

BUILDING THE LEADERSHIP CAPACITY TO ACHIEVE INSTRUCTIONAL  
FOCUS AND INCREASE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

by

Shanta Reynolds

An educational leadership portfolio submitted to the  
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for the degree of Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

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## **ABSTRACT**

New Castle County Vocational Technical School District (NCCVT) is a vocational school district in Delaware consisting of four high schools. NCCVT's vision "is to deliver world-class Career and Technical programs combined with rigorous academic curricula to equip students with the 21st century skills that will best serve the State of Delaware and the global community" (NCCVT, 2018, para. 1). I have served as the principal of St. Georges Technical High School (St. Georges) since 2012. As the principal, I have recognized the value of distributive leadership.

Distributive leadership involves working with several people to help inform decision-making that will improve the performance of educators and increase student achievement. The shared responsibility and experiences that teachers encounter through distributive leadership affect teacher capacities and motivation. The portfolio focuses on building the necessary leadership capacity to both achieve our instructional focus and reach our student achievement goals. Specifically, the ELP (Building the leadership capacity to achieve instructional focus and increase student achievement) centers on developing three school-based teams of teachers and administrators working together to improve teacher practices focused on literacy. The three leadership teams developed are the Powerful Development Team (PDT), Instructional Leadership Team (ILT), and the Instructional Coaches. Particular attention is given to the PDT because they exemplified an effective model of how distributive leadership can be operationalized at the building level. The improvement strategies centered on achieving the instructional focus goals, increasing capacity and distributing leadership. Teachers and administrators worked

collaboratively to complete the following: a) select leaders and establish the PDT, b) build leadership capacity, and c) teach leadership skills and literacy strategies. The improvement strategies resulted in the development of: a) a qualified team of teachers working collaboratively to accomplish the school-wide instructional goals, b) two teams of teachers (ILT and coaches) supporting instructors with implementation of the school-wide instructional focus, c) a PDT team learning leadership skills and literacy strategies; d) three teams (PDT, ILT, and coaches) enhancing the instruction of teachers. These developments led to an increase in student achievement, including an increase in scores on the PSAT and SAT. On both assessments the school scored above the district and state average. The PDT believes that our instructional focus on research-based literacy strategies that is aligned with the Common Core Standards played a major factor in the students' increased achievement on the PSAT and SAT. Recommendations for the future include providing specific feedback and resources for candidates who are not selected to participate on the PDT, collecting and analyzing data to determine goals for the instructional leadership groups, reevaluating the administrative walkthrough tool, creating a coaches' walkthrough tool, and providing additional training on the four disciplines that will help build a cohesive team and healthy organization.

## **Chapter 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Considering the increasing complexity and demands in education, we must move past the idea of one or a few people being the center of knowledge, expertise, and power as it relates to instruction in the building. One person cannot be an expert in all matters, so it is essential that principals allow people to lead where they have expertise. My goal of this educational leadership portfolio (ELP) is to build the leadership capacity in my building to accomplish the school-wide instructional focus on literacy.

A major focus of this ELP is to establish the leadership capacity in my school. A distributive leadership perspective was used to accomplish this goal. As defined, “Distributive leadership is about creating leadership density, building and sustaining leadership capacity throughout the organization. A distributive leadership perspective recognizes that people in many different roles can lead and affect the performance of their school in different ways” (Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement, 2015, p. 1). Creating multiple groups to determine and support the instructional focus was the main objective of this ELP. Spillane (2006) explains that the distributive model of leadership focuses upon the interactions rather than the actions of those in formal and informal leadership roles. As illustrated in Figure 1, a leadership system of practice is comprised of a collection of interconnected components: leaders, followers, and situations. “The researcher’s perspective shifts the unit of analysis from the individual

actor or group of actors to a web of leaders, followers, and situations that give activity its form” (Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2004, p. 11). The distributive leadership model is primarily concerned with *leadership practice* and how leadership influences organizational and instructional improvement.



*Figure 1.* A leadership system of practice is comprised of a collection of interacting components: leaders, followers, and situations. Adapted from “Towards A Theory of Leadership Practice: A Distributed Perspective,” by J. P. Spillane, R. Halverson, & J. B. Diamond, 2004, *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 36(1), p. 11.

Despite the importance of distributive leadership for school improvement, the literature is less clear about what it looks like in practice. Studies typically show that an implementation of distributive leadership in a school includes the following actions: a) select leaders and build relationships, b) establish supports, and c) focus on improving

teaching and learning (Spillane, 2006, p. 56). These actions were used to build capacity in my school building.

This portfolio organizes the work that I conducted over the last three years to support building the leadership capacity at St. Georges Technical High School. There are six chapters and thirteen appendices in this portfolio. This chapter introduces the work that was conducted from 2015-2018. Chapter 2 provides more details on the specific problem addressed, which was not being able to effectively increase leadership capacity in the building. Chapter 3 focuses on improvement strategies that were undertaken to establish the leadership capacity and to accomplish the school-wide instructional focus on literacy. The next chapter reviews the results of the improvement strategies. Chapter 5 reflects on the results of the improvement effort during the initial development and implementation of the Powerful Development Team (PDT). The final chapter is a reflection of my leadership growth through the doctoral program.

### **Description of Appendices**

The thirteen appendices include my portfolio proposal, IRB/human subjects documentation, and twelve artifacts that summarize my work to support developing teams of teachers and administrators to work together to improve teacher practices focused on literacy. The fourteen appendices are titled as follows:

Appendix A: Powerful Development Team Logic Model

Appendix B: Powerful Development Team Job Description and Team  
Functioning Sheet

Appendix C: Powerful Development Team Summer Training Materials



Appendix D: The Reimagining Professional Learning Innovation Grant

Appendix E: Powerful Development Team Schoology Sites

Appendix F: Distributive Leadership: Implications for the Role of the Principal

Appendix G: Building Leadership Capacity Mind Map

Appendix H: Leadership Team Structure and Literacy Target Sheet

Appendix I: Program Evaluation

Appendix J: Summary of the Powerful Development Team's Achievements

Appendix L: ELP Survey Data Overview

Appendix M: ELP Proposal

Appendix N: IRB/Human Subjects Documentation

## **Chapter 2**

### **PROBLEM ADDRESSED**

#### **Organizational Context**

I have served as the principal of St. Georges Technical High School (St. Georges) in the New Castle County Vocational Technical School District (NCCVT) since 2012. During this time, the district has sought to increase leadership capacity in the schools by providing professional development to teachers and administrators on distributive leadership. However, we have not been able to effectively increase leadership capacity in the buildings because there was no strategic plan that connected school-level initiatives to distributive leadership. There also has not been a system established where teachers and administrators work together to find solutions to school-level issues.

In 2004, NCCVT was involved in the Delaware Distributive Leadership Initiative (DDLI). The DDLI was a program assigned to the Delaware Academy of School Leadership by the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) to develop and coordinate distributive leadership efforts across the state. Buttram and Pizzini (2009) served as the lead researchers for this initiative. School districts were invited to submit a proposal to begin developing their own model of distributive leadership. NCCVT was one of four districts awarded a \$25,000 mini grant from the DDOE. The researchers (Buttram & Pizzini, 2009) provided the following recommendations for the district moving forward

with distributive leadership: a) distributive leadership should be attached to other improvement efforts in the school, and b) teachers and administrators should be working together to solve school issues, to hear each other's perspectives, and to decide as a unit how to move the school forward.

The follow-up work from this project was splintered and lacked a cohesive framework. The framework established at the NCCVT district level did not address the individual instructional and behavioral student growth goals at the building level. This highlights the importance of developing a building-base program. Building-based models of distributive leadership, which adhere to researched practice, are more effective because they are individualized to address not only the immediate school improvement needs but also to forecast needs based on pending district and state initiatives/regulations.

My Educational Leadership Portfolio (ELP) focuses on building the necessary leadership capacity to both achieve our instructional focus and to reach our student achievement goals. Specifically, this ELP centers on developing school-based teams of teachers and administrators to work together to improve teacher practices focused on literacy. The work of these teams will enhance teachers' instructional effectiveness, which in turn should lead to an increase in student achievement.

### **Organization Composition**

New Castle County Vocational Technical School District (NCCVT) is a vocational school district in Delaware consisting of four high schools. NCCVT's vision "is to deliver world-class Career and Technical programs combined with rigorous academic curricula to equip students with the 21st century skills that will best serve the

State of Delaware and the global community” (NCCVT, 2018, para. 1). When students graduate, they earn a diploma and a certificate of completion in their selected career area. Students in the NCCVT school district are prepared to be successful in the workforce and/or in a two- or four-year college or apprenticeship program.

St. Georges is a part of the NCCVT school district and opened in the fall of 2006 with a ninth grade of approximately 260 students. Fall enrollment for the 2015-2016 school year was 1,063 students in grades 9-12; they came from 33 different public and charter middle schools throughout New Castle County. The following is the demographic breakdown of the students that attend St. Georges: 52% of the students are male and 48% are female, 40% of students are categorized as minority, 15% receive free/reduced lunches, and approximately 12.5% of students are eligible for special education services.

The school consists of 91 staff members of which 76 are teachers. Of the 76 teachers, 19 are career area teachers, and 57 are academic teachers where 50% of the teaching staff have nine years or less of teaching experience. The other half reflects a veteran group where 26.3% of the staff have 10-19 years of experience, and 23.6% have 20 years or more. Table 1 shows the years of teaching experience for St. Georges’ teachers.

Table 1

*Breakdown in Years of Teaching Experience*

Years of Teaching	Percentage of Staff Members
4 Years or less	13.2
5 - 9 Years	36.8
10 - 14 Years	14.5
15 - 19 Years	11.8
20 - 24 Years	11.8
25 - 29 Years	9.2
30 Years or More	2.6

**Academic Need**

My work explores several factors, such as professional learning, standards alignment, and the role of the principal, which are key indicators to student achievement. The description of these key indicators provide context on the need to establish a team of teachers and administrators that can support instructors with moving past a novice level of understanding and effectively applying what they have learned into daily practice to enhance student learning. Also, it highlights the complexity and importance of the role of the principal as it relates to increasing student achievement.

Research has shown that what distinguishes high-performing, high-poverty schools from low-performing schools is effective, collaborative, comprehensive, and ongoing professional development (Silva, 2008). According to Schmoker (2011), schools should focus on the following three simple goals to significantly improve student

outcomes: a reasonably coherent curriculum (what we teach); sound lessons (how we teach); and far more purposeful reading and writing in every discipline, or authentic literacy (integral to both what and how we teach). Since 2011, the staff at St. Georges has been involved in school- and district-based professional development sessions related to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). These professional development sessions have included an introduction and explanation of the new standards, along with effective strategies: higher-order thinking, close reading, depth of knowledge, discipline specific literacy, growth mindset, and Learning Focused Strategies (LFS). During the 2014-2015 school year, St. Georges participated in the Delaware Department of Education Common Ground for the Common Core training. This year-long training produced more coordinated efforts to connect new learning with practice.

The impact of the professional development sessions over the last several years has resulted in several teachers actively implementing newly acquired strategies and resources. However, some teachers negate or are closed to new learning and remain at a novice level. This is evident through the lack of implementation witnessed by the St. Georges administrative team during classroom walkthroughs and summative evaluations.

Student performance on the SAT exam, currently the state assessment for 11th grade, is another indicator that the professional learning, which is to improve instruction that leads to an increase in student achievement, has not been fully achieved. For example, Table 2 shows the average SAT scores for St. Georges students (11th and 12th grades) during the 2014-2015 school year. The table highlights that students scored above the district average in each category but slightly below the state average in critical

reading and writing. The data indicates there is room for improvement in student literacy skills and thus a need for stronger professional learning.

Table 2

*SAT Average Scores for the Class of 2014-2015*

	School	District	State
Math	454	426	449
Critical Reading	447	416	449
Writing	422	396	429
Total	1,323	1,238	1,327

Traditionally, the instructional focus at St. Georges has been developed and executed by the principal, with occasional assistance from the department chairs who served on the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT). The ILT met once a month for 30 minutes in the morning to discuss upcoming events and to brainstorm ideas for upcoming professional development. The ILT was responsible for setting-up, facilitating, and creating systems to sustain the learning that took place during the staff professional development sessions. They received limited training on team building, strategic planning, and data analysis. As a result, the ILT was mostly the function of the principal.

A key indicator to students' academic success is the role that the principal plays. Principals' perceptions of their roles, and their perceived changes in their roles, may

affect how they address achievement in their school (Boyer, 1997). Principals believe that their role is all-encompassing and ever-changing. There is a consistent struggle with balancing instructional and managerial duties and responsibilities. This is evident based on the data collected from the School Administrator Management Project (SAM) project. The SAM project is a professional development process using a unique set of tools to track and change a principal's focus from school management tasks to instructional leadership activities directly connected to improving teaching and learning (SAM, 2017).

In the 2013-2014 school year, the data collected on the NCCVT school district indicated that an overwhelming majority of administrators spent more than half of their day on non-instructional duties. Fullan (2014) reports, "If principals are to maximize their impact on learning, we must re-conceptualize their role so that it clearly, practically, and convincingly becomes a force for improving the whole school and the results it brings" (p. 6). This multiple-role expectation has prevented principals from concentrating on successfully implementing the instructional focus goals by establishing and training a team to address school concerns. Consequently, my work focuses on the actions taken to develop leadership teams that build and increase instructional capacity.

### **Improvement Goal**

With the goal of establishing the leadership capacity at St. Georges, my ELP portfolio examines the development of three leadership teams created for teachers and administrators to work collectively on achieving the instructional focus on literacy. The three leadership teams were the Powerful Development Team (PDT), Instructional Leadership Team (ILT), and the Instructional Coaches. Particular attention is given to



the PDT because they exemplified an effective model of how distributive leadership can be operationalized at the building level. Also, all but one of the members from the other groups are on the PDT Team. Specifically, I focused on the following three elements necessary to achieve the instructional focus goals and to increase distributive leadership: a) selecting leaders and establishing the PDT, b) building leadership capacity, and c) teaching leadership skills and literacy strategies. The teams participated in activities that were intrinsically meaningful for them and had the autonomy to make decisions not afforded to them as classroom instructors. The goal was for the PDT to accomplish school goals that focus on literacy, increase their leadership skills, and establish a cohesive team of teachers and administrators that are working together to solve school-wide problems. I assisted the team with executing these goals by developing a process for selecting instructors to serve on the team. I also helped teachers select personal/school-wide goals to work on and provided teachers with professional development opportunities to improve their knowledge and skills around leadership and literacy.

## **Chapter 3**

### **IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES**

#### **Rationale**

The first action taken to build leadership capacity in my building was to understand the research literature about distributive leadership. Distributive leadership implies interdependency rather than dependency upon a single leader because it forces leaders to share responsibility with subordinates (Harris, 2003). In a distributive environment, many constituents in the organization have a stake in the accomplishments of the school (Harris, 2003). Thus, distributive leadership leads to an increase in leadership capacity. Specifically, building the leadership capacity involves selecting, developing, and providing opportunities for the next generation of leaders to play an equal role in increasing students achievement in the building. Harris (2014) believes there are a few things that could be done to increase the leadership capacity: 1) Create a strong collaborative team; 2) Train the team on professional collaboration (leadership skills); and 3) Create a condition where professional skills and knowledge are enhanced, and ongoing opportunities are provided for multiple staff members to be involved. I developed a plan after reviewing the available literature. To build the leadership capacity in the building and achieve the instructional focus, this ELP focuses on the following

three elements: a) selecting leaders and establishing the PDT, b) teaching leadership skills and literacy strategies, and c) building leadership capacity.

This chapter explains how these elements were facilitated and examines the rationale for the following artifacts:

### **Selecting leaders and establishing the Powerful Development (PDT) Team**

- Appendix A: Design of the Powerful Development Team Logic Model
- Appendix B: Powerful Development Team Job Description and Team Functioning Sheet

### **Teaching Leadership Skills and Literacy Strategies**

- Appendix C: Powerful Development Team Summer Training Materials
- Appendix D: The Reimagining Professional Learning Innovation St. Georges Grant
- Appendix E: Powerful Development Team Schoology Site
- Appendix F: Distributive Leadership: Implications for the Role of the Principal Video

### **Building Leadership Capacity**

- Appendix G: Building Leadership Capacity Mind Map
- Appendix H: Leadership Team Structure and Literacy Target Sheet

### **Selecting Leaders and Establishing the Powerful Development (PDT) Team**

In this section, artifacts that were used to select and establish the PDT are provided. Selecting highly-qualified candidates and establishing a strong team was a

critical first step in building the leadership capacity. This section includes the PDT Logic Model and PDT Job Description and Team Functioning Sheet.

### **Powerful Development Team Logic Model**

As with any successful school initiative, attention must be given to developing an outline that identifies the intended outcomes and how the organization plans to accomplish those outcomes. The PDT logic model is a mind map outlining the development of the PDT. The logic model identifies the social capital, human capital, and decisional capital needed to establish the team. In addition, the logic model identifies the input, activities, and outcomes of the plan to increase the leadership capacities in the building by forming a team that will work collectively to enhance learning. Curtis, City, and Hall (2009) noted that a logic model helps build the capacity of people in the system to plan and think strategically and helps keep execution on track.

The logic model was used to guide each step of the development of the PDT. It was shared with the team, so they had a clear understanding of the steps, resources, and goals included in the plan. The logic model also served as an example of how school leaders should map out plans to accomplish school goals. The PDT was required to create their own logic model for the individual goals they were working on. The logic model was created using ConceptDraw MINDMAP, which is a proprietary mind mapping and brainstorming software developed by CS Odessa in 2001 for Microsoft Windows and Apple macOS operating systems (CS Odessa, 2018). The entire logic model can be found with Appendix A.

## **Powerful Development Team Job Description and Team Functioning Sheet**

The first action step in building the leadership capacity in the building is selecting teachers to be a part of a teacher and administrator led PDT. The PDT job description provides the candidates with details on what qualifications and characteristics are needed to serve on the team. It also provides candidates with details on tasks they will be required to complete and the overarching goals that the team will tackle. To ensure transparency and begin communication of the goals of establishing leadership teams, the job description was posted in the principal's weekly newsletter each week for one month. Teachers were required to submit a letter of interest and interview to be a part of the team. An eight-person panel comprised of administrators and teacher leaders conducted the interviews.

Those selected were best suited to fulfill the purpose of the team as their responses to the interview questions affirmed the level of commitment necessary to take on the additional responsibilities of a teacher leader on the PDT. As stated in the job description, they were provided opportunities to increase their leadership skills and literacy knowledge by attending professional development sessions across the state and country. Team members developed relationships with one another through team-building exercises. The training involved the following: learning how to operate as a cohesive team, developing a strategic plan, and implementing strategies for working with adult learners.

Lencioni (2012) reports that most organizations do not invest nearly enough time and energy in making their leadership teams cohesive and certainly not with the level of

rigor that it requires and deserves. Along with training, the PDT was provided a functioning sheet that explained how the team would operate as a cohesive group. Specifically, the document provided the results of the personality test taken by each team member, the established group norms, an explanation of the importance of utilizing an agenda, and descriptions of the protocols needed to structure the discussions and activities. The functioning sheet was reviewed with the group at the first meeting and was periodically referred to when the group had questions about the team's ability to debate issues and respectfully hear and consider different perspectives. It was a great tool to remind team members of the expectations that were established, the different personalities/approaches in the group and the rationale for why we were using certain techniques to guide our work. The PDT job description and team functioning sheet can be found with Appendix B.

