IMPLEMENTATION OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES AND DATA TEAMS RELATING TO THE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT GAP

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ABSTRACT

The study was completed to find if there was a significant difference in student achievement after professional learning communities (PLC’s) and data teams were implemented in a title district. A title district is one where the free and reduced lunch rate shows a high poverty level. PLC’s, along with the Data Teams process are designed to enhance communication, teach educators to use data effectively to guide classroom instruction, and to meet students on an individual level to increase achievement. Research shows that effective use of data to guide intervention strategies support growth in student achievement. Findings of this study show that there is a significant difference in the way students performed on state assessments in pre data-teams and post data-teams implementation years. The study focuses on the teacher antecedents, including intervention and collaboration strategies.
INTRODUCTION

Background, issues and concerns

In a time when teachers are overworked, underpaid, and taking on more and more responsibility, educators are constantly looking for ways to improve the quality of education in the classroom. One issue plaguing schools everywhere is that of test scores. It seems like no matter what educators do, test scores are not moving upward, and if they are they are not moving fast enough within the school year to make a difference on state tests. So, as the adequate yearly progress (AYP) expectations rise and Common Core threatens to create a larger learning gap as standards are pushed down, educators are faced with a new question. How do we give the students what they need? How do we meet each student where they are educationally? School districts across the country have implemented many different types of solutions. However, the schools that seem to be experiencing success have some very vital things in common. Some of those very vital things are collaborative teaching, and valid, workable, meaningful data guiding instruction. One way that many schools across the country are managing this data is through a process referred to simply as “Data Teams.” In a nutshell, data teams is simply an organized mapping system coupled with an intervention system where student progress is tracked through pre, formative, and post assessments to determine proficiency. If, at any time in a data tracking cycle, a student is found to be at a level below proficient, they are remediated using a variety of teaching and intervention strategies. The basic idea is that if educators keep a better handle on where their students are at, and implement appropriate intervention strategies along the way, the student achievement gap will not only begin to close, but begin to close at an accelerated pace.
Practice under investigation

Like anything in education, this process has a name. Linked together in educational jargon harmony are the philosophies of Professional Learning Communities (PLC) and Data Teams. Many schools profess to be a PLC environment, but lack several of the quality indicators that would make them a true PLC school. According to Susan Sparks, schools have a choice about what kind of a team to become. Staffs can either be the kind of team, which are poorly run, unfocused, uninformed, and misguided or they can become true PLC teams. “Professional learning communities are built on the foundation of collaborative teams as interdependent, self-directed work groups focused on a common goal.” (Sparks, 2008 p. 4). PLC teams work together to define SMART goals. SMART, in reality, is an acronym which relates to appropriate feedback for students, and stands for specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely. These goals are substantiated by data reflecting current reality in the classroom and a specific target area where students need to improve. This goal then becomes what each team aspires to attain. (Sparks, 2008).

The philosophy of data teams, on the other hand, is one that fits within the structure of a well-formed PLC school. Data teams is the actual process of finding student weaknesses, setting SMART goals, teaching a target, charting student progress, looking at intervention and instructional strategies, and grouping students who have not yet reached proficiency in a skill. (Besser, L. et al, 2010).

During a data teams cycle, the grade level team (or it might be content, such as middle school Social Studies) decides on a target where students struggle. These targets are usually referred to as “heavy hitters,” targets that a lot of students struggle with and will be needed for
many other things. One great example of this in the 5th grade classroom would be the reading target focusing on main idea in text. Once the target is chosen, a pre-test is given and students are grouped into categories of advanced, proficient, close, far to go, and intervention. It is the goal of the cycle to move students as far left as possible. Students are then taught the target. After initial teaching, students are given a formative assessment and charted again into the same five groups. Now the teacher can work with small skill groups for the students who are intervention or far to go. The teacher can also have the students in the proficient and advanced categories work on things that will push them even higher. After this period, a summative is given and students are charted for a final time to see if the initial SMART goal has been attained. In between, the grade level teams meet together to discuss how it is going, and why the students seem to be scoring the way they are. This includes discussion of the assessments given, how the material is being presented to the students, and which instructional strategies are used. (Besser, L. et al, 2010).