### **Teaching Leadership Skills and Literacy Strategies**

This section contains artifacts that were used to teach leadership skills and literacy strategies. The next step in the process was training the PDT on leadership skills and literacy strategies to assist them in working together to inform the instructional focus. This section includes the PDT Summer Training Materials, The Reimagining Professional Learning Innovation St. Georges Grant, the PDT school site, and the Distributive Leadership: Implications for the Role of the Principal (Video).

### **Powerful Development Team Summer Training Materials**

In June of 2016, the PDT received training on how to operate as a cohesive team. This training involved completing and discussing the results of the Myers-Briggs

personality assessment (Myers & Briggs, 1998) and Data Wise's Compass Points activity (Boudett, City, & Murnane, 2013). Training also involved employing the Meeting Wise agendas (Boudett & City, 2014) and protocols to organize the way the team would work. This training was followed by attendance of the ASCD National Conference in Nashville, Tennessee to acquire new strategies and professional learning in literacy. The team reconvened in August to close out the summer training and prepare for the new school year. The PDT summer training material is a PowerPoint presentation that highlights the instructional core, which is research representing the interactions of teachers (instructional practices) and students in the presence of content (curriculum) (Curtis et al., 2009). The PowerPoint presentation also reviews the theory of change, strategy, and structure/system as it relates to the development of the PDT. The training materials also walk participants through the four major disciplines noted in Lencioni's (2012) book *The Advantage*. The following concepts were used to build a cohesive team, to create clarity about what is important in the school, and to develop a clear mission.

**Discipline 1: Build a cohesive leadership team.** The PDT learned what it means to function as a leadership team. They participated in a series of activities that focused on building a cohesive team by embracing the five behavioral principles: Trust, Conflict, Commitment, Accountability, and Results. The activities included taking a personality test, sharing personal stories, participating in team effectiveness activities, and discussing personal and school-wide goals.

**Discipline 2: Create clarity.** In addition to being socially cohesive, the PDT was intellectually aligned and committed to consistent answers for the following six questions:

1. Why do we exist?
2. How do we behave?
3. How will we succeed?
4. What do we do?
5. What is important right now?
6. Who must do what?

**Discipline 3: Over-communicate clarity.** Next, the PDT developed a playbook based on the answers to the six questions. The team also developed a surface level plan to clearly communicate the playbook to the faculty repeatedly and enthusiastically.

**Discipline 4: Reinforce clarity.** For our organization to establish and maintain long-term health, the PDT learned how to establish a system to reinforce clarity. Every policy, program, and activity were designed to focus the faculty toward realizing our school's vision.

A major component to this summer training was developing trust within the team. High functioning teams trust their team members and are comfortable with productive conflict. Studies conducted by Greenfield (1993) and Ryan (2006) emphasized how social trust must be developed for dialogic interactions to support individual and organizational learning.



The PDT roadmap and instructional playbook for the 2015-2016 school year are also included in the materials. The roadmap and instructional playbook were used to determine the sequence and resources used for the summer and school year professional learning sessions. The roadmap outlined meetings scheduled for the summer and the 2015-2016 school year while the instructional playbook outlined the instructional plan and how we sought to operate as a team for the 2015-2016 school year. After the team completed the summer sessions and was operating as a more cohesive group, the PDT solidified the instructional focus and each member selected an individual goal they wanted to work on that aligned with the school-wide instructional focus. Social trust was enhanced as team members were provided opportunities to have broader involvement in achieving the instructional focus (Beck & Murphy, 1996). The PDT summer training materials can be found with Appendix C.

### **The Reimagining Professional Learning Innovation Grant**

The Reimagining Professional Learning Innovation Grant sponsored by the state's DOE was written by the PDT to support the school-wide instructional focus on literacy. The grant thoroughly explained why the team decided to select literacy as the instructional focus. Also, it defined the PDT as the primary group responsible for developing the online and face-to-face professional development sessions, monitoring implementation, and analyzing data to determine progress. The grant resulted in \$40,000 awarded to St. Georges to support the three-year school-wide professional development plan focusing on literacy.

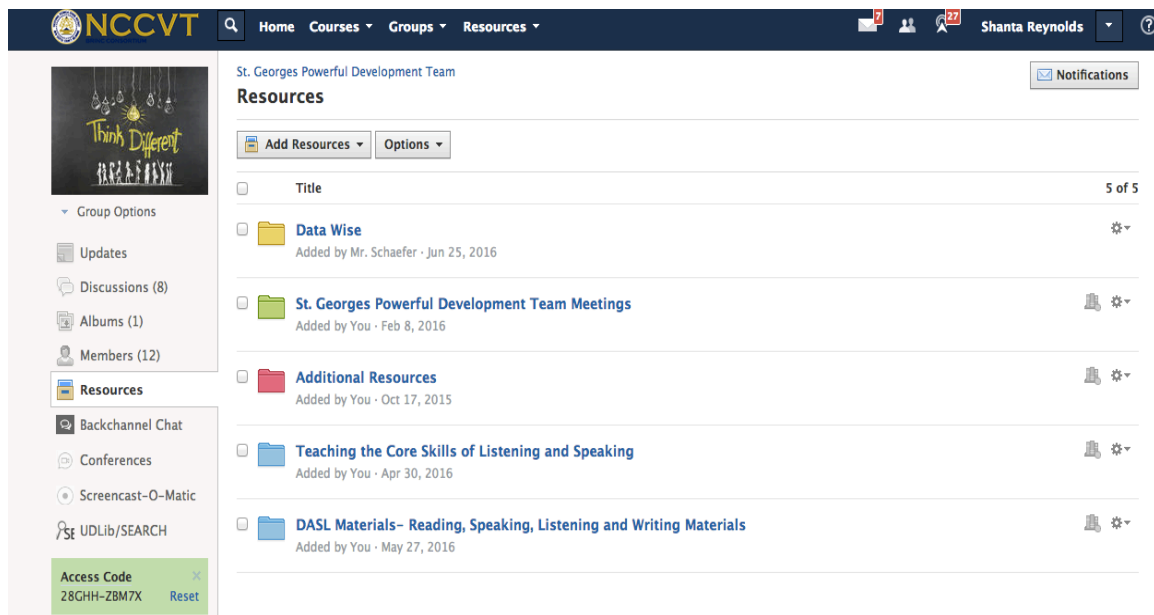
After gaining experience with working on individual goals that aligned with the instructional focus, the team worked together to analyze data to identify the learner-centered problem and to create an action plan to address a school-wide issue. The team met during after-school sessions to collaboratively complete the grant application. Prior to submitting the grant, department chairs reviewed and vetted the application to ensure the expectations were reasonable and aligned to all areas. The team's approach to completing the grant supports Spillane's (2006) research on distributive leadership. Spillane believes that in addition to the principal's own skillful leadership, benefit exists in sharing decision-making responsibilities by drawing on expertise wherever it exists in the organization (e.g. other principals, teachers, parents, etc.). The team also allocated time in the summer to present the grant and action plan to district leaders in NCCVT and outside partners (i.e. Delaware Academy for School Leadership - DASL). The plan was fine-tuned based on their feedback. The PDT also received professional learning on critical elements relevant to the grant (i.e. working with the adult learner, providing literacy training, supporting a high-functioning team, etc.). The Reimagining Professional Learning Innovation Grant can be found with Appendix D.

### **Powerful Development Team Schoology Sites**

The PDT Schoology group is an online platform that hosts team members' profiles, agendas, readings, training videos, and other resources relevant to leadership and the - focus on literacy. Schoology is a learning management system (LMS) for K-12 schools, higher education institutions, and corporations that allows users to create, manage, and share content and resources (Schoology, 2018). The team was encouraged

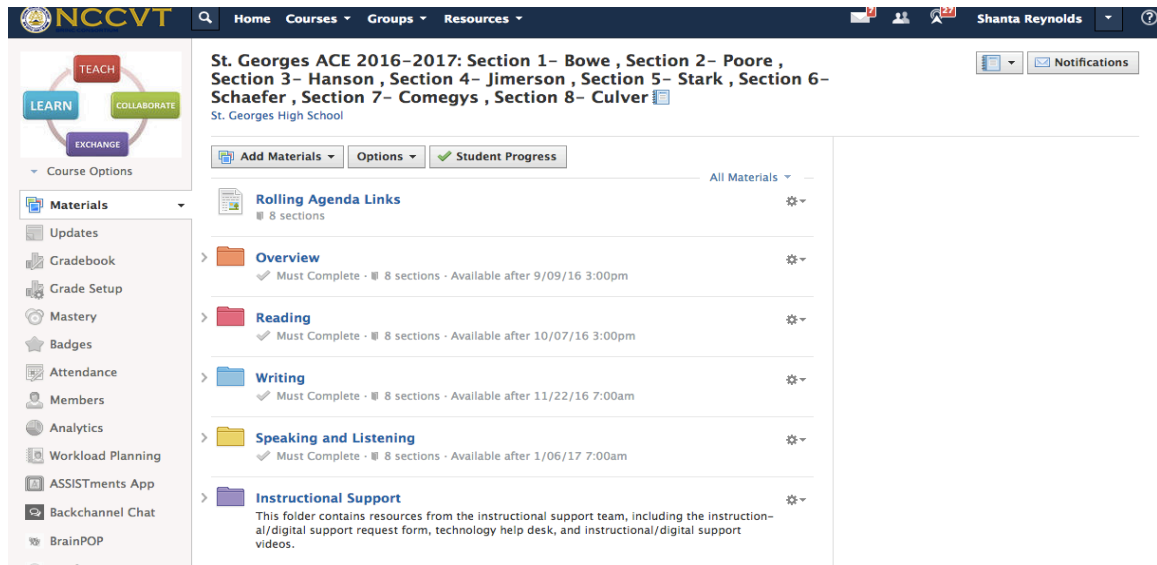
to submit comments on the discussion board and add relevant resources to foster collegiality and feedback. This site was primarily used to disseminate information to the team about next steps in initiatives and to store helpful resources to assist the team. The Schoology site was also designed to get the team accustomed to working and designing courses on the Schoology platform. Developing a Schoology page is a step that is listed on the logic model, see Figure 2 below.

The team used the experience gained from designing the PDT Schoology site to design modules for the school-wide focus on literacy. Specifically, the team designed reading, writing, speaking, and listening modules for teachers to complete every other week in their ACE (Action, Collaboration, Evidence) professional learning community meetings, see Figure 3 below.



*Figure 2.* A screenshot of the Schoology page used by the PDT to disseminate useful information and to store resources to assist the team.

A video was designed to help teachers navigate through the course and to show them how to submit assignments. Designing modules on Schoology was a step outlined in the Reimagining Professional Learning Innovation Grant action plan. Additional images of the Schoology page and the linked video tutorial can be found in Appendix E.



*Figure 3.* A screenshot of the reading, writing, speaking and listening modules for teachers to complete every other week in their professional learning community ACE (Action, Collaboration, Evidence) meetings.

### **Distributive Leadership: Implications for the Role of the Principal Video**

Usdan, McCloud, and Podmostko (2000) reported that principals' responsibilities have increased, and the job has become more complex due to accountability demands for improved student achievement. Principals typically work 10-hour days, and many believe the job is just not doable as it is configured now. The distributive leadership implication for the role of the principal video provides an overview of the duties and responsibilities of being a high school principal from the perspective of two principals that work in the NCCVT School District. Dr. Stanley Spoor, principal of Howard High School of Technology, and Dr. Clifton Hayes, principal of Delcastle Technical High School, explain the importance of building the leadership capacity in the building and

discuss some of the barriers to distributive leadership. The video also captures the perspectives of two instructors, Mr. J. W. and Mr. N. S., who are members of the PDT. They discuss the initiatives they are working on, the support they are receiving from the building level administration, and the impact they are experiencing as teacher leaders. The video highlights the increasing complexity and demands of being a high school principal and proposes the use of distributed leadership to make decision-making more collaborative and the job of the principal doable. The video was created to make the superintendent, Dr. Vicki Gehrt, and the NCCVT board of education aware of the distributive leadership initiative at St. Georges. The Distributive Leadership: Implications for the Role of the Principal video can be found with Appendix F.

### **Building Leadership Capacity**

This section houses artifacts used to build capacity. The last step in the process was to open additional leadership positions to support the instructional focus. This section is centered on continuing the process of building the leadership capacity. This section includes the Building Leadership Capacity MINDMAP, Leadership Team Structure, and Literacy Target Sheet.

### **Building Leadership Capacity Mind Map**

The building leadership capacity mind map illustrates the input, activities, and outcomes for the PDT, Instructional Leadership Team (ILT), Instructional Coaches, and Steering Committee. This tool assisted with ensuring that each group supported each other in achieving the instructional focus on literacy. The mind map also indicated the resources needed for each group to accomplish their goals. I created this map so that the

teams had an overarching view of the training and work which needed to be accomplished during 2015-2016 school year. The mind map was created using ConceptDraw MINDMAP software (CS Odessa, 2018).

The first main component listed on the logic model is “Inputs.” Inputs are the resources needed to successfully develop the program. The resources listed ranged from establishing groups to providing professional development to identifying the instructional focus.

The second major component listed on the logic model is “Activities.” The activities are the program events or strategies used to accomplish the program goals. The activities ranged from establishing a strong team to providing the training for the team to writing a grant and establishing a communication plan for stakeholders.

The last major component listed is the outcomes. The outcomes section indicated the goals accomplished by a successful program. The following goals were listed:

- Give teachers the opportunity to take on leadership roles while still serving in the classroom
- Enhance the skills of teacher leaders to increase the leadership capacity in the building
- Teacher leaders will know how to operate as a cohesive team
- Clear instructional focus and professional development plan
- Teacher leaders will know their roles and responsibilities in building a healthy organization

The building of the leadership capacity mind map can be found with Appendix G.

## **Leadership Team Structure and Literacy Target Sheet**

The leadership team structure and literacy target sheet provides an overview of the roles and responsibilities for each group at St. Georges as they relate to the literacy focus. This tool is also important for ensuring that the groups are supporting each other in accomplishing the instructional focus. I created this sheet to reassure the groups that we were all working together to meet the instructional focus on literacy. This document was distributed to each group. The PDT, ILT, and learning coaches were the three teams developed as a result of the focus to build leadership capacity. The creation of these teams and the work they did serves as an example of distributive leadership because they were engaged with executing, supporting, and sustaining the instructional focus on literacy, technology, and mathematics. The following are more in-depth details about the ILT and learning coaches that are not included on the leadership team structure sheet. As stated, these teams assisted with the implementation and reinforcement of the instructional goals.

**Instructional leadership team.** The ILT was trained to work with the adult learning model and how to effectively facilitate a professional learning community. They were also trained on the literacy content that was delivered in their ACE groups. Every Tuesday, the instructional coaches met to prepare and simulate the professional learning for the following day's ACE groups. In addition, they also had an opportunity to discuss highlights and barriers they previously encountered in their ACE groups and to receive feedback from their peers and administrators. They actively determined topics for the



upcoming professional development days based on the needs communicated by the staff during the ACE group meetings.

**Instructional practice coaches.** The instructional practice coaches were responsible for improving the instructional practice of fellow educators using a variety of high-impact support strategies focused on frequent, targeted feedback in each educator's development area. These strategies included co-planning, co-teaching, modeling, lesson planning, and observing (non-evaluative). There were two coaches who focused primarily on supporting the goals for the school's instructional focus on literacy. The instructional coaches received training based on Jim Knight's (2009) work on *Instructional Coaching* and participated in the training provided for the ILT. The instructional practice coaches received 90-minutes of daily release time for one semester as compensation for their services.

**Digital practice coaches.** The digital content coaches were tasked with helping educators build their knowledge of instructional technology and impactful employment of digital instructional resources to improve student academic outcomes. In addition to researching and modeling best practices with their own students, digital content coaches connected educators with appropriate technology resources and hosted professional learning sessions about integrating digital content and technology into instruction. The digital coaches assisted with preparing the staff for the district one-to-one initiative that will be launched during the 2018-2019 school year. The two digital coaches received training based on Jim Knight's (2009) work on *Instructional Coaching* and participated

in the training provided for the ILT. The digital coaches also received 90-minutes of daily release time for one semester.

**Instructional technology coach.** The instructional technology coach assisted classroom teachers with incorporating digital platforms into their lesson plans. Moreover, the coach supported teachers with integrating effective strategies using multiple technologies to differentiate, personalize, and enhance student learning. The instructional technology coach is a full-time position. This individual works closely with the digital leads on completing their tasks. The tech coach worked with the digital coaches, ILT, and instructional coaches to ensure a clear connection between the school-wide instructional focus on literacy and the district focus on incorporating more technology in the classroom. The instructional technology coach also participated in school and district professional development focusing on literacy, technology, and leadership.

**Research lead/literacy coach.** This coach conducted research on literacy strategies highlighted in the online modules that were created for the ACE groups. This coach served as the school's point of contact pertaining to the instructional focus on literacy and worked with the Delaware Academy of School Leadership (DASL) to identify resources that aligned with the ACE modules. The research lead coach established a system to collect and analyze data on the effectiveness of the literacy modules created for the ACE groups. The coach worked closely with the ILT and all other coaches and spent most of her time assisting and training the ILT and instructional coaches, as well as participating in the school-level professional development sessions.

In 2017-2018, this position was retitled to literacy coach. The position entailed the same responsibilities but with a more laser-like focus on literacy. This position eventually became a full-time position.

**Math coach.** The math coach worked solely with the math department. Analysis of district and state standardized math assessment data showed that mathematics was our weakest area. The math coach conducted research-based, content-focused coaching with the math department. Specifically, the math coach trained the math instructors in developing a classroom that promotes the conceptual understanding of mathematics. The math coach received training through the Delaware Mathematics Coalition and participated in the Jim Knight (2009) training. The math coach position eventually became a full-time position. The leadership team structure and literacy target sheet can be found with Appendix H.

## **Chapter 4**

### **IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY RESULTS**

The improvement strategies centered on achieving the instructional focus goals, increasing capacity and distributing leadership. Teachers and administrators worked collaboratively to: a) select leaders and establish the Powerful Development (PDT) Team, b) build leadership capacity, and c) teach leadership skills and literacy strategies. The improvement strategies resulted in the development of:

1. A qualified team of teachers willing to work collaboratively to accomplish the school-wide instructional goals.
2. Two teams (ILT and coaches) to support instructors to implement the school-wide instructional focus.
3. A fully trained PDT, versed in leadership skills and literacy strategies.
4. Three specific leadership teams-- the PDT, ILT, and coaches – whose work enhanced the instruction of teachers and increased student achievement.

#### **Qualified Team of Teachers**

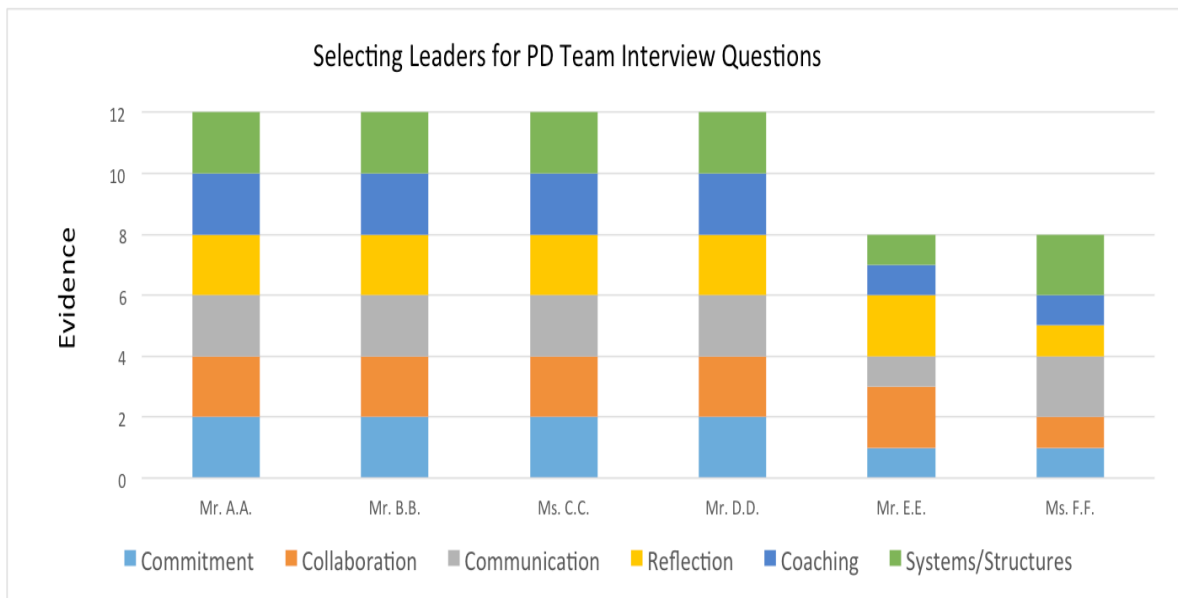
PDT members were selected through an application and interview process. The advertisement for becoming a PDT member, along with the job description, was posted in the weekly principal's newsletter for the month of April 2015. At the end of the month, there were six applicants. The applicants for the position were required to submit a brief

paragraph explaining how they would meet the requirements listed in the job description.

Next, all candidates were interviewed by a committee consisting the social studies, science and math department chairpersons, two assistant principals, and myself. Each candidate was required to answer a total of six questions. The questions focused on the following themes: Commitment, Collaboration, Communication Skills, Reflectiveness/Continuous Learning, and Adult/Learning/Coaching and Systems/Structure. The interview questions were:

1. *Commitment*: One of the priorities that school leadership has for this role is to promote and support the instructional focus on literacy. How would you help the school meet this priority? What actions would be most impactful?
2. *Collaboration*: Describe a time when you were part of a team of people with diverse perspectives. How did you work collaboratively with this group? What role did you take? What were some of the challenges you faced and how did you help resolve them?
3. *Communication Skills*: Consider a time when you had to give someone constructive feedback. How did you approach the conversation? What was the outcome?
4. *Reflectiveness/Continuous Learning*: What are your most important areas for development? How do you plan to improve in these areas?
5. *Adult Learning/Coaching*: Describe a time when you coached or provided feedback to another adult(s). Include the approach you used and why, along with how you assessed whether or not you were successful in delivering that feedback.
6. *Systems/Structures*: What do you believe are some common challenges associated with introducing a new form of technology into the school building? How would you address those challenges?

The committee members rated each candidate using a three-point scale consisting of Limited Evidence (0), Sufficient Evidence (1), and Abundant Evidence (2). The results of how each candidate performed on the interview questions are shown in Figure 4. Four of the six candidates (Mr. A. A., Mr. B. B., Ms. C. C. and Mr. D. D.) scored 2 (Abundant Evidence) on each of the six interview questions. Two candidates (Mr. E. E. and Ms. F. F.) scored a one on four questions and a two on the remaining questions. The committee selected the four candidates with perfect scores to serve on the PDT. The team of eight were comprised of the four candidates and four administrators.



*Figure 4.* Candidate interview scoring per topic.

I met with each candidate to review the purpose and expectations of the PDT and received acknowledgement from each candidate via signed job descriptions. I also met with Mr. E. E. and Ms. F. F. who were not selected to provide feedback from the

committee and to encourage them to apply for other upcoming leadership positions.

### **Two Teams Supporting Instructors**

As suggested by Marks and Printy (2003), veteran teacher leaders served as additional thought partners to provide feedback and another layer of support for the team. After the PDT was established, I added two additional tiers to support teachers with learning and implementing literacy strategies. As described in Table 3, there are three teams that hold various responsibilities to support the school in achieving its instructional focus.

Table 3

*Breakdown of Members, Roles, and Responsibilities Per Team*

Team	Members	Number	Responsibilities	Year Established
PDT	Admin and Teachers	8	Steering committee for literacy initiative and ACE facilitators	2015
ILT	Teachers	8	ACE facilitators	2016
Learning Coaches	Teachers	6	In-class teacher support on major initiatives	2016

I utilized the school budget and requested assistance from the superintendent to create learning coach positions. Six learning coaches assisted teachers with implementing effective strategies into their daily practice. During the 2016-2017 school year, the learning coaches were responsible for supporting teachers during the school day with the implementation of literacy, technology and math strategies. Specifically, they co-taught, assisted with lesson planning, observed teachers, and provided them with

formative feedback on their lesson plans. The coaches created a logic model to guide their work and to help them visualize the instructional focus (see Figure 5).

**Name:** Mrs. D.P. and Mr. J.C.  
**Situation:** Instructional Coach Action Plan (2016-2018)

**Green Outcomes: Complete**  
**Yellow Outcomes: In Progress**  
**Red Outcomes: Not Started**

Inputs	Outputs		Outcomes – Impact		
	Activities	Participation	Short	Medium	Long
Hawk to Hawk Support Committee (or ACE Meetings)	Work with Mrs. C.S. and Ms. C.J. to facilitate the meetings with the ILT to support the literacy initiative	Mrs. D.P., Mr. J.C., Mrs. C.S., and Ms. C.J.	Establish an open forum to discuss the ACES meetings and receive professional development to support the instructional initiative	The committee will work as a unified support system that directly impacts teachers' instruction.	Together the committee will be able to provide all teachers with the necessary support to implement the literacy focus  Survey data will be collected to help determine the effectiveness of this committee
Hawk to Hawk Help Page (add to the online module)	The instructional coaches will monitor and develop the help page. The forum will provide teachers with direct access to videos, presentations, articles and other online resources to support the literacy focus. The page will also serve as a help desk for active Q & A.	Mrs. D.P., Mr. J.C., Mrs. C.S., and Ms. C.J.	Develop the page with general resources to support the instructional focus  The Q & A function of the page is up and running	The instructional focus resources posted on the page are tailored to specific content/career areas  Teachers are asking questions and receiving support from the instructional coach	All of the content/career areas have resources posted that are aligned with their area  The Q & A function is open so that the school community can address each others questions and post resources
Literacy professional development sessions aligned with the content discussed in the ACE meetings	Interactive professional develop sessions after school once a month to support the literacy focus. The PD session will be recorded and uploaded within a week of being presented.	Mrs. D.P., Mr. J.C., Mrs. C.S., and Ms. C.J.	5 % (5) of staff will attend and further their understanding of the literacy focus in a personalized learning environment	10% (10) of staff will attend and further their understanding of the literacy focus in a personalized learning environment	15% (15) of staff will attend and further their understanding of the literacy focus in a personalized learning environment

Figure 5. Instructional Coaches Action Plan for the 2016-2017 school year.

The logic model outlines the goals and activities developed by the team. The logic model notes the short-term, medium, and long-term outcomes. The outcomes highlighted in green have been accomplished. The outcomes in yellow indicate that coaches are in the process of completing the work, and those listed in red indicate that the coaches have not started yet. Figure 6 shows the coaches have completed the short-term outcomes. It illustrates that all but one of the medium-term outcomes have been completed. The medium outcome that focuses on the instructional resources is being



tailored to specific content and career areas which have not been started. The long-term outcomes vary with four outcomes complete, three in progress, and one incomplete. The incomplete goal focuses on all teachers having resources available and aligned to their areas.

Name: Donna Poore and Justin Comegys  
 Situation: Instructional Coach Action Plan (2016-2018)

Green Outcomes: Complete  
 Yellow Outcomes: In Progress  
 Red Outcomes: Not Started

Inputs	Outputs		Outcomes – Impact		
	Activities	Participation	Short	Medium	Long
Open Lab Classroom	- Develop a schedule to work with teachers throughout the school day and for teachers to come view their class During M.P. 1 and 2 there will be three 45 minutes periods per day when the instructional coach will be available for collaboration, assistance and classroom observation - Present position/resources to staff via video	Mrs. D.P., Mrs. J.C., Mrs. C.S., and Ms. C.J.	Connect 10% of the educators with literacy strategies and professional learning that will enhance their instruction  Create the script for the video	Connect 15% of the educators with literacy strategies and professional learning that will enhance their instruction  Develop the first draft of the video	Connect 20% of the educators with literacy strategies and professional learning that will enhance their instruction  Complete the video and send the video to the staff in September 2016.
Digital Resources (Hawk Highlights and Parent Newsletter)	Provide tips, strategies or teacher highlights for the Hawk Highlights	Mrs. D.P., Mrs. J.C., Mrs. C.S., and Ms. C.J.	Provide information for the Hawk Highlights once a month	Provide information for the Hawk Highlights biweekly	Provide information once a week.

Figure 6. Progress for Instructional Coaches Action Plan for the 2016-2017 school year.

A newly designed Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) was created and responsible for facilitating the professional learning communities, which were renamed Action, Collaboration, and Evidence (ACE). The instructors serving on the ILT were responsible for leading nine ACE groups consisting of approximately ten faculty members. The ACE meetings concentrated on strategies to increase student literacy by focusing on reading, writing, and speaking/listening with an emphasis on analysis. Each

Tuesday, the ILT met with the PDT and coaches to review the content to be presented the following day. Figure 7 is an example of the agenda used to train the ILT to facilitate the weekly ACE meetings. This ILT meeting involved establishing norms, fostering team building, clarifying procedures, and planning.

**St. Georges Technical High School**

**Topic: Instructional Leadership Team Meeting**  
**June 15, 2016 8:00am -11:30am**

**Meeting Purpose:** The purpose of this session is to provide the instructional leadership team with the necessary skills to effectively facilitate weekly PLCs so that collaboration and shared learning will translate to increased student performance.

**Attendees:** ILT, PD Team, and Administrators

**Facilitator:** Kalia Reynolds

**Note Taker:** Christine Schumacher

**Time keeper:** Donna Poore

**Clarifier:** Shanta Reynolds

**Meeting Objectives**

- Identify the 3 big ideas of a PLC
- Discuss the 6 essential characteristics of a PLC
- Establish the frameworks to be used for establishing agendas, norms, and meeting protocols
- Create simulation experiences for how to debrief and summarize a meeting, as well as what to do when a meeting isn't going as planned

**Next steps from previous meeting**

- This is our first ILT training session

**Schedule (240 minutes)**

Time	Min	Activity						
8:00-8:15	15	Introduction and Agenda						
8:15-8:25	10	Hopes & Fears Protocol						
8:25-8:45	20	PLC Overview						
8:45-8:55	10	Purpose of the PLC						
8:55-9:05	10	Building Blocks & Team Checklist						
9:05-9:25	20	<u>Compass Points Protocol</u>						
9:25-9:40	15	Break						
9:40-9:55	15	Developing Norms/Plus Delta Protocol						
9:55-10:25	30	Team Structures & Examples						
10:25-10:40	15	Building Foundations of a PLC						
10:40-11:00	20	Plan First Meeting Agenda						
11:00-11:15	15	Closing Protocol- I Used to Think but Now I Think...						
11:15-11:20	5	Considerations/Follow-up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How will documents be organized and shared with team members?</li><li>• How does the work of the PLC impact the school's goals and focus areas?</li></ul>						
11:20-11:30	10	Assess what worked well and what didn't in this meeting <table><tr><th>+</th><th>▲</th></tr><tr><th>(What worked well)</th><th>(What to change in future meetings)</th></tr><tr><td>•</td><td>•</td></tr></table>	+	▲	(What worked well)	(What to change in future meetings)	•	•
+	▲							
(What worked well)	(What to change in future meetings)							
•	•							

Figure 7. Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) Meeting Agenda

Figure 8 is an example of the agenda that was used by the ILT for the face-to-face week two ACE meeting. The meeting agenda provided the topics, roles, objectives, preparation requirements, and timeframes. It concluded with a protocol to help participants determine what went well during the meeting and what needed improvement.


<b>St. Georges Technical High School</b> ACE Overview Face to Face Week 2 7:35-8:05		
Topic: <b>Overview Online Module</b>		Facilitator: Note taker: Timekeeper:
Meeting Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creation of a definition and an understanding of 21st century learning skills</li> <li>To discuss and assess St. Georges 21st century literacy and learning practices</li> </ul>		
To Prepare For This Meeting, Please: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete the Week 1 Online Module</li> </ul>		
Schedule: 30 minutes		
Time	Minutes	Activity
7:35-7:40	5	21st century education YouTube video with discussion following about literacy and education
7:40-7:50	10	Break ACE participants into small groups to read and share personal definitions of 21st century learning skills by educators
7:50-8:05	15	Major takeaways that pertain to St. Georges (Plus/Delta Protocol)
<b>Plus/Delta Protocol</b>		
<b>Plus+</b>		<b>Delta</b> 
•		•

Figure 8. ACE Overview Face-to-Face Week Two Meeting Agenda

## Team Training on Leadership Skills and Literacy Strategies

The team received training on leadership skills and literacy strategies. This training prepared them to facilitate professional learning that would enhance both student and teacher performance. This section includes a program evaluation of the leadership training that was conducted with the PDT. Survey results revealed the impact of the

team's preparedness to facilitate ACE meetings and to provide professional learning pertaining to the instructional focus. The summary of the PDT 's achievement video will provide an overview of some of the initiatives that PDT implemented and the results. In addition, the SAT results are included as an indicator of increased student achievement.

### **Leadership Skills**

**Program evaluation.** A program evaluation was conducted to gather information related to the training of the PDT at St. Georges and to assess the organizational health of the school. One of the major skills the PDT learned was how to create a healthy organization using the four disciplines outlined in Lencioni's (2012) book *The Advantage*:

Discipline 1: Build A Cohesive Leadership Team

Discipline 2: Create Clarity

Discipline 3: Over-communicate Clarity

Discipline 4: Reinforce Clarity

Using the framework of the four disciplines, the program evaluation considered the following two questions:

*Process Question:* To what degree did the training that I delivered help teacher leaders and administrators know how to execute Lencioni's four-disciplines model discussed in the book *The Advantage*?

*Outcome Question:* What percentage of teacher leaders and administrators believe that St. Georges Technical High School is a healthy organization (e.g., rubric score of 4 or higher)?

## **Method**

An interview was conducted with eight St. Georges Technical High School team members (4 administrators and 4 teachers) that are part of the PDT. They responded to the following 5 questions:

1. The team building training you participated in last summer was based on the four disciplines (building a cohesive team, create clarity, over-communicate clarity, and reinforce clarity) discussed in the book “The Advantage.” What aspects of the training did you feel were most beneficial in helping you execute the four-disciplines model? Why?
2. What training was least beneficial? Why?
3. Which discipline do you feel more training is needed? Why?
4. What changes or improvements to training would you suggest to the facilitator?
5. How will or did you use the four disciplines to improve the health of our organization?

## **Results**

See Appendix I for the results of the five questions. Three questions were selected where at least 88% of the respondents selected the same opportunity or result based on the prompt. Questions one through three are highlighted in this section of the report.

Results in Table 4 show most of the administrators and teachers believed that one of the most beneficial aspects of the summer training on the four disciplines was building a cohesive team by participating in team building activities and events. A teacher reported,

I felt the relationship-building portion was important. Going to the ASCD conference in Nashville, completing the personality survey, talking about our

personal stories and participating in team building activities helped the team come together as a cohesive group that was ready to develop an instructional focus for the school year.

Teachers also valued learning about each other's individual strengths and weaknesses. A teacher noted,

Working together to learn our individual strengths and weaknesses was the most helpful part. It was good to identify who was on the team and how we could best work together. It set the stage for a good working relationship.

Table 4

*Most Beneficial Aspect of the Summer Training on Four Disciplines*

Opportunities	<i>n</i>	Percent of Administrator responses	<i>n</i>	Percent of Teacher responses
Building a cohesive team by participating in team building activities and events	3	75.0	4	100.0
Learning about each other's individual strengths and weaknesses	1	25.0	3	75.0
Creating clarity by developing an instructional playbook	1	25.0	2	50.0
Reading about the 5 dysfunctions of a team	1	25.0	0	0.0

In Table 5, most of the teachers and administrators identified that not spending enough time on developing a communication plan was least beneficial. A teacher stated,

I enjoyed the team building activities, but I believe other training was left aside. For example, we developed relationships and created a great instructional playbook, but we didn't spend enough time developing a staff communication plan.

Teachers also expressed that not enough time was allocated to establish clarity. A teacher noted,

The training, as a whole was beneficial. I have a difficult time with the words ‘least beneficial,’ so I will refer to the most difficult part of the training. Creating clarity takes time (possibly a year), and I do not think we were able to achieve ‘pure clarity.’ Personalities and egos, along with pride, stood in the way, and we just didn’t have enough time to break through it all.

Table 5

*Summer Training That was The Least Beneficial*

Opportunities	<i>n</i>	Percent of Administrator responses	<i>n</i>	Percent of Teacher responses
Not enough time allocated to developing a communication plan	3	75.0	4	100.0
Not enough time allocated to establishing clarity	1	25.0	3	75.0
More time was needed to catch up the individuals that missed the team building exercises	0	0.0	1	25.0
No response	1	25.0	0	0.0

In Table 6, all teachers and administrators believed that more training was needed on over-communicating clarity. An administrator noted,

I think we need to reinforce or communicate clarity throughout the year and in a consistent manner, so that the staff stays the course. Our staff starts the year knowing clearly what we represent as an organization, but then some get complacent, colleagues turn a blind eye, and now the clarity becomes tarnished. Reinforcing clarity will increase accountability, and we need more training on how to fully accomplish this discipline.



Teachers also felt that more training was needed on creating clarity. A teacher noted,

We need to revisit the training on creating clarity and communication. I think over the year we have forgotten some of the great things that happened during the summer training, which is completely understandable.

Table 6

*The Discipline Where More Training is Needed*

Opportunities	<i>n</i>	Percent of Administrator Responses	<i>n</i>	Percent of Teacher Responses
Building a cohesive team	1	25.0	1	25.0
Creating clarity	1	25.0	4	75.0
Over-communicating clarity	4	100.0	4	100.0
Reinforcing clarity	3	75.0	2	50.0

### Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the data collected on the process and outcome questions, it is evident that the training delivered to teacher leaders and administrators about executing the four disciplines needs improvement. There are a few major areas that need to be improved to enhance the effectiveness of the training. It is also noted that the health of St. Georges is not at the highest point and there are components that need to be addressed to maximize the successes of the organization.

Administrators and teachers agreed that allocating more time and training to developing clarity and establishing a communication plan were areas that needed improvement. Allocating more attention to clarity and communication were reoccurring

themes in the findings as they relate to not enough training provided in the summer (refer to Table 4 and 5) and changes or improvements to the training (refer to Table 6).

Building a cohesive team and creating clarity were identified as the strongest disciplines applied at St. Georges, earning a medium rating. Improvements need to be made in all four disciplines for St. Georges to obtain a healthy rating. The discipline with the lowest rating is over-communicating clarity. It makes sense that this was an area of weakness identified in the organizational health summary because it was established that summer training was lacking in over-communicating clarity.

### **Leadership and Literacy Strategies:**

#### **ELP Survey Overview**

**Purpose of the evaluation.** The purpose of the survey was to gather information about the impact of the trainings on the PDT's preparedness to facilitate ACE meetings and provide professional learning pertaining to the instructional focus. The survey also provided information about the effectiveness of the PDT in guiding the implementation of the school-wide instructional focus.