Many schools across the country which are considered to be high-performing are seeing great results with Data Teams because it is truly an intervention strategy and is even being coupled with formal Response to Intervention (RTI) in many districts.

*School policy to be informed by study*

In a Midwestern school district, there are currently 16 elementary schools. Of those 16 schools, 11 meet the requirements of a title school. However, due to distribution of monies, only 9 of those buildings actually receive title status from the district. Under Title 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education act, a district or school can file for title status when 40% of the population is poverty level. Poverty level can be determined by five factors: the number of children 5-17 listed as poverty during the latest census, the percentage of students who qualify for free and reduced lunch, the number of children in families who receive government
assistance, the number of children who qualify for Medicade, or a composite of the first four. Faced with the issue of low achieving students, most families that qualify for free and reduced lunch status, many of the elementary buildings are currently in training with the with a common Regional Professional Development Center (RPDC) to learn how to implement PLC and Data teams in their buildings. This research project was conceived to see if, in fact, using these strategies would bring the successes of many other low achieving schools to the district in question. Teachers in the district are spending countless hours in professional development, and schools are spending much of their professional development monies for these trainings. Is the money and time that the district is investing worth it?

**Conceptual underpinning**

Meeting students “where they are at” is not a new idea in education. This idea has been a best practice for years, and has been implemented in as many different ways. A generation ago, meeting students meant grouping the low readers together, calling them the “black birds” and leaving them that way for the duration of the year. However, this idea has changed into something more. This includes multiple intelligences, learning styles, individualized education plan accommodations (IEP), and flex grouping in both reading and math. The issue that the School District is in is much like that of many districts across the country; we have more and more students falling in the lowest socioeconomic bracket. Following theories presented by Ruby Payne, these students often suffer many academic problems related to their low socioeconomic status. Students face homelessness, hunger, little or no access to running water, lack of adult support/supervision, lack of value placed on education, parents/grandparents who are illiterate/uneducated and can not help with homework, late hours watching younger siblings, and the responsibility of taking care of all of the adult issues in the home. Due to these hardships,
students from free and reduced lunch families are often lower achieving. From personal experience, these families are often time management issues as well. These students tend to be absent from school more than other students. Due to the concepts which Payne discusses, the philosophy of using data teams, developed by a team of educators from the Learning Center, seems to be a theory and practice fitting to any school, but especially a low-income one. The process of data teams requires that students be frequently assessed, their progress monitored, and teaching strategies implemented to either accelerate or remediate students. The theory is that students who are already at a level of proficiency or mastery on a specific skill will be pushed farther, and students who have not yet achieved proficiency can be remediated and worked with so that they will reach skill mastery. The idea is that students who are failing or at risk will receive more adequate one on one time working on skills. Generally these students exhibit characteristics or share similar traits, identified by Payne, which are attributed to living in poverty. The other sector is made up of students to receive special services. Using data teams in the classroom also opens up whole class instruction time, and maximizes the usage of time in an already short day.

Statement of the problem

The problem in the district under study, as it is for many districts, is two-fold. One issue is that schools continue to have low achieving students. Students are transient because the district is large, socioeconomically challenged district, and many students struggle to keep up and find stability while bouncing back and forth between schools. The other issue is that AYP continues to rise. With Common Core coming, and soon, it is a worry of many that a large gap will be created as standards are pushed from higher grades into lower ones. The concern for those lower
achieving students grows. Looking for solutions to help close the achievement gaps between subgroups is one way to make sure that these students are not falling through the cracks.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to determine if implementing PLC teams and the data teams process will be a solution to closing the achievement gaps for students in the School District. Will it be enough to bridge the gap for the district’s lower achieving schools? Can implementing these strategies push lower achieving students to better scores not only on state assessments, but also for the future in regards to Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT), American College Testing (ACT) and other academic related standardized testing?

Research questions.

Is there a difference in student achievement between the use of PLC teams and data teams compared to not using PLC teams and data teams?

Null hypothesis.

There is no difference in student achievement between the use of PLC teams and data teams compared to not using PLC teams and data teams.

Anticipated benefits of the study.