**Training overview.** PDT team members underwent training and team building activities throughout the year. They learned more about each other's personalities, work preferences, strengths, and weaknesses. They learned to support each other through a process of continual improvement. To build the collaborative culture, they completed and discussed the results of the Myers-Briggs personality assessment and a Compass Points leadership protocol, set personal goals for themselves, and learned how to employ the Meeting Wise agenda and protocols (establishing group norms, five why's problem

solving tool, and affinity protocol) to organize the team's expected body of work. The group had bi-weekly morning meetings to discuss the initiatives and progress; afternoon training sessions were regularly scheduled and facilitated by an instructor, administrators, or an outside consultant. The professional development sessions focused on the following ideas:

- Facilitating discussions between two or more people when opinions vary, and emotions run strong.
- Developing and executing a comprehensive plan for enhancing instruction and student learning.
- Training on research-based literacy strategies and other instructional strategies that impact student learning.
- Applying the six essential characteristics of a PLC to the ACE model.

With a focus on sharpening the team's skill sets, each PDT member selected an attainable goal that required collaboration and was aligned with an identified need at St. Georges. Goals selected by the PDT members included teaching stakeholders about the growth mindset, creating collaborative learning opportunities for administrators and teachers, and organizing peer-to-peer walkthroughs. These "low hanging" areas of need gave the PDT members an opportunity to lead and utilize the skills learned from participating in their professional development sessions.

In striving to reach St. Georges' robust vision, the team applied for and received the Reimagining Professional Learning Grant from the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) in 2016 (DDOE, 2017). The \$40,000 grant provided stipends for PDT members working on the initiative (DDOE, 2017). It also funded training from the

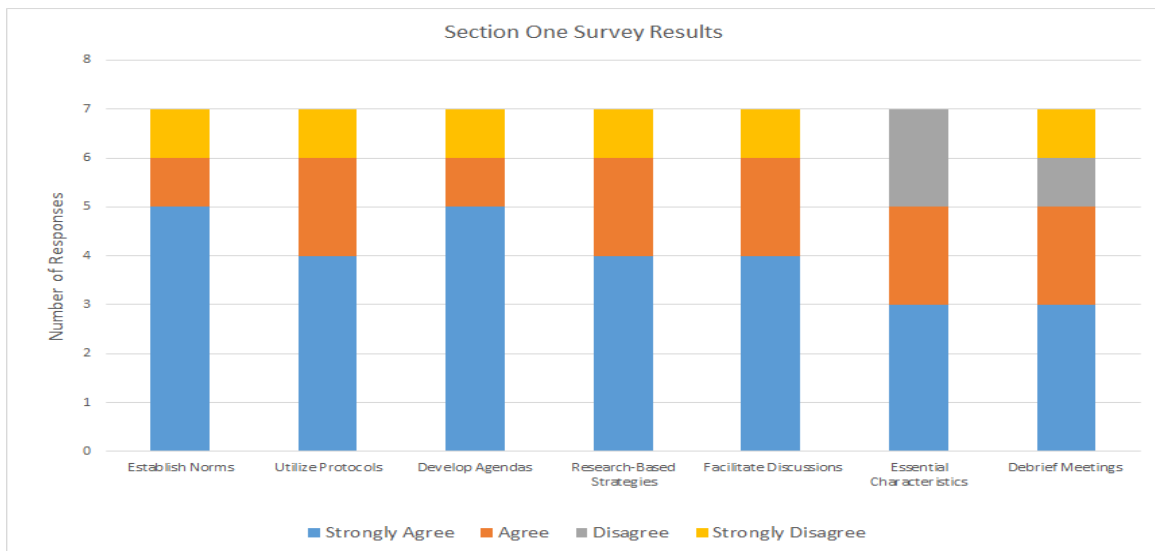
Delaware Academy of School Leadership (DASL). With a portion of the grant funds, we were able to purchase innovative technology to be used in the classroom to support the instructional focus. Writing the grant was a collaborative task during the spring of 2015-2016. As part of the grant writing process, the PDT analyzed data that indicated literacy needed to be the primary instructional focus. As a result, the St. Georges' three-year school-wide literacy focus began to emerge. After the action plan was solidified, the PDT developed online modules to guide the weekly ACE (Action, Collaborate, Evidence) meetings with faculty. Throughout this process, the PDT had an opportunity to learn and grow by leading a group of passionate educators to strive to reach our vision.

## **Results**

The first section of the survey pertained to training the PDT to facilitate morning ACE meetings. They responded to the following questions written in statement form:

1. Being a part of the instructional leadership team at St. Georges Technical High School has provided me with the skills to establish norms to help the group participate in a manner that is respectful, as well as conducive to effective feedback.
2. Being a part of the instructional leadership team at St. Georges Technical High School has provided me with the skills to utilize protocols that guide meaningful, efficient communication, problem-solving, and learning.
3. Being a part of the instructional leadership team at St. Georges Technical High School has provided me with the skills to develop agendas that establish structured meetings.
4. Being a part of the instructional leadership team at St. Georges Technical High School has provided me with the skills to identify appropriate researched-based strategies that will impact student learning.

5. Being a part of the instructional leadership team at St. Georges Technical High School has provided me with the skills to facilitate discussions between two or more people when opinions vary, and emotions run strong.
6. Being a part of the instructional leadership team at St. Georges Technical High School has provided me with the skills to apply the six essential characteristics of a PLC to the ACE model.
7. Being a part of the instructional leadership team at St. Georges Technical High School has provided me with the skills to debrief and summarize meetings, as well as what to do when a meeting isn't going as planned.



*Figure 9.* Responses to section one of the ILT end-of-year survey pertaining to training the instructional leadership team to facilitate ACE meetings.

Respondents indicated their agreement with each statement based on a 4-point Likert-type scale (1-strongly agree, 2-agree, 3-disagree, 4-strongly disagree). Figure 9 indicates that respondents generally agreed with the statements. The average Likert-type scale score for each of the questions, 1 - 7, was 1.57, 1.71, 1.57, 1.71, 1.71, 1.86, and 2.00 respectively. The statements that the respondents most agreed with were being

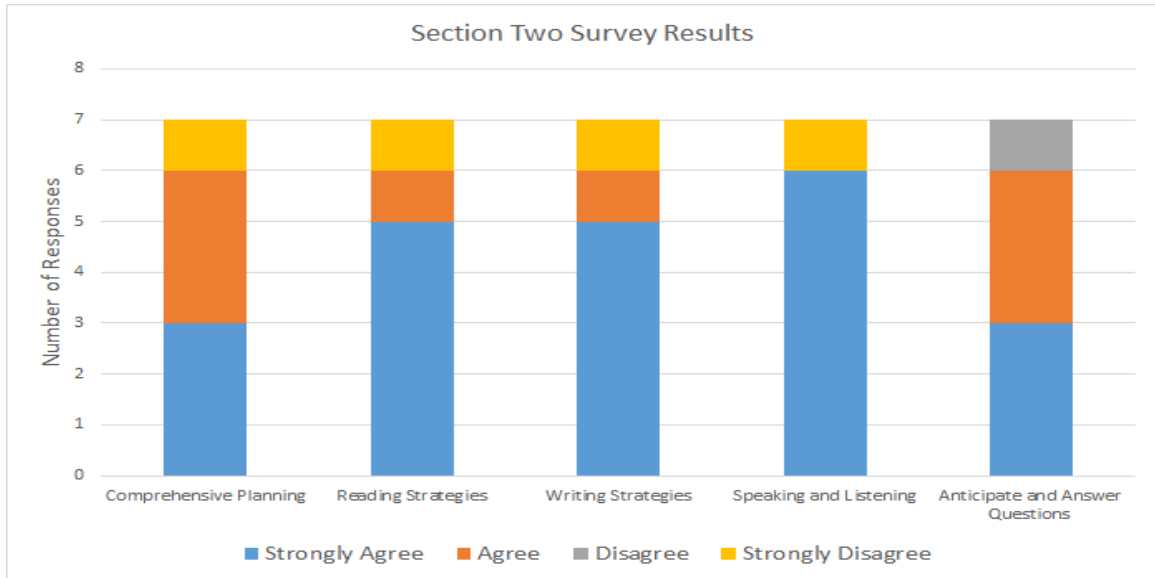
trained to establish norms and to establish agendas. The statements that respondents least likely agreed with concerned being trained to debrief and summarize meetings and to respond when meetings did not go as planned.

The second section of the survey pertained to training the PDT to provide professional learning on the instructional focus. They responded to the following questions written in statement form:

8. Being a part of the instructional leadership team at St. Georges Technical High School has provided me with the knowledge to develop and execute a comprehensive plan for enhancing instruction and student learning.
9. Being a part of the instructional leadership team at St. Georges Technical High School has provided me with the knowledge to provide training on researched-based reading strategies.
10. Being a part of the instructional leadership team at St. Georges Technical High School has provided me with the knowledge to provide training on researched-based writing strategies.
11. Being a part of the instructional leadership team at St. Georges Technical High School has provided me with the knowledge to provide training on researched-based speaking and listening strategies.
12. Being a part of the instructional leadership team at St. Georges Technical High School has provided me with the knowledge to anticipate and answer questions related to the instructional focus.

Figure 10 below indicates general agreement with the statements. Average Likert-type scale scores for statements 8 - 12 were 1.86, 1.57, 1.57, 1.43, and 1.71 respectively. Participants expressed the strongest agreement with their ability to provide training on research-based speaking and listening skills as a result of their involvement in the ILT. They expressed the least agreement with the statement pertaining to their ability

to develop and execute a comprehensive plan for enhancing instruction and student learning as a result of the training they received.



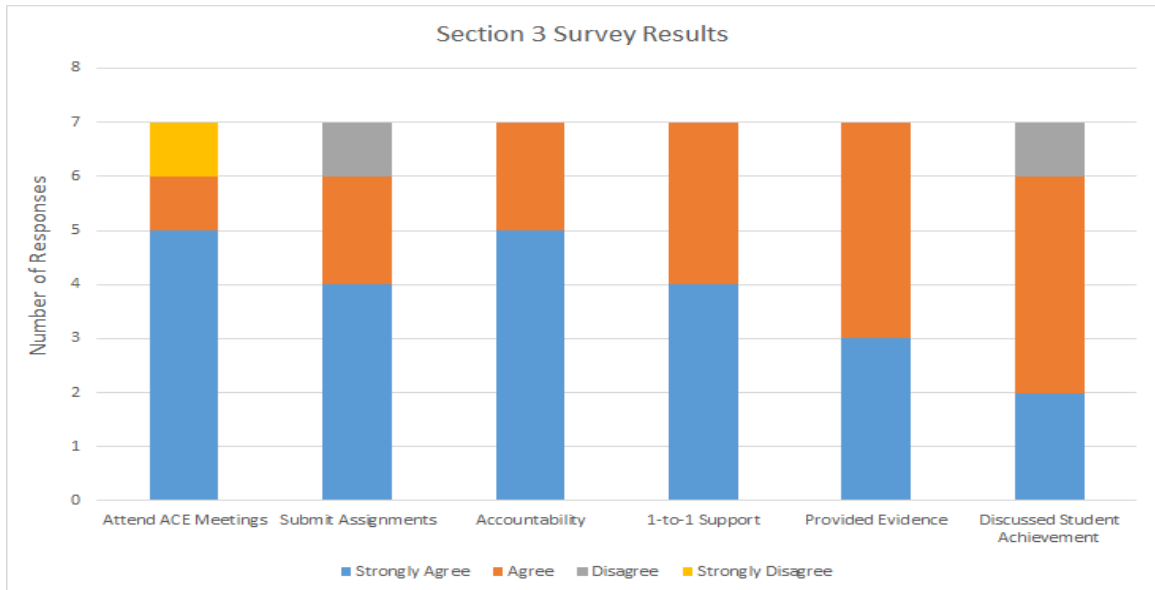
*Figure 10.* Responses to section two of the ILT end of year survey pertaining to training to provide professional learning on the instructional focus.

The third section of the survey pertained to the overall impact the leadership team had on guiding the implementation of the school-wide instructional focus. Respondents answered the following questions written in statement form:

13. The staff at St. Georges Technical High School have attended the ACE meetings.
14. The staff at St. Georges Technical High School have submitted the required assignments.
15. The staff at St. Georges Technical High School are being held accountable by the administration to attend and submit required assignments.
16. The staff at St. Georges Technical High School receives one-on-one support from the instructional coaches and ACE facilitators on implementing the instructional focus.

17. The staff at St. Georges Technical High School provided evidence that the research-based strategies are being implemented into their lessons.

18. The staff at St. Georges Technical High School have discussed how the research-based strategies have improved student achievement.



*Figure 11.* Responses to section three of the ILT end of year survey pertaining to impacts of the leadership team’s implementation of the school-wide instructional focus.

Figure 11 indicates general agreement with the statements; however, there is slightly less favorable agreement with these statements than with the statements in the other sections. Average Likert-type scale scores for statements 13 - 18 are 1.57, 1.57, 1.29, 1.43, 1.57, and 1.86 respectively. The statement that respondents most strongly agreed with was about administration holding staff members accountable for attending ACE meetings and submitting required assignments. The statement that respondents least agreed with was discussing how the research-based strategies learned have improved student achievement.



## **Results**

The PDT's intended outcome was to increase the leadership capacity in the building to accomplish our goals aligned with the school-wide instructional focus on literacy. After the recruitment of PDT members, the objective was to increase the leadership capacity in the building by preparing the recruited faculty members to facilitate and provide professional learning on the instructional focus. Based on the survey results, most of the PDT members believed that they were provided the skills and knowledge to guide and deliver training on the instructional focus. The PDT also believed that they had a positive impact on the implementation of the school-wide instructional focus on literacy. The training enabled the PDT to develop a strategic plan, find funding to support the plan, and create face-to-face and online modules on literacy. Because of the trainings, the PDT members were able to establish productive working groups around protocols and to build a system that held all staff members accountable for completing and submitting the assignments. Based on discussions held during the ACE meetings and the evidence submitted by staff members, students are demonstrating that they have a clearer and deeper understanding of the content and skills being taught in the core content areas. The training received by the PDT had a positive impact on teacher learning which led to increased student achievement focused on literacy at St. Georges. The ELP survey data overview can be found with Appendix K.

### **Summary of the Powerful Development Team's Achievement**

The summary of the PDT's achievement is a video highlighting the members of the PDT and the tasks that they have completed. The teachers and administrators

explained the details of their initiatives and the impact it has had on their professional growth. In addition, they discussed what it was like to be a part of the team and how the work has influenced the school environment. The video was shared at the NCCVT Board meeting where the team was recognized by the principal, superintendent, and the NCCVT Board of Education for its accomplishments. The Summary of the PDT's Achievement can be found with Appendix J.

### **Teacher Enhanced Instruction**

The PDT analyzed internal assessments and SAT scores from the 2015-2016 school year to determine the needed areas of focus around the implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). St. Georges did not meet the NCCVT district goal to have 80% of the students proficient on the SAT. NCCVTSD uses the SAT as a measure for college and career readiness. An analysis of the SAT's Evidenced-Based Reading and Writing (EBRW) scores indicated that only 56% of St. Georges' students met proficiency. Based on this data, it is evident that St. Georges needed to focus on literacy development to increase the number of students who are proficient on the EBRW of the SAT and meet or exceed the NCCVT and St. Georges goal. Furthermore, by working towards this goal, St. Georges worked to reduce the college remediation rate for its students. Based on the most recent data, 47% of students from St. Georges needed collegiate remediation.

This section highlights the effectiveness of the implemented literacy strategies. In monitoring this work, the administrative walkthroughs provided insight on how teachers

incorporated these strategies into their practice. Overall, students' success is evidenced by their performance on the SAT and PSAT.

### **Administrative Walkthroughs**

The team determined that literacy; with an emphasis on analysis and synthesis, was a logical starting point for professional learning based on college and career needs. The PDT implemented a three-phase professional development program personalized to the individual needs of each content and career area. The "Lessons in Literacy" initiative provided teachers with personalized learning opportunities. The initial awareness and introductory phase took place in the 2016-2017 school year.

In phase one, teachers worked in cross-curricular groups to develop an understanding of literacy and how the literacy initiative could be supported within their classroom. Ultimately, they chose a focus class to develop an implementation plan for teaching analysis skills in the areas of writing and speaking/listening.

In phase two (2017-2018), teachers worked collaboratively within the content and career areas to learn about and to develop discipline specific literacy strategies. During phase three (2017-2018), instructors implemented strategies into their classrooms and engaged in numerous cycles of inquiry focused on student data and the literacy initiative. Throughout this process, the PDT provided personalized, high-quality professional development to improve teacher practice and to increase the instructional prowess of the teachers, which in turn should lead to an increase in student achievement.

## **Results**

The walkthroughs conducted by the administrative team illustrate that instructors have improved their practice as it relates to implementing the research-based literacy strategies. The administrative team conducted 10-minute walkthroughs of the individuals that they supervise. It should be emphasized that the observer was in the class for ten minutes, so they may not have had the opportunity to observe some of the skills. Figure 12 is the walkthrough tool that the administrative team utilized to track instructors' progress on the implementation of the literacy strategies.

Level of classroom engagement has to do with students' willingness and desire to learn and to move forward with their learning. Level of classroom engagement was a major point of discussion during the ACE meetings. Teachers read articles about the topic and discussed best practices. The administrative team noted that students were highly engaged during the lesson observed.

I

Materials/Texts used:

What is the teacher doing?

What are the students doing?

Level of engagement? (To what extent are most of the students attentive to the teacher and/or to the task?)

0 (extremely disengaged) 1 (very disengaged) 2 (somewhat engaged) 3 (very engaged)  
4 (extremely engaged)

What behaviors do the non-engaged students exhibit?

What else do you notice? (Learning/classroom climate or culture, teacher/student talk, student comments, etc.?)

SG Expectations	Exemplary Practice	Ratings: 3=Evident, 2=On Track, 1=Not Used, N/O=Not Observed	NOTICE	WONDER
GRR	Teacher models strategy to show students how to comprehend and apply what they have read/learned			
GRR	Teacher asks questions to lead students to an idea/answer			
GRR <a href="#">GRR article</a> <a href="#">GRR video</a> <a href="#">GRR video 2</a>	Students engage in guided practice and receive feedback from the teacher			
Inquiry <a href="#">Inquiry Article</a> <a href="#">Inquiry Slides</a> <a href="#">Inquiry Video</a> <a href="#">Inquiry Video 2</a>	Students ask a variety of questions, make connections, and predictions			
Collaboration	Teacher uses strategies to engage all students in the classroom			
S&L <a href="#">PVLEGS article</a> <a href="#">PVLEGS Rubric</a>	Discussion about concepts and learning is balanced between students and teacher			





Action---Collaboration---Evidence

<a href="#">PVLEGS Rubric 2</a>				
S&L <a href="#">S&amp;L video</a>	Students are actively engaged in the learning through talk and collaboration			
S&L <a href="#">S &amp; L Article</a> <a href="#">S&amp;L Article 2</a> <a href="#">S&amp;L Article 3</a>	Students spend time reading and discussing the text			
Writing <a href="#">Summarizing Slides</a> <a href="#">Summarizing Slides 2</a>	Students spend time reading and writing about the text			
Summary <a href="#">Summarizing Article</a> <a href="#">Summarizing Article 2</a> <a href="#">Summarizing Video</a>	Students actively summarize what they have learned or read			
Evidence-Based	Students provide evidence of what they have learned or to support an answer			
Rigor <a href="#">Rigor Video</a>	Students engage in highly critical thinking			
Bell to Bell Instruction	Students use time effectively to process and reflect on information			

Figure 12. Literacy walkthrough tool used by the administrative team to assess teachers' implementation of literacy strategies.

Figure 13 shows that 80% of the time most of the students were very attentive or extremely attentive to the teacher and/or the task.