The largest benefit of this study was to figure out if all of the blood, sweat, and tears that the district is funneling into teacher training are worth it. Trends in education cycle, and things can change with each year. The district has often times had this issue. The powers that be will decide to try something that has been successful in another district without doing enough
research, and then it fails. This leaves teachers and administrators frustrated, tired, and exhausted by training and resources they can no longer use.

*Summary of Terms*

**ACT**-American College Testing.

**AYP**-Adequate yearly progress. Written into law in 2000, the No Child Left Behind Act sets yearly goals for school districts in regard to student performance. These goals are measured by several factors, one of which is end of course tests in secondary school and the Missouri Assessment Program test in elementary school.

Data team—a process in which grade level teams work with common assessments toward SMART goals by tracking data, teaching, grouping, and using intervention instructional strategies.

**DESE**-Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Individualized Education Plan (IEP)-legal document written for students qualifying for special education services.

Professional Learning Community (PLC)-a team developed within the school building staff that learns, grows, and makes decisions together based on data, and student needs. PLC teams have set roles, norms, and expectations, which allow them to function smoothly.
MAP test- Missouri Assessment Program test, administered in Math, Communication Arts and Science (grades 5 and 8) in Missouri elementary schools.

RPDC-Regional Professional Development Center.

SAT-Scholastic Assessment Test

SMART Goal-SMART is an acronym, which stands for specific, measureable, attainable, realistic, and timely. The term relates to feedback for students.

Summary

A study was conducted to see if there was a significant difference in MAP scores between pre implementation of PLC and Data teams and post implementation of PLC and Data teams in a Midwestern school. Segregated data was used from grade 5 to show growth. If a significant difference is found between pre and post implementation, PLC/Data teams training should be suggested to other low achieving schools in the district. At the completion of the study, districts can benefit from the included data by having tangible examples of the effects of using PLC teams and the Data teams process.
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Data driven decision-making has become realism in public education over the last decade. Brought on by the movement toward standards and accountability, educational systems today are under much greater pressure to produce results, and measurable ones at that, than ever before. This is especially true since the passage of The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Pub. L. No. 107-110).

Educators across the country are realizing that failure to make changes and improve the achievement of students, as measured by specific, external measures of performance, will not be tolerated (White, 2005) So, what then, do we do? Teachers, drowning in piles of forms and numbers they do not understand? How do we fix the problem without reinventing the wheel, creating even more work, and burning ourselves out? The answer, though perhaps not simple, is an easy one. Management (Thomas, 2011).

There are many issues facing school districts presently. These issues include, but are not limited to: lack of resources, lack of funding, low socioeconomic status, and low parent involvement—are just a few (Thomas, 2011). However, these are factors which educators have no control over. The first step in solving the problems is figuring out what is within reach to fix. The only way to pinpoint some of these issues is to look at data, in some form or another.

According to White (2005), in his book “Beyond the Numbers,” educators face two major issues regarding data. Number one is what he refers to as the rearview mirror effect. The rearview mirror effect is defined simply as planning the future based on events of the past. White explains that the rearview mirror effect has four distinct and harmful characteristics. The first is responding to a rapidly changing reality based on past events, causing educators to fail to anticipate urgent challenges. It also fails to gather fresh feedback about how students and
teachers are feeling in their current situations. Secondly, the rearview mirror effect is dangerous, because it causes educators to “wait for the road to reveal itself.” In other words, depending on and waiting for annual state assessments. Relying only on state test results as the single most dimension of learning, says White, invites issues because then the data is only examined after the fact. The third issue is what is called the “single-dimension highway” because it stays focused only on the actions of the student, which is not the same as focusing on student achievement. The fourth and final characteristic, one experienced in many buildings across the nation, is a wistful looking-back to a time when “things were simpler.” In this, teachers’ attitudes fail them in the classroom, though it isn’t hard sometimes to understand why.

The other issue plaguing many educators where data is concerned is not only the sheer amount of data, but also what to do with it afterwards. How many teachers were actually trained to analyze real-time data? How many teachers were actually coached on what data really counts in bringing up student scores and achievement levels? The answer, sadly, is very few. Many data analysis sessions hinge on the structures that are put in place by the school district leadership, and thus must conform to their expectations (Thomas, 2011). Many educators feel boxed in, trapped, and alienated by this model because few really understand what they are looking for in the endless pages and piles of numbers.