**4. Level of engagement? (To what extent are most of the students attentive to the teacher and/or to the task?)**

Response		Frequency	Percentage
0 (extremely disengaged)		0	0%
1(very disengaged)		5	4%
2(somewhat engaged)		19	16%
3(very engaged)		67	56%
4(extremely engaged)		28	24%

*Figure 13. Level of engagement.*

Gradual release of responsibility refers to the teachers slowly releasing responsibility to the learner. Fisher and Frey (2007) report that the gradual release of responsibility model of instruction is an effective approach for improving literacy achievement. During the ACE meetings, the teachers learned how to model lessons, ask questions, guide students learning, and provide feedback. Figure 14 shows that 29% of the time teachers were modeling strategies to show students how to comprehend and apply what they have read/learned. The data also shows that 41% of the time teachers were on-track to modeling strategies.





**7. Exemplary Practice - Teacher models strategy to show students how to comprehend and apply what they have read/learned**

Response		Frequency	Percentage
3 = Evident		35	29%
2 = On Track		49	41%
1 = Not Used		2	2%
N/O		33	28%

*Figure 14. Gradual release of responsibility: Modeling strategies.*

Figure 15 shows that 29% of the time teachers asked questions to lead students to an ideal/answer. The data also shows that 34% of the time teachers were on-track to asking questions to lead students to an ideal/answer.





**8. Exemplary Practice - Teacher asks questions to lead students to an idea/answer**

Response		Frequency	Percentage
3 = Evident		34	29%
2 = On Track		40	34%
1 = Not Used		2	2%
N/O		43	36%

*Figure 15. Gradual release of responsibility: Teaching by asking questions.*





Figure 16 notes that 31% of the time students were engaged in guided practice and received feedback from the teacher. The data also shows that 33% of the time students were on track to engage in guided practice and to receive feedback from the teacher. It should also be noted that 34% of the time this skill was not observed by the administrative team.

**9. Exemplary Practice - Students engage in guided practice and receive feedback from the teacher**

Response		Frequency	Percentage
3 = Evident		37	31%
2 = On Track		39	33%
1 = Not Used		2	2%
N/O		41	34%

*Figure 16. Gradual release of responsibility: Engage in guided practice.*

**10. Exemplary Practice - Students ask a variety of questions, make connections, and predictions**





Response		Frequency	Percentage
3 = Evident		22	18%
2 = On Track		29	24%
1 = Not Used		2	2%
N/O		66	55%

*Figure 17. Inquiry: Questions, connections and predictions.*

Inquiry refers to the students' ability to ask questions. In ACE meetings, teachers learned different techniques to encourage students to ask a variety of questions and to make connections and predictions. Figure 17 shows that 18% of the time students asked a variety of questions and/or made connections and predictions. The data also show that 24% of the time students were on-track to do so. It should be noted that 55% of the time this skill was not observed by the administrative team.

Collaboration refers to teachers using strategies to engage all students in the classroom. Teachers learned different strategies to promote collaboration via ACE meetings. Figure 18 shows that 37% of the time teachers used strategies to engage all students in the classroom and 31% of the time teachers were on track to use strategies to engage all students in the classroom.

**11. Exemplary Practice - Teacher uses strategies to engage all students in the classroom**

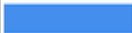



Response		Frequency	Percentage
3 = Evident		44	37%
2 = On Track		37	31%
1 = Not Used		7	6%
N/O		31	26%

*Figure 18. Collaboration: Strategies to engage students.*



Speaking and listening skills refer to classroom discussion being balanced between students and teachers, student engagement being marked by talk and collaboration, and student time being spent by reading and discussing text. Teachers learned about these skills in their ACE meetings by reading articles, watching videos, and having discussions about best practices. Figure 19 shows that 23% of the time discussion about concepts and learning was balanced between students and teachers while 26% of the time it was on track to being balanced. It should be noted that 50% of the time this skill was not observed by the administrative team.





**12. Exemplary Practice - Discussion about concepts and learning is balanced between students and teacher**

Response		Frequency	Percentage
3 = Evident		27	23%
2 = On Track		31	26%
1 = Not Used		2	2%
N/O		59	50%

*Figure 19: Speaking and listening: Discussion about concepts.*

In Figure 20, the data shows that 29% of the time, students were actively engaged in the learning through talk and collaboration while 24% of the time, students were on-track to actively engage in the learning through talk and collaboration. It should be noted that 42% of the time this skill was not observed by the administrative team.





**13. Exemplary Practice - Students are actively engaged in the learning through talk and collaboration**

Response		Frequency	Percentage
3 = Evident		35	29%
2 = On Track		29	24%
1 = Not Used		5	4%
N/O		50	42%

*Figure 20. Speaking and listening: Learning through talk and collaboration.*

Figure 21 shows that only 19% of the time students spent time reading and discussing the text. The data also shows that only 16% of the time students were on-track to spend time reading and discussing the text. It should be noted that 64% of the time this skill was not observed by the administrative team.





**14. Exemplary Practice - Students spend time reading and discussing the text**

Response		Frequency	Percentage
3 = Evident		23	19%
2 = On Track		19	16%
1 = Not Used		1	1%
N/O		76	64%

*Figure 21. Speaking and listening: Reading and discussing the text.*

Writing refers to students spending time reading and writing about the text. Teachers learned about basic writing skills in their ACE meetings by reading articles, watching videos, and having discussion about best practices. Figure 22 shows that 32% of the time students spent time reading and writing about the text. It should also be noted that 55% of the time this skill was not observed by the administrative team.





**15. Exemplary Practice - Students spend time reading and writing about the text**

Response		Frequency	Percentage
3 = Evident		38	32%
2 = On Track		14	12%
1 = Not Used		1	1%
N/O		66	55%

*Figure 22. Writing: Students reading and writing about the text.*

Summary skills refer to students actively summarizing what they have learned or read. Teachers learned about the summarizing skills in their ACE meetings by reading articles, watching videos and having discussions about best practices. In Figure 23 it shows that 33% of time students actively summarized what they learned or read. It should also be noted that 48% of the time this skill was not observed by the administrative team.





**16. Exemplary Practice - Students actively summarize what they have learned or read**

Response		Frequency	Percentage
3 = Evident		39	33%
2 = On Track		22	18%
1 = Not Used		1	1%
N/O		57	48%

*Figure 23. Summary: Students actively summarizing.*

Evidence-based refers to students providing evidence to indicate learning to support an answer. Teachers discussed evidenced-based learning in their ACE meetings. Figure 24 shows that 29% of the time students provided evidence of what they learned or used evidence to support an answer; whereas, 29% of the time students were on track to demonstrating this skill. It should also be noted that 42% of the time this skill was not observed by the administrative team.

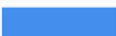
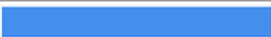

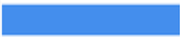
**17. Exemplary Practice - Students provide evidence of what they have learned or to support an answer**

Response		Frequency	Percentage
3 = Evident		34	29%
2 = On Track		34	29%
1 = Not Used		1	1%
N/O		50	42%

*Figure 24. Evidence-based: Evidence to support answer.*

Rigor refers to students engaging in highly critical thinking. Teachers discussed, read, and watched a video on rigor during their ACE meetings. Figure 25 shows that 20% of the time students engaged in highly critical thinking and 47% of the time students were on-track to demonstrate rigor. It should also be noted that 31% of the time, this skill was not observed by the administrative team.





**18. Exemplary Practice - Students engage in highly critical thinking**

Response		Frequency	Percentage
3 = Evident		24	20%
2 = On Track		56	47%
1 = Not Used		2	2%
N/O		37	31%

*Figure 25. Rigor: Highly critical thinking.*

Bell-to-bell instruction refers to students using time effectively to process and reflect on information. Teachers discussed and read about bell-to-bell instruction in their ACE meetings. Figure 26 shows that 32% of the time students used their time effectively to process and reflect on information and 29% of the time students were on-track to demonstrate bell-to-bell instruction. It should be noted that 36% of the time this skill was not observed by the administrative team.

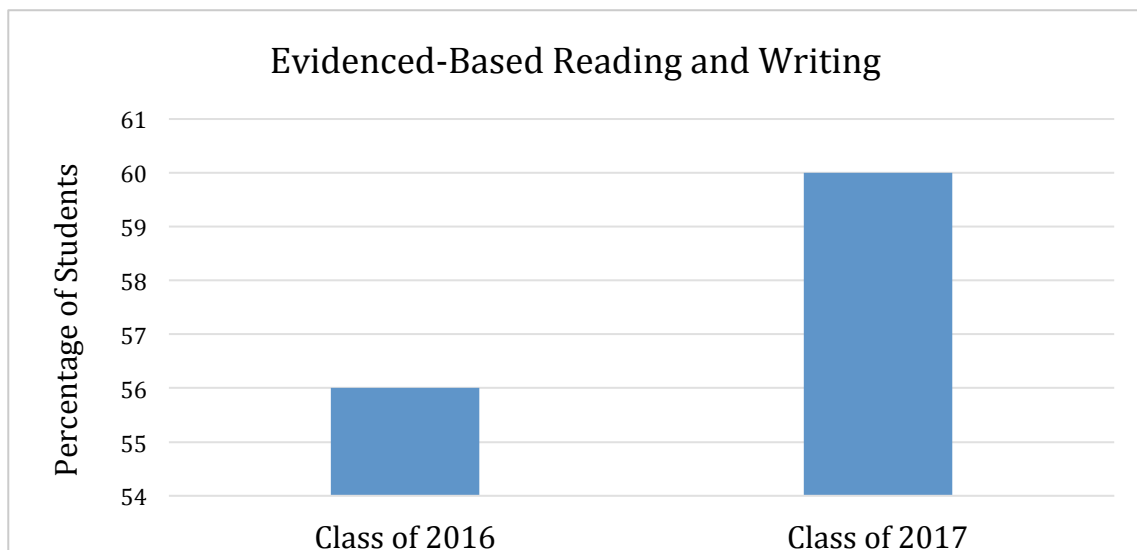
**19. Exemplary Practice - Students use time effectively to process and reflect on information**

Response		Frequency	Percentage
3 = Evident		38	32%
2 = On Track		34	29%
1 = Not Used		4	3%
N/O		43	36%

*Figure 26. Bell-to-bell Instruction: Using time effectively.*

## Student Achievement

As stated, the SAT score was an indicator that prompted the PDT to focus on literacy. The data below are results from the junior class that took the test in 2016 and the junior class that took the test 2017. Figure 27 shows an increase in student performance when comparing the juniors that took the test in 2016 to the juniors that took the test in 2017. Specifically, there was a four-percentage point increase in the scores from 2016-2017.



*Figure 27.* Percentage of students proficient on evidenced-based reading and writing.

Figure 28 shows that the school, district and state outperformed the district and state CCR benchmarks. Another indicator of student success can be found in the PSAT results.

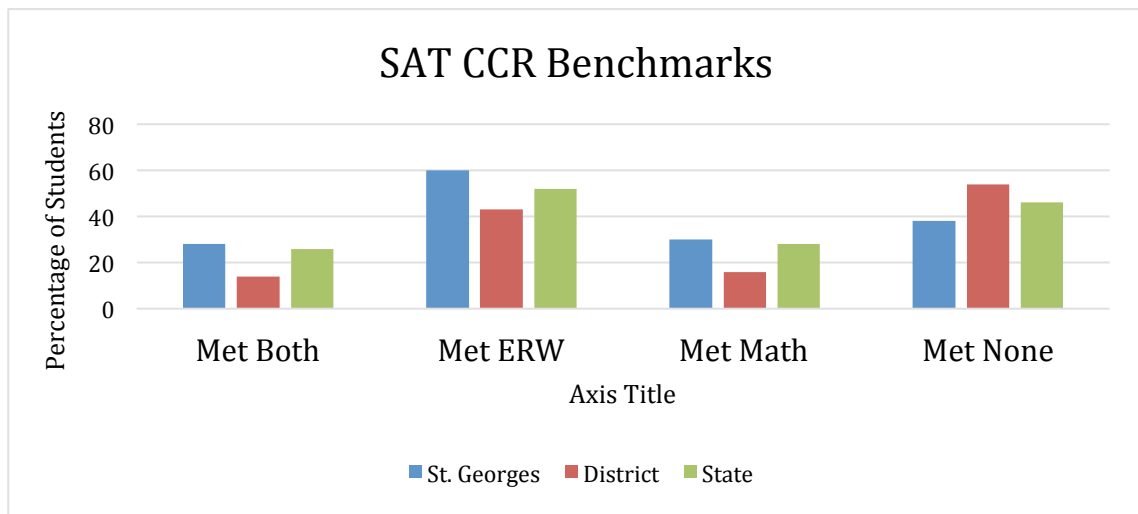


Figure 28. Percentage of students meeting the SAT CCR benchmarks.

Figure 29 shows that the freshmen during the 2017 school year scored nine percentage points higher than the 2015 freshmen class. The freshmen during the 2017 school year also scored above the district and state average.

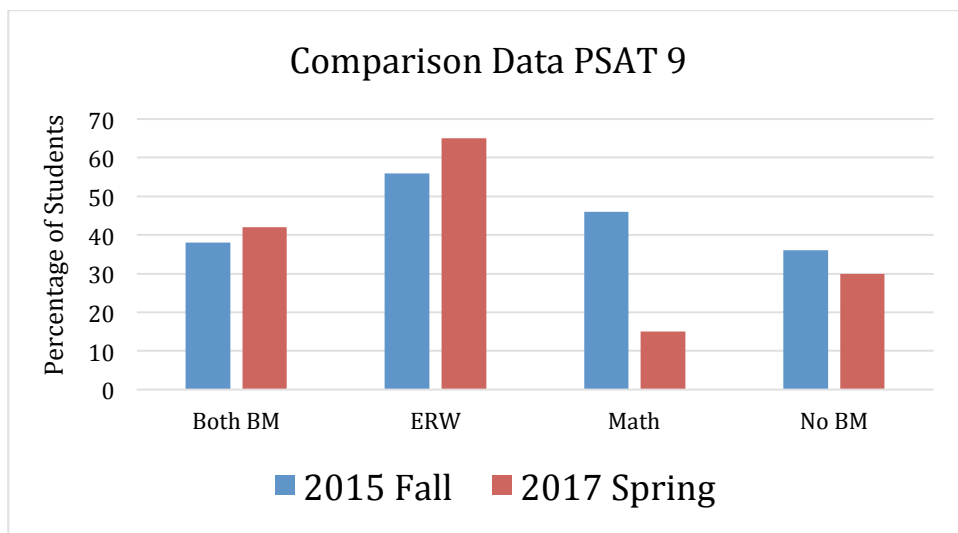
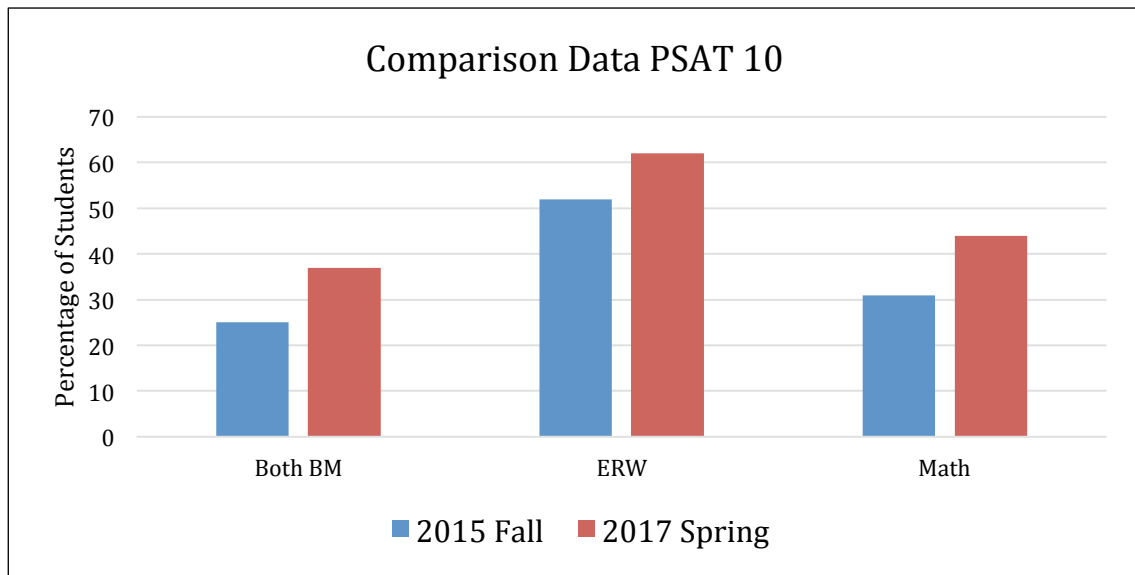


Figure 29. Comparison data PSAT 9.

Figure 30 shows that the sophomores during the 2017 school year scored 10 percentage points higher than the 2015 sophomore class. The sophomores during the 2017 school year also scored above the district and state average. The PDT believed that the implementation of the research-based literacy strategies played a factor in the improvement of scores on the SAT and PSAT.



*Figure 30.* Comparison data PSAT 10.

## Results

In summary, there was an increase in scores on both the PSAT and SAT. On both assessments the school scored above the district and state average. The PDT believes that our instructional focus on research-based literacy strategies that are aligned with the Common Core Standards played a major factor in the students' increased achievement on the PSAT and SAT. The change is positive and in the correct direction, but is not

statistically significant ( $t = -0.82$ ,  $p = 0.41$ ). Follow up analyses and subsequent years will determine whether not this change is in fact part of a longer-term trend.



## **Chapter 5**

### **REFLECTIONS ON IMPROVEMENT EFFORT**

Three goals were the driving force for this ELP. In my capacity as principal at St. Georges Technical High School, I attempted to have teachers and administrators work collaboratively to: a) select leaders and establish the PDT, b) build leadership capacity, and c) teach leadership skills and literacy strategies.

#### **Lessons Learned**

**Selecting leaders and establishing the Powerful Development (PDT) Team:**  
**PDT selection process.** The process used to select members to participate on the PDT was effective. One reason it went well was because I incorporated teacher feedback concerning a lack of time to read about and to apply for previously advertised opportunities when I designed this search. Advertising the PDT job description in the Hawk Highlights for a month provided teachers with ample time to submit their letters of interest. Six educators applied and four were selected to be a part of the PDT. The job description qualifications were clear, and participants understood the purpose and expectations of the team. This was evident based on the letters of interest that were submitted and the responses to the questions that each candidate provided.

It was also helpful to have the department chairs and administrators on the interview committee. Their participation was beneficial to the process because the

committee was able to provide additional insight about the candidates' work ethic and contribution in their department and in the school. The takeaway was that the inclusivity in the process gave the department chairs and administrators a chance to gain a better understanding of the purpose and expectations of participating on the PDT. The department chairs and administrators appreciated being a part of the process and were excited to increase the opportunity for more instructors to participate in determining the school-wide instructional focus. Moving forward, the department chairs should continue to participate in the process, possibly as a vetting committee. They will receive the information before it's provided to the faculty, so that the PDT can proactively make adjustments.

I took a different approach when interviewing candidates for the teams. This process went well because it involved the candidates being asked questions that focused on six major themes and each question had a rubric that allowed the interview committee to be more objective when rating responses. The themes of each question that the candidates had to answer were based on values that were essential to the cohesiveness as the team started accomplishing the instructional focus. The candidates' responses to the questions demonstrated that they understood and could provide sufficient evidence that they could perform the skills. I met with each candidate to inform them that they were selected and to reiterate the purpose and expectations of the PDT. Also, the candidates that did not receive a perfect rating on their responses were provided feedback and were encouraged to apply for other leadership positions.

Overall, the process was successful because we were able to select four talented educators to serve on the PDT. One thing I would like to improve is the feedback that was provided to each candidate. The candidates were given a general overview of their performance. In the future, I will provide candidates with specific feedback in writing describing their strengths and weaknesses based on the interview process and writing prompt and provide resources that could strengthen their area of weakness.

The other adjustment would be to require each candidate to take the Myers Briggs Survey prior to the interview (Myers & Briggs, 1998). This would allow the candidates an opportunity to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses. The interview committee might ask the candidates to reflect on the results and share how the information learned could help the team accomplish the intended goals. This would provide an opportunity to develop a well-balanced team based on skillset. Fortunately, the team skillsets were well-balanced and able to function at a high-level.

**Building leadership capacity.** The PDT recognized the need to continue to increase the leadership capacity to accomplish the instructional focus necessary. The coaches and ILT assisted the PDT with leading the instructional focus in the building. The creation of the two teams increased the number of educators who were involved with crafting the vision and supporting the teachers with the implementation of the literacy strategies. The various levels of assistance allowed instructors to select the type of support that best fit their needs.

**Coaches.** Establishing a logic model for the coaches worked well because it provided a clear roadmap to what goals needed to be accomplished with the time

provided. The outcomes were listed as short, medium, and long-term goals. This allowed the coaches to pace their work and concentrate on the needs of the instructors. Meeting with coaches allowed for periodical review of the outcomes. The logic model guided our conversation about what was going well, what needed to improve, and what resources were needed to change and support. The coaches were successful with accomplishing most of the outcomes listed on the logic model.

An area that needs improvement is making sure teachers are surveyed on the effectiveness of the coaches. This was included as a goal on the logic model but was not completed. Moving forward, this goal will become a priority by developing the survey prior to the start of the year and by scheduling two dates for release to the staff. It's important that I take a more active role in making sure the data is collected, reviewed, and used to determine outcomes for the following year.

**ILT.** The ILT was well prepared to lead and facilitate their ACE groups. The members of the ILT worked collaboratively to determine the focus of the meetings. The ILT met weekly to discuss the agenda, opportunities, and challenges they were encountering in their ACE meetings. The structure of the ILT meetings and ACE meetings provided participants with an open forum to learn and to share their experiences to improve instruction.

An issue encountered was that the ILT members couldn't always make the meetings. In the future, it would be helpful to record the ACE meetings and post them on the ACE Schoology site for individuals who were absent or participants who want to review the meeting's information and discussion.

## **Teaching Leadership Skills and Literacy Strategies**

**Program evaluation (Leadership skills).** The program evaluation findings from the four disciplines' training that the PDT received from Patrick Lencioni's (2012) book, *The Advantage*, provided information on how to improve the training and the health of our organization. The results of the program evaluation indicated that the PDT believed the most beneficial aspect of the summer training was building a cohesive team by participating in team building activities and events off-site. The PDT members believed that going to the ASCD conference in Nashville, completing the personality survey, talking about our personal stories, and participating in team-building activities helped the team come together as a cohesive group that was ready to develop an instructional focus for the school year. Offsite training should continue to be offered on the instructional focus and on team building.

Overall, the team believed that improvements needed to be made in all four disciplines for St. Georges to be a healthy organization. Therefore, ongoing training will continue to include the four disciplines. The evaluation form clearly revealed that more time should be allocated to developing a staff communication plan to explain the instructional focus, and additional time should be spent determining how the team would over communicate - consistently reinforcing the instructional goals. The following are recommendations for action:

1. Contract with an outside agency to provide additional training on relevant processes and practices for over-communicating clarity.
2. Develop an in-depth action plan (i.e. what, who, when, how, etc.) for communicating clarity to stakeholders in the organization.

3. Build in checkpoints to assess the effectiveness of communicating clarity in the organization.

The data indicated that the discipline with the lowest rating was over-communicating clarity. The following are recommendations for action (Lencioni, 2012, p. 15):

1. Repeat, repeat, repeat: Leaders must be willing to over-communicate by saying the same message again and again.
2. Keep it simple: Leaders must deliver a clear and uncomplicated message about where the organization is headed and how they can contribute to getting there.
3. Use multiple mediums: Leaders must utilize all mediums of communication to deliver clarity.
4. Streamline a focus and have identified initiatives explicitly connected to that focus.

### **ELP Survey Overview (Leadership Skills and Literacy Strategies)**

After recruiting the PDT members, the objective was to increase the leadership capacity in the building by preparing the recruited faculty members to facilitate and provide professional learning on the instructional focus. Based on the survey results, most of the PDT members believed that they were provided the skills and knowledge to guide and deliver training on the instructional focus. The PDT also believed that they had a positive impact on the implementation of the school-wide instructional focus on literacy. The training provided to the PDT enabled them to develop a strategic plan, find funding to support the plan, and create face-to-face and online modules on literacy. As a result of the trainings, the PDT members were able to establish productive working groups around protocols and build a system that held all staff members accountable for

completing and submitting assignments. Based on discussions held during the ACE meetings and the evidence submitted by staff members, students are demonstrating that they have a clearer and deeper understanding of the content and skills being taught in the core content areas. The training received by the PDT had a positive impact on teacher learning, which led to increased literacy achievement at St. Georges school district.

Based on the data collected, the PDT members need to conduct additional training sessions on how to facilitate and provide professional learning on the instructional focus. Additional training sessions will give some members of the PDT an opportunity to showcase their understanding of the topics and other members a chance to enhance their understanding by revisiting the process and gaining clarity from a different presenter. The training will be open to staff members to continue the process of building the leadership capacity within the building. The following are recommendations for action:

1. Identify the PDT members who are comfortable and prepared to conduct trainings on the topics.
2. Develop a professional development action plan that address the following: *what, how, when and where?* Additional training and opportunities to learn and apply the concepts related to comprehensive planning will be offered and will involve multiple days of training.
3. Communicate the action plan to the staff.
4. Develop a survey to assess the effectiveness of the professional development sessions.
5. Develop a walkthrough tool for the coaches that will help assess the level of implementation of the literacy strategies in the classroom. The walkthrough tool will only be used by the coaches, and the data collected will serve as a data point to determine the success of the implementation and future professional development sessions.

The coaches' walkthrough tool will be used to provide teachers with feedback and to gather data on the implementation of the literacy strategies in the classroom. This document will look different than the walkthrough tool used by the administrative team.

The following are recommendations for action:

1. The PDT will utilize materials and books to help determine the structure of the walkthrough tool. The skills assessed on the walkthrough tool will mirror the skills noted on the administrative walkthrough tool.
2. After the tool is developed, have an outside consultant provide feedback about the tool and make the necessary adjustments.
3. Determine the procedures for using the tool and how the data will be analyzed. Coaches will pilot the tool with teachers that are on the PDT.
4. Share the non-evaluative tool with the staff and explain that it will be used to provide feedback about the implementation of the instructional strategies. Also, explain that the data will be used to determine the topics for the monthly professional development days and that school-wide data obtained from the walkthrough tool will be shared with the staff.

### **Walkthroughs Conducted by the Administrative Team (Literacy Strategies)**

The walkthrough tool provided the administrative team with data on how instructors were implementing the literacy strategies. Specially, the tool focused on gradual release of responsibility, inquiry, collaboration, speaking and listening, writing, summarizing, evidence-based, rigor and bell-to-bell. The data from the walkthroughs will inform future professional learning topics. The following skills were not observed at least 50 percent of the time:

1. Students asking a variety of questions and making connections or predictions (Inquiry).



2. Students engaging in balanced discussions with teachers about concepts and learning (Speaking and Listening Skills).
3. Students spending time reading and discussing text (Speaking and Listening Skills).
4. Students spending time reading and writing about text (Writing).

The data collected was shared monthly with the PDT, coaches, and ILT. It was evident that teachers are steadily implementing the strategies learned in the ACE meetings. This was just one indicator to determine the success of the implementation and what should be a point of emphasis for professional learning. This summer, the administration team will re-evaluate the tool to make sure that it is monitoring the most impactful strategies and is providing feedback that enhances instruction. Next school year, the school data collected will be shared with the staff monthly.

### **Student Achievement (Literacy Strategies)**

The students at St. Georges showed a 4% increase in their SAT and PSAT scores when comparing juniors who took the test in 2016 with juniors who took the test in 2017. The freshmen during the 2017 school year scored nine percentage points higher than the 2016 freshmen class. The sophomores during the 2017 school year scored 10 percentage points higher than the 2016 sophomore class. Although it's difficult to make a direct correlation between the increase in student achievement on the assessments and the instructional focus on literacy, the PDT believes that the concentration on literacy strategies, prior to the increase in student achievement, was a contributing factor to improved scores. The slight increase in scores served as an indicator to drill deeper into

the focus on literacy. Specifically, it led the team to transition from a focus on general literacy strategies to a more in-depth approach to discipline specific strategies that strengthen students' content knowledge, strategies, and skills. The PDT also determined that we should identify an assessment that will provide the data that shows a direct correlation between the instructional focus and student achievement. The assessment should measure student reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills related to specific content areas. The pre/post assessments will most likely have to be created by the content teachers and literacy coach.

### **Implementing Distributive Leadership**

Implementing distributive leadership is not an easy task. It is very difficult as a leader to release responsibility. As the principal of the school, I am accustomed to and comfortable with making school decisions with my admin team or on my own. It took a while to become comfortable with not always having the answer and sitting back and allowing the teachers to lead.

Initially, I struggled with balancing individual and group needs. It was important for each teacher leader to have a voice and to be present at the table. However, checking for input and synthesizing varying perspectives from team members required timeliness. In these situations, I felt as though I needed to have the “right” answers, the perfect solution that everyone could agree on. My thinking was that this would help us to move faster and keep to our plan. However, I learned that sometimes you have to move slow to go fast. Those initial meetings, though time consuming, helped the group to build trust and to evolve into a cohesive team. In the long run, I believe that it saved us time and

allowed us to grow closer. This bonding helped us to be able to tackle the challenges and frustrations that come with leading change.

It was also a challenge to determine what training the team actually needed. The training that became the most critical to getting the work done was working with the adult learner and *Crucial Conversations* (Patterson, Grenny, McMillan, & Switzler, 2012). The teachers were not prepared for some of the resistance they encountered from a few of the teachers that did not want to participate in the work. The team spent a number of meetings working through scenarios that they encountered in the ACE meetings. The team grew from those experiences. Moving forward, it is important to build opportunities to practice difficult meetings and what to do in the face of resistance and opposition. Summer work will include increased time for practice, reflection, and feedback on facilitating meetings that bring resistance to change.

I also realized that communication was critical to successful implementation of distributive leadership. Everyone participating in the instructional leadership group needed to know what others were doing. It was important to develop logic maps, protocols, and agendas to guide our work. In addition, I/we struggled with constantly communicating the instructional focus and the roles of the teacher leaders. This made it difficult for teachers to obtain the buy-in needed to do the work. In hindsight, it would have been ideal for me to consistently communicate the facilitators' and teachers' roles in the ACE meetings. I realized that some of the resistance surfaced because of lack of clarity. Overcommunicating expectations and monitoring collective commitments and team norms will help to ensure that the focus is on instruction and teaching practices.

Although we encountered some barriers, I feel the work was and will continue to be important. Working on problems as a team is more effective than working on them as an individual. The work that we started will take some time, but I am committed to continuing what we started for the best interests of our students, teachers, and overall school community.

## **Chapter 6**

### **REFLECTIONS ON LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

I was appointed the Acting Principal at St. Georges Technical High School in 2012. I started the Educational Leadership Doctorate program at the University of Delaware in the fall of 2013. In 2014, the assistant principals that I started with in 2012 were all moved to different buildings to take on other leadership opportunities due to their high-level of performance at St. Georges. The NCCVT School District and my mentors provided me with the support needed to adapt to such a major change the second year of my principalship. The Educational Leadership Program was instrumental in providing me with the knowledge and skills to use data and research to support my ideas. Also, the University of Delaware provided me with the forum to share and receive feedback on initiatives that I implemented in my school to establish structure and to increase student achievement. I am thankful that I have had the opportunity to be a part of this program during major transitions in my professional career. I have truly learned a variety of skills that have helped me better lead my school. I attribute my growth as a leader to my participation in the Educational Leadership Program, the support of the NCCVT school district, and the guidance of multiple mentors. Below, I will specifically reflect upon my leadership growth with respect to scholarship, problem-solving, and collaboration.

## **My Growth as a Scholar**

In reflecting back on the valuable information from this program, one of the most notable is the importance of utilizing research and data to make informed decisions. As a principal, you have to make many impactful decisions daily. It's easy and less time consuming to simply base decisions on surface level facts, past practice and/or your gut feeling. As a scholar at the University of Delaware, however, I learned the importance of drilling deeper into critical problems by creating, collecting, and analyzing data. I also learned the importance of asking questions based on data and developing a strategic plan based on research results of others who have successfully grappled with the same problem. Specifically, I learned how to be a "critical consumer" in Dr. Farley-Ripple's Research in Education Decision-Making course through her lessons regarding how to learn from research studies and how to collect data. Dr. Farley-Ripple stressed the importance of knowing how research could change policies and practice (instrumental effect), influence stakeholders' learning and attitudes (conceptual effect), and change opinions regarding initiatives and/or teaching (symbolic effect). I am reminded of the concepts taught in her class whenever I am working on a major project and making a critical decision.

Dr. Fred Hofstetter has also shaped my growth as a scholar. I obtained my Master's in Educational Technology, so I had the pleasure of taking several of Dr. Hofstetter's courses in both the master and doctoral programs. I learned how to utilize technology to support student and teacher learning. For example, I developed an online course in Dr. Hofstetter's Google Application course using Schoology and Google

applications. Learning how to use a variety of technology-enhanced educational strategies together has allowed me to increase the learning experience of participants. Taking Dr. Hofstetter's courses helped me stay on the forefront of new educational technological developments, which in turn helped me lead my building in the implementation of innovative teaching and training practices.

I learned the importance of scholarly pursuits and came to the conclusion that, as a principal, authentic research is necessary when considering potential implementation of strategies that impact my school's programming. By conducting literature reviews, I will inform myself about ideas that have or have not worked in other settings and better understand how to implement working ideas appropriately into my school's setting. For example, my research on distributive leadership led me to develop a plan to increase leadership capacity by focusing on: (1) selecting leaders and establishing the PDT, (2) teaching leadership skills and literacy strategies, and (3) building leadership capacity.

### **Growth as a Problem Solver**

The courses I had enhanced my ability to be a better problem solver. I learned about the complexity of leadership and the multiple approaches that could be used to solve problems. In Dr. Jackie Wilson's Superintendent's course, I learned how to apply the different approaches of leadership to authentic situations. Throughout the course, I had the opportunity to discuss my plan for building the leadership capacity in my building and how the plan could be replicated to benefit the schools in my district. Also, we discussed statewide issues and how we could take an active role to assist with enacting change. The internship portion of this course gave me a chance to work with

Dr. Shelley Rouser, Director of K-12 Initiatives and Educator Engagement at the Delaware Department of Education. Dr. Rouser provided me with resources and insightful feedback to strengthen my plan. Talking and working with Dr. Rouser gave me insight on what DDOE is grappling with and the system they have in place to address statewide problems.

By completing the doctoral program, my problem-solving abilities have been enhanced, and I have come to the simple conclusion that all of us are smarter than any one of us alone. Learning more about distributive leadership has opened my eyes to the importance of having multiple participants solve problems to reach instructional goals. Developing and executing the plan for a school-wide focus on literacy would not have happened without having several staff members involved in the process.

### **Growth as a Partner**

My growth as a partner has increase exponentially as a result of completing the doctoral program. Based on my focus for developing teacher leaders, I had the opportunity to partner with the University of Delaware on a few projects. One of the projects involved my participation in a series of videos that are used in the educational leadership courses to activate the learning of emerging leaders in the program. I also participated on the UD Educator Preparation Alliance Committee. The University of Delaware established this program to have members of the education community collaborate with UD faculty and staff on the preparation of the next generation of teachers. The knowledge I obtained from these courses and my experiences working



with new instructors in my building provided me with the information needed to play an active role on this committee of diverse educators.

The knowledge and guidance of Superintendent Dr. Vicki Gehrt has been influential in my growth as a partner. She challenges me to use multiple lenses to view problems. Specifically, our partnership has encouraged me to be an innovative thinker and to solve problems that will benefit all schools in the district. Her encouragement and support has influenced me to take an overarching approach to problem solving.

Developing strong internal and external relationships was critical to the successful implementation of distributive leadership. Established partnerships with the University of Delaware, the Department of Education, and other school leaders involved in the implementation of distributive leadership provided me with insight on advantages and methods to build capacity within St. Georges. For example, I worked with Dr. Clifton Hayes, principal at Delcastle Technical High School, when he started his work on distributive leadership. I shared my action plan and observed how he transformed the plan to meet Delcastle's needs. The ongoing conversations about developing leadership within the ranks of the faculty to improve instructional practices gave me ideas on how I could improve my work plan. Internally, I learned that working closely with teachers improved buy-in and that faculty members who were involved in the decision-making process were more interested in taking on additional responsibilities outside of the classroom.

## **Final Thoughts**

In *The Purpose of Education*, Martin Luther King, Jr. (1947) wrote: “The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically...Intelligence plus character- that is the goal of true education.”

Though I have dedicated my career to the education of others, participating in the doctoral program at the University of Delaware has allowed me to enhance my own abilities as a scholar, problem solver, and partner. The research and technological tools introduced in Dr. Farley-Ripple and Dr. Hofstetter’s courses have enhanced my ability as a scholar to think intensively and strategically about difficult problems. My learning experiences with Dr. Wilson and Dr. Rouser have guided me to think critically when solving problems that are relevant to my school, district, and state. The University of Delaware and the NCCVT school district have been great partners and have provided me with opportunities to obtain and to put into practice the knowledge and skills I gained. My character is grounded in the belief that educators and students should learn and grow every day. Participating in this program has built on my existing ability and has lead me to reach my goal of obtaining a “true education” to better myself as a leader and to improve my organization.