So where is the middle ground? How do we find where our students are at academically without overwhelming ourselves? It all hinges on choosing the data that is most effective. Reeves (2005), as quoted in Beyond the Numbers, says that in today’s school climate, students are much more apt to be “over tested, yet under assessed” (p. 4).

In other words, student performance and achievement is rarely examined in terms to offer insight, which can help us improve. More often, test data is used to compare students to others,
rather than increase student performance (White, 2005). One great example is the student data requirements for NCLB. In counting, there are 40 separate pieces of data, which are required to be submitted.

State testing holds some of the same hazards. Take into account this example. During state testing, a child sits in a classroom. She belongs to every sub group she possibly could. Not only is she female, but also she is African-American, on free or reduced lunch, and on an IEP where she is serviced in both reading and math. Because this child is not reading on grade level (though the math assessment can be read to her) her success on these tests is going to be limited. Yet, each subgroup that this child belongs to takes a hit when she fails to pull proficient scores. A prime example of data collected simply for comparison, as many of the factors are out of the teacher’s control (Trimble & Gay, 2007).

According to Blankstein (2004), author of Failure is Not an Option, the best way to choose data is to make selections that will really help you decide where your students are at academically, and give you a clear picture of how to proceed with instruction. There is nothing wrong with looking at segregated testing data, as long as it is taken with a grain of salt, and the idea that it is only showing a very small percentage of the whole picture. Some pieces of data that should be collected and analyzed fall into three categories: academic outcomes, things correlating to student achievement, and specific targeted areas for success. These categories encompass things like benchmark tests, semester exams, graduation rates, test scores compared between academic years, attitude surveys of students and parents, student engagement levels, discipline actions, and daily observations. Data should be timely, and should be looked at by teams to ensure that everyone remains on the same page (Perry, 2011). Some questions to be asked include: which criteria will be used to determine proficiency? Does the piece of work
show proficiency? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the students? What should be done to assure growth in this area? (White, 2005).

Data however, is only as effective as the people analyzing it. This can be assured through one major part of the PLC process: intentional collaboration. It is exactly what it sounds like: groups or teams of educators purposely working together toward a common goal (Sparks, 2008). Successful meetings have five key elements, which include focus, roles and responsibilities (everyone has a job and purpose), structure, process, and behaviors and relationships. Teams must also work together to create SMART goals. SMART goals reflect the current classroom reality and where the students are right now (The Learning Center, 2010). In order to attain a staff that is capable of sitting a successful meeting, the six principles of PLC’s are set into play. These principles ensure a community among staff. Having a common mission, vision, and goal for school and students, ensuring achievement for all students, collaborative teaming, data guiding decision making, active engagement from parents and community, and building sustainable leadership roles are all part of a successful staff (The Learning Center, 2010. Blankstein, 2004). In addition, these principles build a relational trust among staff members. When expectations associated with relationships and roles within school building are met, it enhances trust. Respect, competence, personal regard for others, and integrity go a long way to establishing a strong PLC within a school building (Blankstein, 2004).

Once the correct data for each purpose is chosen, and a collaborative culture of trust and respect is built among staff the idea of Data Teams can then be successfully implemented. While some buildings find success implementing a collaborative culture and Data Teams at the same time, it is generally considered easier to have a solid collaborative structure before taking on the full scope of the Data teams practice (Sparks, 2008).
According to The Learning Center (2010), the team of educational leaders and specialists at the heart of the Data Teams philosophy, Data Teams is not about working harder or doing more. Data Teams is about streamlining your assessment, pinpointing what exactly each student needs, and making an instructional plan based on solid results. It is this idea in which many school districts are finding great success. The Data Teams processes may look familiar to some as a basic RTI approach, which is used already in several school districts across the nation (Sgouros & Walsh, 2012).