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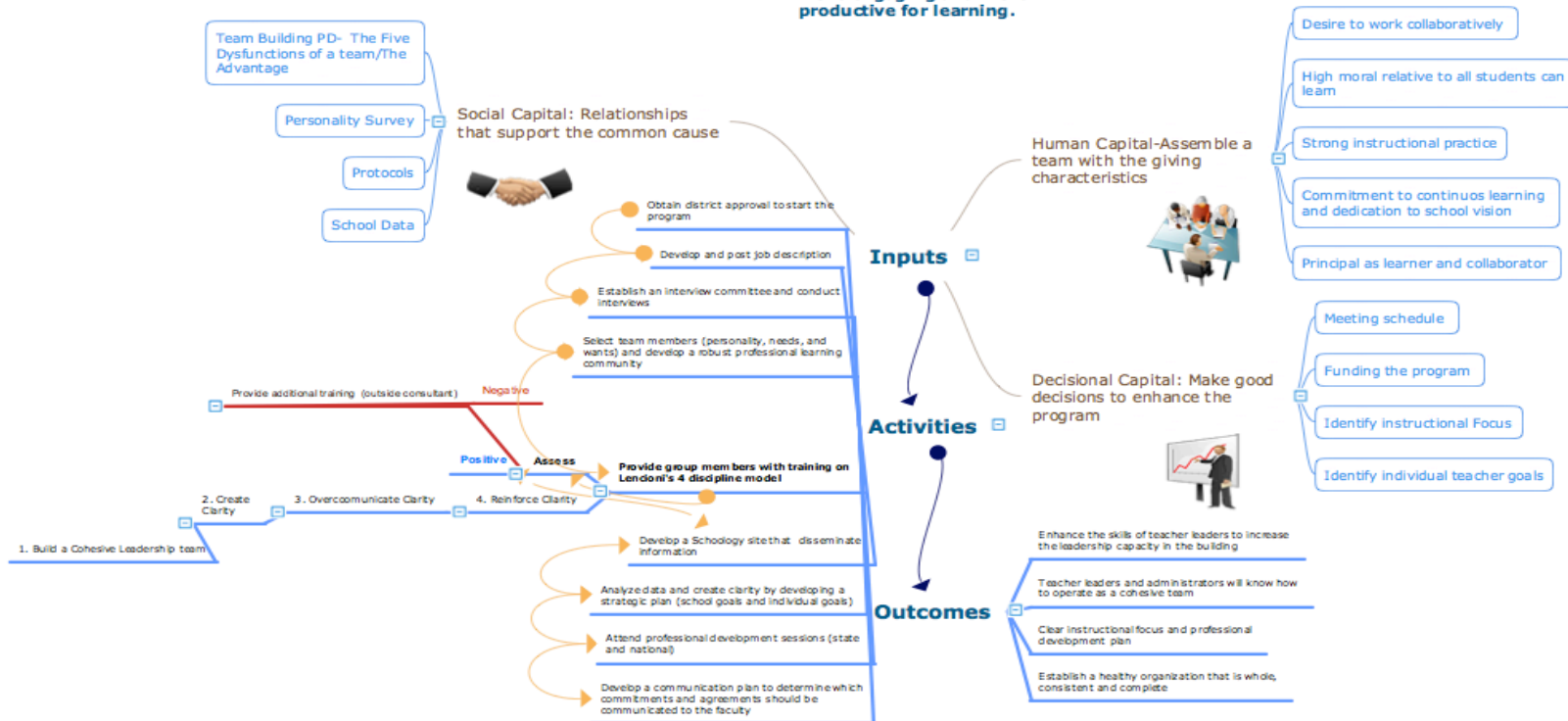
## APPENDIX A

### Powerful Development Team Logic Model

**Logic Model: St. Georges  
Powerful Development Team**

**Purpose:** This logic model represents the development of a leadership program at my school. The goal is to form a team that will work collectively to do things more engaging and more productive for learning.

**Reynolds: EDUC 863**



## **APPENDIX B**

### **Powerful Development Team Job Description and Team Functioning Sheet**

#### **Powerful Development Team (PDT) Job Description**

Creative, forward thinking, aspiring instructional leaders to serve as members of the Powerful Development Team at St. Georges Technical High School. Candidates must possess a strong commitment to continuous learning and dedication to the school vision. Major duties include participating in and conducting professional development, identifying major school project(s) that will support individual and school growth, and assisting with decision-making on school-wide instructional focus and initiatives. Team members will demonstrate the following skills:

- Analyze data to assess instructional effectiveness
- Promote continuous improvement in teaching and learning at the school and department levels
- Demonstrate knowledge of instructional best practices and current research.

Participants will need to be able to work on tasks collaboratively and independently. They must have the ability to work in an environment where their thoughts and ideas will be stretched and challenged. The reward for participating will be school and district recognition, on-site and off-site professional development, professional development clock hours, and the opportunity to work collaboratively with the principal to identify weaknesses and solutions that will help our school grow. The

primary challenges include: sharing instructional resources with colleagues, setting high-expectations for teaching and learning, utilizing data to inform next steps, and to assume a leadership position outside of the classroom. The individuals selected to serve on the team will represent a key part of the school and will bring critical talent and insight to our instructional focus.

### **Process**

Working on the PDT will require participants to make voluntary commitments outside of the regular work hours to receive intense training in leadership and instructional practices. Individuals interested in signing up for this team will submit a brief paragraph explaining how they meet the requirements listed above (due to Mr. Reynolds by April 16th). The principal and a small committee will also interview candidates (Interviews will take place April 17th). Four teachers will be selected to serve on the committee.

### **Goals**

- The PDT will assist with developing a comprehensive plan for enhancing instruction and student learning. The leadership team will communicate this plan to stakeholders at our school.
- The PDT will lead and oversee the implementation of the plan, providing professional development and supporting teacher learning.
- The PDT will assume leadership roles outside of the classroom that directly align with their personal interests and the growth of the school.

## **Team Functioning Sheet**

### **Is the team's purpose clear, challenging, and consequential?**

- The team will spend its time developing improvement strategies for the system, ensuring coherence and aligning resources to the strategy, creating the conditions required for implementation, and tracking results.
- The team will lead and oversee the implementation of the improvement strategies by providing professional development and supporting teacher learning.
- The team will assume leadership roles outside of the classroom that directly align with their personal interests and the growth of the school.
- The team will ask tough questions, bring their best thinking, and debate ideas and issues with the goal of making the best decisions for the organization.
- The goal of the team is not to share updates across departments, provide advice to the principal or coordinate projects. Rather, this team focuses at the level of strategy-for example, deciding on the most effective approach to building teachers' instructional skills. The team participates and delegates the execution of that work and tracks results. The team also decides what the organization will start doing, stop doing, and do differently in light of current conditions and the system's vision and strategy.

**Are the right people on the bus?** Strong team members understand that the success of the team requires team members to leave their individual interests at the door and come to the table thinking about the organization as a whole and what will ensure its growth and overall health. "This means that individual team members think about decisions from the perspective of what will accelerate the system's rate of improvement and opportunities and outcomes for children rather than the perspective of what this means for their department" (Curtis et al., 2009, p. 46).

The following Table B1 identifies areas where we can improve and where other members might bring balance.

Table B1

<i>Needed Improvements</i>						
Team Member	Title	Consul	Mediator	Executive	Defender	Entertainer
Participant 1	Admin	X				
Participant 2	Admin		X			
Participant 3	Teacher				X	
Participant 4	Intern	X				
Participant 5	Teacher					X
Participant 6	Admin					X
Participant 7	Teacher	X				
Participant 8	Teacher				X	
Shanta	Admin			X	X	

Listed below in Table B2 is the detailed profile information on each team member (click on the link under personality type for additional information).

Table B2

*Team Member Profiles*

Team Member	Personality Type	Strength		Role	Strategy
Participant 1	<b>“The Consul”</b> <u>(ESFJ-A)</u>	E = 67%	O = 57%	Sentinel	People Mastery
		F = 12%	J = 20%		
		A = 14%			
Participant 2	<b>“The Mediator”</b> <u>(INFP-A)</u>	I = 40%	I = 74%	Diplomat	Confident Individualism
		F = 29%	P = 25%		
		A = 9%			
Participant 3	<b>“The Defender”</b> <u>(ISFJ-A)</u>	I = 15%	O = 60%	Sentinel	Confident Individualism
		F = 21%	J = 26%		
		A = 13%			
Participant 4	<b>“The Consul”</b> <u>(ESFJ-A)</u>	E = 42%	O = 77%	Sentinel	People Mastery
		F = 5%	J = 32%		
		A = 31%			
Participant 5	<b>“The Entertainer”</b> <u>(ESFP-A)</u>	E = 14%	O = 14%	Explorer	People Mastery
		F = 4%	P = 23%		
		A = 5%			
Participant 6	<b>“The Entertainer”</b> <u>(ESFP-A)</u>	E = 83%	O = 14%	Explorer	People Mastery
		F = 23%	P = 4%		
		A = 53%			
Participant 7	<b>“The Consul”</b> <u>(ESFJ-A)</u>	E = 5%	O = 52%	Sentinel	People Mastery
		F = 54%	J = 32%		
		A = 75%			
Participant 8	<b>“The Defender”</b> <u>(ISFJ-T)</u>	I = 7%	O = 8%	Sentinel	Constant Improvement
		F = 44%	J = 13%		
		T = 16%			
Shanta	<b>The Executive”</b> <u>(ESTJ-A)</u>	E = 5%	O = 20%	Sentinel	People Mastery
		T = 8%	J = 38%		
		A = 19%			



## **Are the necessary structures in place to support a high functioning team?**

Structure supports the rhythm of work in high-functioning teams and creates room for them to be creative and innovate. Three key structures that support high functioning teams are norms, agendas, and protocols.

### **Norms:**

Listed below are the agreements that define how team members will behave when we are together. The norms will be revisited periodically to see how they fit once they're put into practice and whether they need to be revisited as the team and the work evolves.

- ***Demonstrating integrity:*** Be transparent: Say what you mean, and mean what you say, say the same things outside the meetings that you say in the meetings. Be reliable: Do what you say you will do; provide honest feedback.
- ***Be trustworthy:*** Assume good intentions; listen to understand and ask for clarification when it's needed; communicate clearly.
- ***Be a Team player:*** Support colleagues in your words, thoughts, and deeds. Focus on **the good of the whole over the good of your department or cluster**; offer your time and expertise when it will add value; and ask for help when you need it.
- ***Be able to disagree and commit:*** You can argue about something or disagree, but leave the meeting actively committed to the decision that was made. Conflict is required from team members and everyone is going to be held accountable for doing whatever the team ultimately decides.
- ***Be engaged:*** Prepare for meetings as needed and attend meetings (no substitutes), share airtime, use technological tools to enhance the work not to deter the work, ask questions to push the team's thinking and learning, speak up when the team is not functioning well, and commit to helping it get back on track.
- ***Be efficient:*** Start and end the meeting on time; have a timed agenda at every meeting with objectives defined; provide materials related to agenda items and have a timekeeper. At the end of every meeting, the team will take a few

minutes to ensure that everyone sitting at the table is walking away with the same understanding about what has been agreed to and what they are committed to do.

- ***Be accountable:*** Abide by decisions once they are made, communicate the work and decisions of the team to your stakeholders accurately, commit to doing whatever it takes to bring the team's decisions and commitments to fruition, assess the work of the team and the individuals on it, track outcomes and results.

### **Agendas:**

We will use a well-designed agenda to guide our work. The agenda will highlight the priorities for the meeting and expectations for what will be accomplished. The agenda will be developed with the intent to focus the team on the most important work of systemic improvement and organizing the meeting to focus on a few top priorities.

“Unexpected things may arise in the meeting, just as they may in the classroom requiring a shift in direction. But we all know what a wasted opportunity teaching without planning can be and how painful it can be for everyone involved; the same holds true for the meeting” (Curtis et al., 2009, p. 53). Listed below is the template we will use.

### **Protocols:**

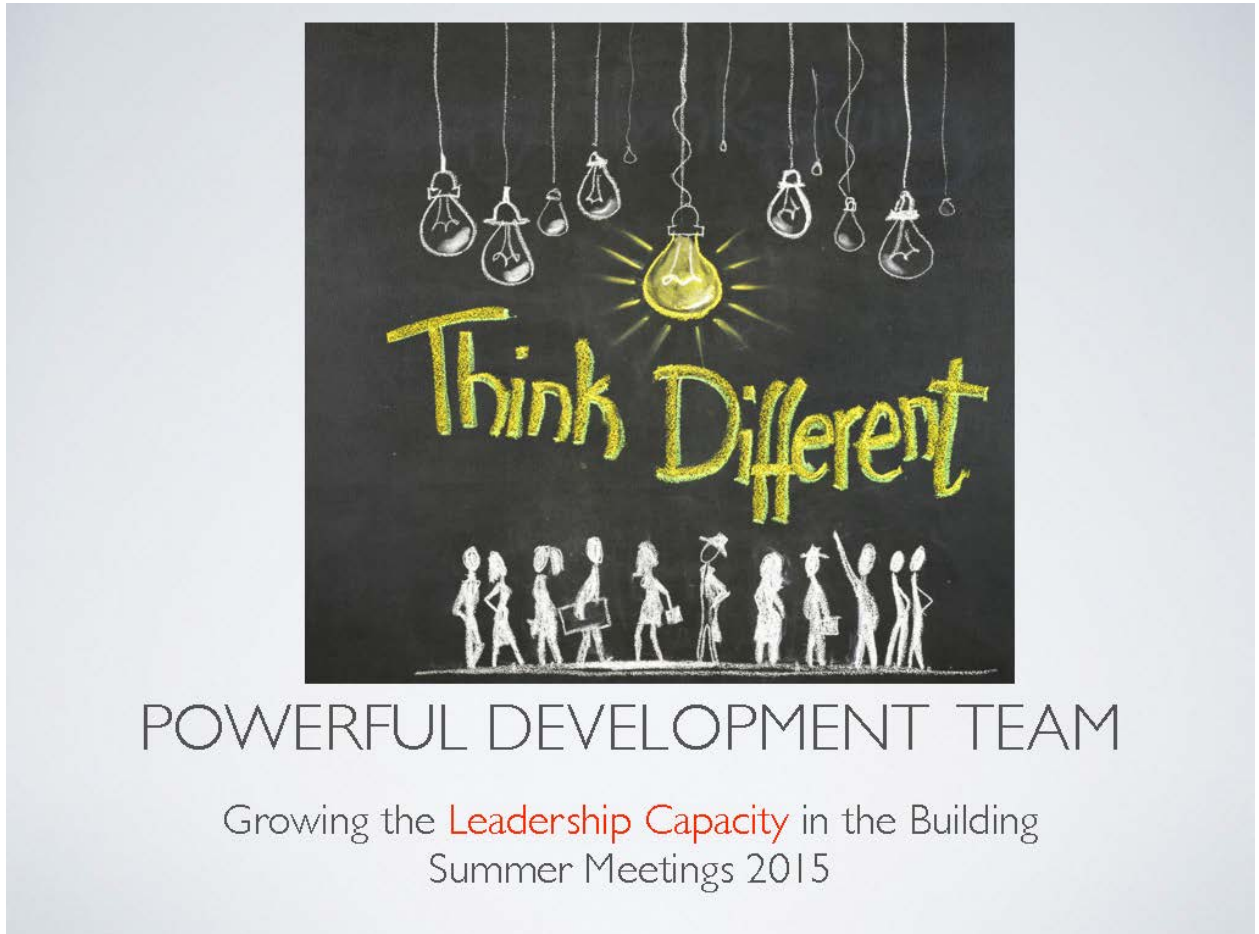
Protocols are used to provide structure to activities and conversations that you are conducting with your group. By following accepted parameters, group members can have very focused conversations. Protocols help educators look at student work, artifacts of educator practice, texts relating to education, or problems and issues that surface during educators' day-to-day lives. According to Easton at the National Staff Development Council,

The result of using protocols to structure the dialogue is an increased and shared understanding among group members that can lead to deeper understanding and action. Protocols also may push people into places they have avoided: real issues that, resolved, can make the difference between a school that succeeds and a school that fails the students it serves. (2009, p. 2)

See the following National School Reform Faculty (2018) website for a host of protocols that will help guide our work: <https://www.nsrfharmony.org>

## APPENDIX C

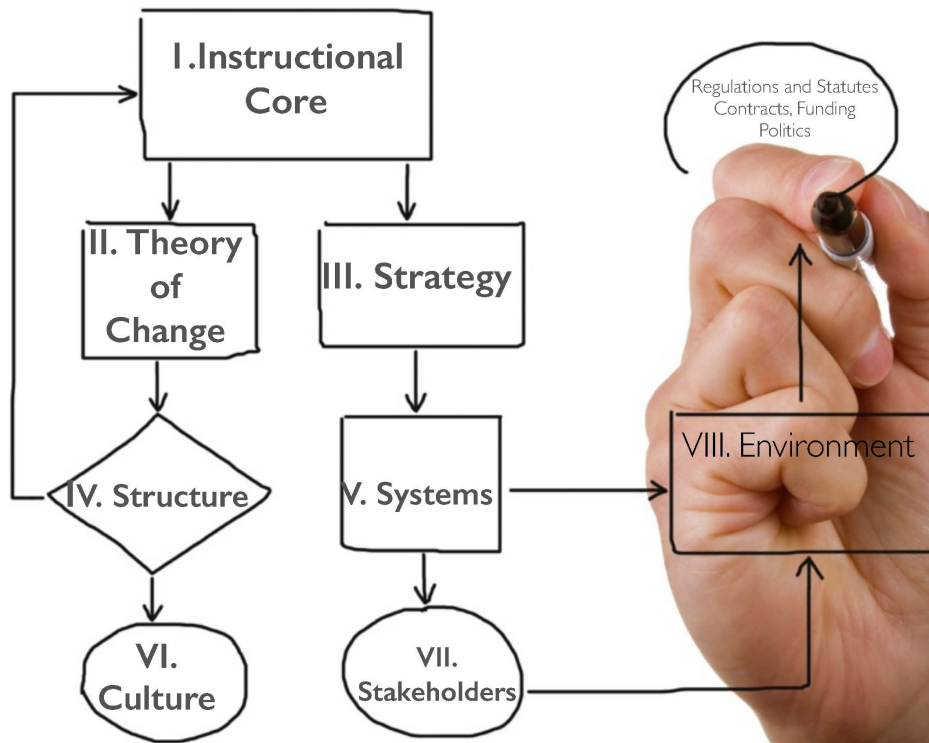
### Powerful Development Team Summer Training Materials





## OPENING SESSION:

JUNE 4th: 3:15-5:15



# INSTRUCTIONAL CORE: COLLECTIVELY MOVING IN THE **WRONG** DIRECTION

- **Two-thirds** of initially happy kindergartners become alienated from schooling by the time they reach grade 9 (Jenkins, 2013).
- Teacher satisfaction has declined **24** percent since 2008, when **62** percent of them reported feeling “very satisfied”; within five years, only **38** percent were saying that (Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, 2013).
- **75** percent of principals feel that their job has become too complex, half of all principals feel under great stress “several days a week,” and the percentage who say they are satisfied in their work has dropped from 68 to **59** since 2008.



# THEORY OF CHANGE: INCREASE THE LEADERSHIP CAPACITY IN THE BUILDING

## RESEARCH TO SUPPORT CAPACITY BUILDING

- Robinson research highlights five domains that had significant effect sizes on student achievement:
  - I. Establishing goals and expectations (0.42)
  - II. Resourcing strategically (0.31)
  - III. Ensuring quality teaching (0.42)
  - IV. Leading teacher learning and development (0.84)**
  - V. Ensuring an orderly and safe environment (0.27)
- Viviane Robinson found that the principal that make the biggest impact on learning is the one who attends to other matters as well, but, most important, **"participates as a learner" with teachers in helping move the school forward, leading teacher learning means being proactively involved with teachers such that principal and teachers alike are learning.**





# THEORY OF CHANGE:

## INCREASE THE LEADERSHIP CAPACITY IN THE BUILDING

- Helen Timperly examined research on the relationship between teacher learning and student achievement.
- Timperly comes up with the wonderful question for principals. “Who is my class?”  
**One principal noted that she and other principals were so busy attending to the needs of individual teachers that they didn't attend to the leadership learning needs of team leaders. This principal concluded that “her class” of learners included team leaders who in turn can leverage the learning of other teachers in their group, thereby generating learning across the school.**



# THEORY OF CHANGE:

## INCREASE THE LEADERSHIP CAPACITY IN THE BUILDING

- The report *How the World's Most Improved School Systems Keep Getting Better* analyzed school systems in 20 diverse countries that experienced sustained improvement (Mourshed, Chijoke, & Barber, 2010). **One common thread was a strong reliance on teamwork to identify and respond to problem.**
- In the report introduction, Micheal Fullan explained, **"The power of collective capacity is that it enables ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things-for two reasons.** One is that knowledge about effective practice becomes more widely available and accessible on a daily basis. The second reason is more powerful still-**working together generates commitment.** (p.72)



# THEORY OF CHANGE:

## INCREASE THE LEADERSHIP CAPACITY IN THE BUILDING

### PLAN MOVING FORWARD

- The goal is to form a team of teachers and administrators that will **work collectively** to do things more engaging and more productive for learning.
- The PD team members will have an opportunity to participate in activities that are **intrinsically meaningful** for themselves. They will also have a chance to accomplish **worthwhile school goals**.