Data Teams follows a step at a time approach, and encourages educators to learn how to read and organize the data that before seemed like it would over take them. At the start of a new cycle, educators get together in collaborative teams and decide on a SMART goal (sometimes called a priority target) for the new cycle. Together, an appropriate pre-assessment is found to test the target. Once the pre-assessment is given, the cycle can really begin! Educators collaborate to collect and chart data. Assessments are scored together, with a common scoring guide, and decisions are then made about what constitutes a proficient student. During step two, educators analyze the data, and the student work to prioritize needs. This is where common patterns and misconceptions are discovered, as well as strengths of the group. In between steps two and three the content is taught to the students. After a short period, a formative assessment is given to the students. Again, data is charted and analyzed. In step three SMART goals are revised, and educators set new goals. These goals include how to bump up proficient students and how to bring up students who are in the intervention category. Step four requires the strong collaborative culture that Sparks (2008) discusses in her article *Creating Intentional Collaboration*, because it requires trust. Teachers, during this step, choose common instructional strategies for implementation. This is sometimes hard if teachers have starkly different views on
how something should be presented. Finally, the material is retaught, and the data charted for a third time. When looking at the final charted data, this being step five, teachers must decide how to proceed. They track what has been successful, and what has not been by looking at student samples from throughout the cycle. If enough students have reached proficiency, the team will move to another SMART goal. The students who have still not achieved proficiency will be taken into skill groups and remediated. Many steps in the cycle can be repeated and recycled to fit the needs of each individual team (The Learning Center, 2010).

One important thing to remember when considering data analysis and collaborative culture is that it is not about what educators have no control over (Thomas, 2011). We cannot change the homes from which our students come, the level of involvement from their parents, the socioeconomic status of which they are a part, or a large percentage of the distracting behaviors they present every day. Creating a culture in which there is truly success for all students requires the adults to focus on their own actions. Data Teams large focus is on the adult antecedents, or actions, during everyday instruction. White identifies antecedents as “those structures and conditions that precede, anticipate, or predict excellence in performance. They lead to excellence in student achievement, excellence in implementing a new program or strategy, or excellence in performing routine tasks.” Antecedents precede and predict results, because they are the causes that have a strong correlation (positive or negative) with results. As educators, if we desire sustained improvements in student achievement, it is wise to first identify antecedents (White, 2005). Antecedents include causes, instructional strategies, administrative structures, and conditions for learning—all of which can be altered and improved by the staff within a building (Blankstein, 2004).
RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design

A quantitative study was conducted to see if there was a difference between achievement levels on the MAP test after the Data Teams model was implemented. The independent variable being tested was the usage of the Data Teams model, while the dependent variable was scores on the Communication Arts portion of the MAP test. If the difference is found to be significant, the school district should be informed and other buildings in the district should begin receiving training in the Data Teams process, which can then be implemented to increase achievement.

Study Group Description

Within the Midwestern district, there is one school that is currently proficient in the Data Teams process. This building is K-6, with teachers receiving training and professional development in Data Teams from a local RPDC. In order to track growth, scores from the teachers most proficient in the process were chosen. Communication Arts scores were taken from the 6th grade class of 2010-2011 (pre-data teams) and 2011-2012 (first year of implementation) from the same teachers’ classes. The school is question is a higher-achieving school in the Midwestern district. In the last school year, the enrollment was 374 with 36.6% of those students qualifying for free and reduced lunch. Though this school is not title itself, the Midwestern district is title, with 63% of students in the district considered poverty level (DESE). The school is predominately white with a small percentage (less than 5%) of African American and Asian. The building employs 37 staff members, and class size averages between twenty and
twenty-five students per teacher. This school was chosen for the alignment in training with other schools in the district, and for their progress in the training process.

Data Collection and Instrumentation

Segregated data provided to the schools by the State of Missouri was used to determine breakdown of scores for each student in the 6th grade for the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school years.

Statistical Analysis Methods

A t-test was conducted to see if there was a significant difference in Communication Arts MAP scores based on the implementation of the Data Teams process. Scores released by DESE to the building administrator were obtained from said administrator to compare the 2011 6th grade class (pre implementation) and the 2012 6th grade class (post implementation). The mean, mean D, t-test, df, and p-value were concluded from this test. The Alpha level was set at .25 to test the null hypothesis: There is no difference in Communication Arts MAP scores after the implementation of the Data Teams process.

FINDINGS

A t-test was conducted to determine whether or not there was a difference in performance on the Communication Arts MAP test between 2011 and 2012, based on teacher actions related to the implementation of PLC’s and Data Teams.

The following tables will depict the organized findings based on the statistical raw data from DESE provided by the school in question.
Figure 1

**t-Test Analysis Results for 2011 and 2012 Communication Arts MAP Scores**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Mean D</th>
<th>t-Test</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011 Pre Data Team (54)</td>
<td>686</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012 Post Data Team (54)</td>
<td>696</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>.091</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Significant when p<=0.25

Two teachers, receiving Data Teams and PLC training were selected for this study based on the level of competence for the material that their administrator felt they demonstrated during their first year of implementation. This competence was based on the implementation of the Data Teams process, and the instructional strategies used to remediate intervention cases, and excel students who are already proficient. For each year, there are 54 case scores, giving a total of 108 scores for both years. The test shows that the mean for the 2011 school year (pre implementation) was 686 while the mean for the 2012 school year (post implementation) was 696, which is a difference of approximately 10. The t-Test result was 1.7, and the df was 106. The null hypothesis states that implementation of PLC teams and the data teams process does not have a significant effect on student performance on state assessments. The null hypothesis was rejected, due to the p-Value of .091 being less than the alpha level of .25. Thus, there is a significant difference in student test scores when PLC’s and Data Teams are implemented in classrooms.

The Missouri State Assessment is broken into four categories of performance, each with their own scale score to determine where a student falls within a certain range. These ranges are
advanced, proficient, basic, and below basic. The table below illustrates the scale scores for the Communication Arts portion of the MAP test according to DESE.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proficiency Indicator</th>
<th>Scale Score Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>704-855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proficient</td>
<td>676-703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>631-675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below Basic</td>
<td>505-630</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The bottom two categories, basic and below basic, encompass scores that do not meet the state requirement. The top two categories, proficient and advanced, are scores considered by the state to illustrate success. The following chart shows the number of scores falling into each range to the 2011 state test as well as the 2012 state test.

Figure 2

The left bar, represented in blue, is the 2011 MAP scores. The right bar, represented in red, is the 2012 scores. In 2012, the testing year in which Data Teams were implemented, the
number of students in the advanced and proficient categories grew from 2011, while the basic
and below basic categories showed regression. In fact, the below basic category disappeared
from this group all together.

Based on the presented data, the effectiveness of data teams, which includes collaboration
and intervention strategies, cannot be disputed. The results are especially encouraging because
the data shows the growth of only one year of training and implementation.
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The outcomes of this study show that implementing PLC’s and the Data Teams process are effective strategies for student achievement. The findings show that there is a significant difference in test scores when intervention and collaboration strategies are implemented in a school. The p-Value, resting at .091 is far less than the alpha level of .25, meaning that the null hypothesis can be rejected with confidence. There is a difference in Communication Arts scores between pre and post implementation years.

The conceptual underpinning of both the Data Teams professionals at The Learning Center, as well as that of theorist Ruby Payne supports these results. Data Teams, used as an intervention and collaboration strategy, has been shown to make a difference in school environments as teachers learn to communicate and to effectively meet students at the level of need. This is especially true for schools with a high poverty rate, as noted by Ruby Payne. Because many poverty level students struggle with support at home, it is important to find strategies to meet the intervention needs of these lower performing students. To ensure success for all, it also allows teachers to help accelerate students who are already at a level of proficiency.

After concluding the study, with positive results, it will be important to conduct some further studies. Many of the schools in the district are just completing their first implementation year. The school in question has just completed their second year. When state testing results are released for the 2013 testing year toward the end of August, scores for the school in question could be compared to those that have already been released. This study would show the effectiveness over a two-year period, and likely show more growth from pre implementation to year two. It would also be interesting to examine other schools outside of the School District in
question, who have implemented Data Teams and PLC’s to see if the study is supported state-
wide.

With the effectiveness of Data Teams and PLC’s being shown in one of the district’s high-achieving schools, it will be interesting to see how the first-year scores of the lower achieving schools compare when the data is released by DESE in August. Should those scores show the same, or perhaps better, increase in student achievement, it would be worth while for the schools who have not yet begun this training to be trained in the process. With the implementation of common core, and the size of the SJS district, it would be beneficial for everyone to be on the same page.
REFERENCES