# STRATEGY: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A STRATEGIC PLAN TO ADDRESS KEY ELEMENTS

## Key Goals for the Summer of 2015:

- Identify areas of focus based on school's data: **All**
- Create a plan for professional development: **Christine/Shanta**
- Establish a framework for RTI: **Jim**
- Devise a plan to increase school wide Growth Mindset: **Shanta**
- Develop the master schedule: **Jim/Adrianne**
- Review and revise reapplication process: **Chad**
- Revise the CAT and Senior curriculum: **Chad**
- Develop an assessment schedule: **Adrianne**

## Key Goal for the School Year of 2015-2016:

- Follow up on the goals that were accomplished in the summer
- Identify an issue and develop/implement an action plan (based on data)





## STRUCTURE/SYSTEM: DEFINE HOW WE ARE GOING TO GET THE WORK DONE

- **Policy and Practice and ASCD Conference:** June 24th -28th
- **Five Team Meetings in the Summer:** July 13th, July 16th, August 5th, August 12, and August 19
- **Voluntary Summer Internship Program:**  
Teachers can select days and times to work with the administrative team on the project listed on the previous page.
- **Monthly PD Sessions (See Roadmap Slidedoc):** TBA (full day sessions or two hour sessions)
- **Monthly Meeting with the Teachers on the PD Committee (Teachers Only- See Roadmap Slidedoc):** TBA
- **Individual Meetings (See Roadmap Slidedoc):** TBA (will take place during your planning period)



## REFECTION: IDEAS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

- Based on the dialogue from the first meeting it is evident that we need to spend time (1) building a cohesive PD team and (2) we need to create clarity about what is important in our school (a clear mission).
- We will utilize the following four disciplines in the book "Advantage" by Patrick Lencioni to guide our work:

**Discipline 1:** Build a Cohesive Leadership Team

**Discipline 2:** Create Clarity

**Discipline 3:** Overcommunicate Clarity

**Discipline 4:** Reinforce Clarity



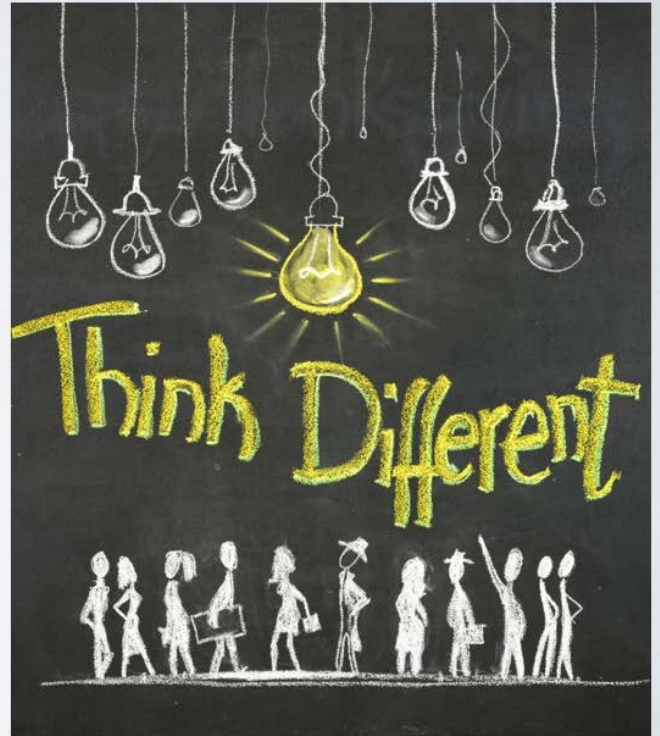


MEETING II: BUILD A COHESIVE LEADERSHIP  
TEAM

June 25th: 3:00-5:00

# ST. G PD MEETING AGENDA

- Define Leadership Team
- Five Behavioral Principles
- Share Personal Stories
- The Five Dysfunctions of a Team
- Personality Survey Summary





# WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A LEADERSHIP TEAM?

- “A leadership team is a small group of people who are collectively responsible for achieving a common objective for their organization (Lencioni, 2012).”



# FIVE BEHAVIORAL PRINCIPLES



# SHARE PERSONAL STORIES

Wrap Around- Answer the following three questions:

1. Where did you grow up?
2. How many siblings do you have and where do you fall in that order?
3. Please describe a unique or interesting challenge or experience from your childhood.

Debrief: What did you learn about one another that you didn't already know?

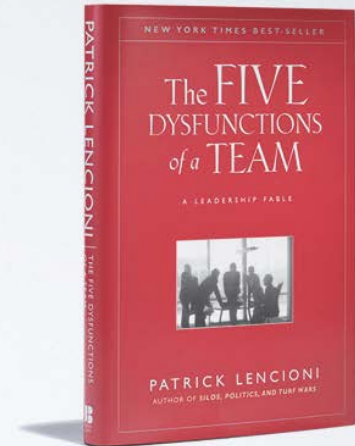


# THE FIVE DYSFUNCTIONS OF A TEAM

**3** What are 3 things you learned?

**2** What are 2 things you found interesting?

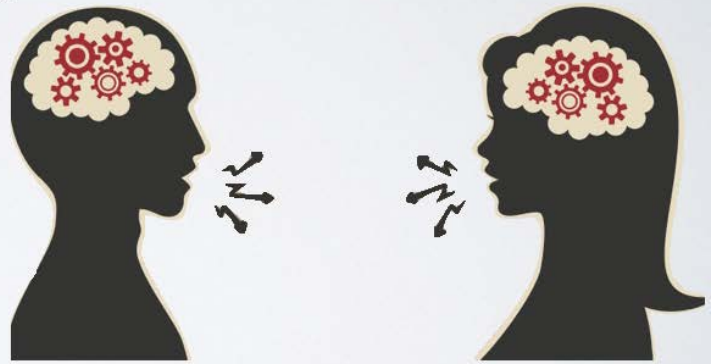
**1** What is 1 question you still have?



# PERSONALITY SURVEY

**Wrap Around Activity-**  
**Provide a response to the following:**

- Provide an overview of your personality profile.
- Identify the strengths and weaknesses of your personality type



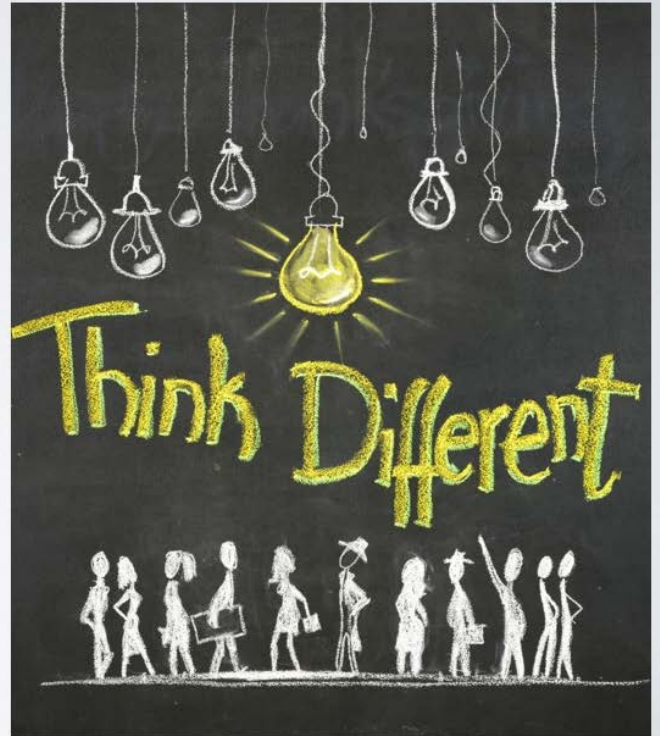


MEETING II: BUILD A COHESIVE LEADERSHIP  
TEAM: PART II

July 13th 10:00-2:00

# ST. G PD MEETING AGENDA

- ASCD Conference Debrief
- Summer Task List
- Building Blocks
- Team Building Review Activities
- The Five Dysfunctions of a Team
- Team Effectiveness Exercise





# ASCD CONFERENCE DEBRIEF

**3** What are 3 things you learned?

**2** What are 2 things you found interesting?

**1** What is 1 topic you would like to focus on for the upcoming school year?





# SUMMER TASK LIST

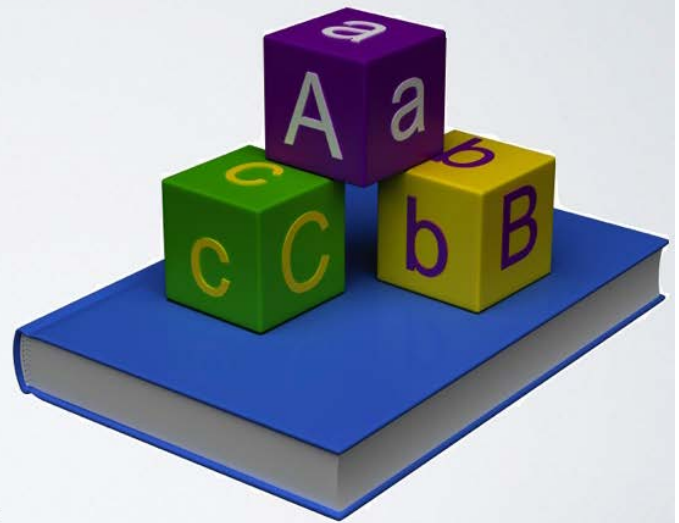
- Develop procedures for the senior curriculum: Chad and Jermaine
- Develop a CTE help desk on schoology: Chad and Jermaine
- Create school-wide plan for the growth mindset: Shanta and Nick
- Create a year-long professional development plan for next school year-Christine and Christa
- Develop an action plan for RTI: Jim and Justin
- Develop an assessment action plan and calendar: Adrianne and Justin



# BUILDING BLOCKS

**Refer to the the Team Functioning handout for answer to the following questions:**

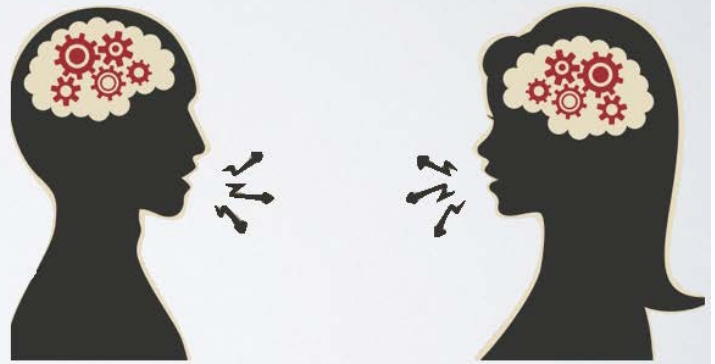
- Is the team's purpose clear, challenging, and consequential?
- Are the right people on the team?
- Are the necessary structures in place to support a high-functioning team?
- Does the team have the capacity to function well?
- Is the team accountable for its processes and outcomes?



# PERSONALITY SURVEY

**Wrap Around Activity-**  
**Provide a response to the**  
**following:**

- Provide an overview of your personality profile.
- Identify the strengths and weakness of your personality type.



Review

# WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A LEADERSHIP TEAM?

- “A leadership team is a small group of people who are collectively responsible for achieving a common objective for their organization (Lencioni, 2012).”



Review

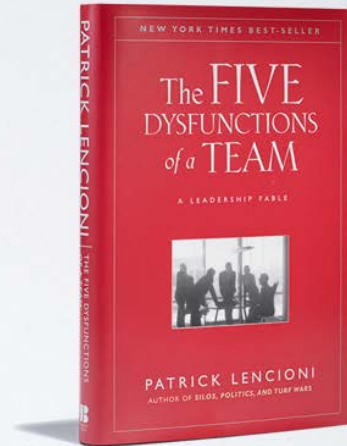
# FIVE BEHAVIORAL PRINCIPLES



# THE FIVE DYSFUNCTIONS OF A TEAM

A few guiding questions:

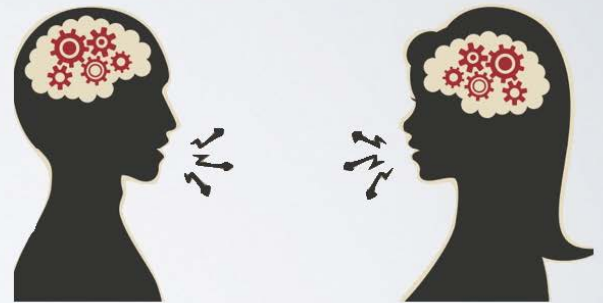
- What was the problem with Mickey? How can one person throw off an entire executive team?
- What characteristics does Kathryn possess that make her such a great manager? Is she perfect?



# TEAM EFFECTIVENESS EXERCISE

Team members will answer the following questions about each member of the team other than themselves (write down your answers):

1. What is the person's single most important behavioral quality that contributes to the strengths of the team? (That is, their strength)
- 2..What is the person's single most important behavioral quality that detracts from the strength of the team? (That is, their weakness or problematic behavior)?
3. When all team members have received input from their peers, each will summarize aloud for the team the one or two key takeaways that they will work on individually. Everyone will email their takeaways to Mr. Reynolds.







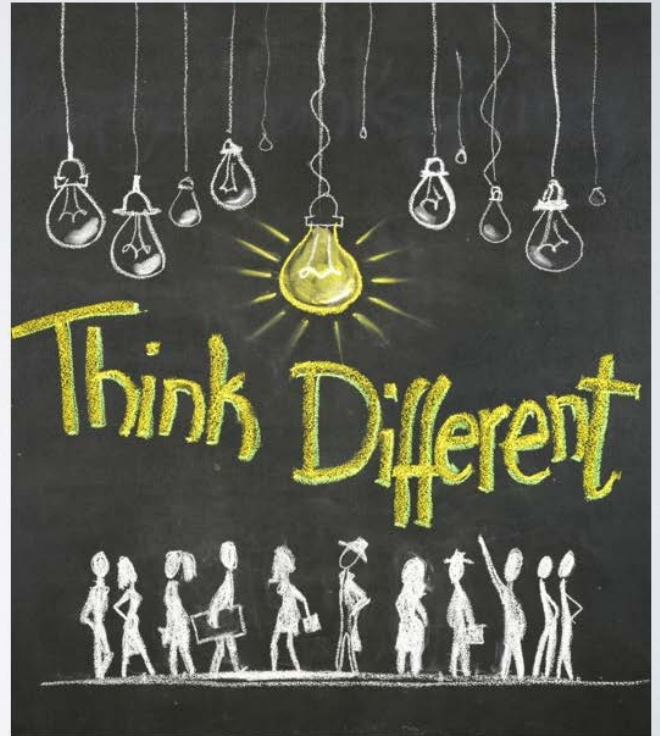
## MEETING III: CREATE CLARITY

July 16th: 12:00-2:00



# ST. G PD MEETING AGENDA

- Mission Statement
- Playbook- Answer Six Critical Questions:
  - Why do we exist?
  - How do we behave?
  - What do we do?
  - How will we succeed?
  - What is most important?
  - Who must do what?



# CAN YOU GUESS WHICH COMPANY HAS THIS MISSION STATEMENT?

- \_\_\_\_\_ Incorporated provides its customers with quality \_\_\_\_\_ products and the expertise required for making informed buying decisions. We provide our products and services with a dedication to the highest degree of integrity and quality of customer satisfaction, developing long-term professional relationships with employees that develop pride, creating a stable working environment and company spirit.



# SIX CRITICAL QUESTIONS

- 1. Why do we exist?
- 2. How do we behave?
- 3. What do we do?
- 4. How will we succeed?
- 5. What is most important?
- 6. Who must do what?



# WHY DO WE EXIST?

- The answer to this question will yield a core purpose, or fundamental reason we are in business.



# “WHY DO WE EXIST?” CATEGORIES

- “Customer” is the category that fits our purpose. This purpose is directly related to serving the needs of an organization’s customer or primary constituent (STUDENTS).
- **Nordstrom** is a good example of this. Their underlying motivation for everything they do is about serving customers. It not really about fashion, though they certainly have to be good at that; it’s about giving people what they’re looking for, no matter what.



# WHY PROTOCOL ?

- The Why Questions: Why do we exist?
- **The “Why Questioning”** (10 minutes) The “why question” is asked and the participant responds. Another “why question” is asked in response to the participant’s answer. This continues with a maximum of five “why questions” being asked.
- **Discussion** (5 minutes) The group then discusses what they have heard the presenter say. The discussion is not a solving of a problem but an attempt to help the participant understand the underlying cause for the issue he or she described. The participant is silent.
- **Response (3 minutes)** The participant responds to what has been said. The group is silent.
- **Debrief ( 3minutes)** The group and presenter debrief the experience.





# HOW DO WE BEHAVE?

- This question examines behaviors and values required for success.
- Example: Southwest-  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=07LFBydGjaM>



# HOW DO WE BEHAVE?

Activity: Dissect employees in the organization who already embody what is best about the organization. What is true about these employees that make them admired. Identify those who are not a good fit and what is it about them that makes them a distraction and a problem.





# WHAT DO WE DO?

- This answer provides a simple, direct explanation of the business.



# WHAT DO WE DO?

**Activity:** Quietly write down a sentence or two about what you think the organization does.



# HOW WILL WE SUCCEED?

- This question requires the team members to develop a strategy.



# AFFINITY PROTOCOL

- Question: How will we succeed?
- First Step: Each participant will write one idea in response to the question per post-it note. Work silently on your own.
- Step 2: Split into groups of 4. In silence, put all post-it notes on the chart paper:
- Step 3: All participants should remain silent and organize ideas by “natural” categories: Which ideas go together? As long as you do not talk, feel free to move around the post-its. Do not be offended if someone moves yours to a place that you think it does not belong, just move it to where you think it does belong-but do this all in silence.”



# AFFINITY PROTOCOL

- Step 4: Place post-it notes on chart paper in neat columns. At this point, the groups will converse about the categories and come up with a name for each one.
- Step 5: Each group will pick a “spokesperson” to report their ideas to the larger group. We will have an open discussion using questions such as the following to help participants make connections between each group’s responses and categories:
  - I. What themes emerged? Were there any surprises?
  - II. What dimensions are missing from our “maps”? Again, any surprises?
  - III. How did this expand your knowledge or your notion of what the question at the beginning asked you to consider: How will we succeed?



# WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT, RIGHT NOW?

- The answer to this question is the establishment of a unifying thematic goal and action plan.





# WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT, RIGHT NOW?

- Step 1: "If we accomplish one thing during the next x months, what would it be?" Share and debate answers. Use the following statement: If we do not accomplish \_\_\_\_\_, we have failed."
- Step 2: Discuss the list and we will determine if some of the answers are actually a standard operating objective. To determine this distinction, we will consider the following ideas:
  - "Is this something that is always important?"  
"When are we not worried about that?" "How is that different from last semester or next semester or next year?"
- **Note that the thematic goal is only for a specific period of time, and then it goes away. If something is always important, it is more likely than not a standard operating objective (refer to the clarification handout).**



# WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT, RIGHT NOW?

- Next, the team will review the newly sorted list to identify which goal rises to the top as the most important.
- Teams must then put a stake in the ground to select thematic goal.
- Review the list of suggestions; many of these activities/concepts will likely populate the defining objectives and standard operating objectives.
- The team will continue the discussion until there are 4-6 defining objectives (activities/components that define the goal) and outline several of the team's standard operating objectives (areas of focus that don't change from period to period).





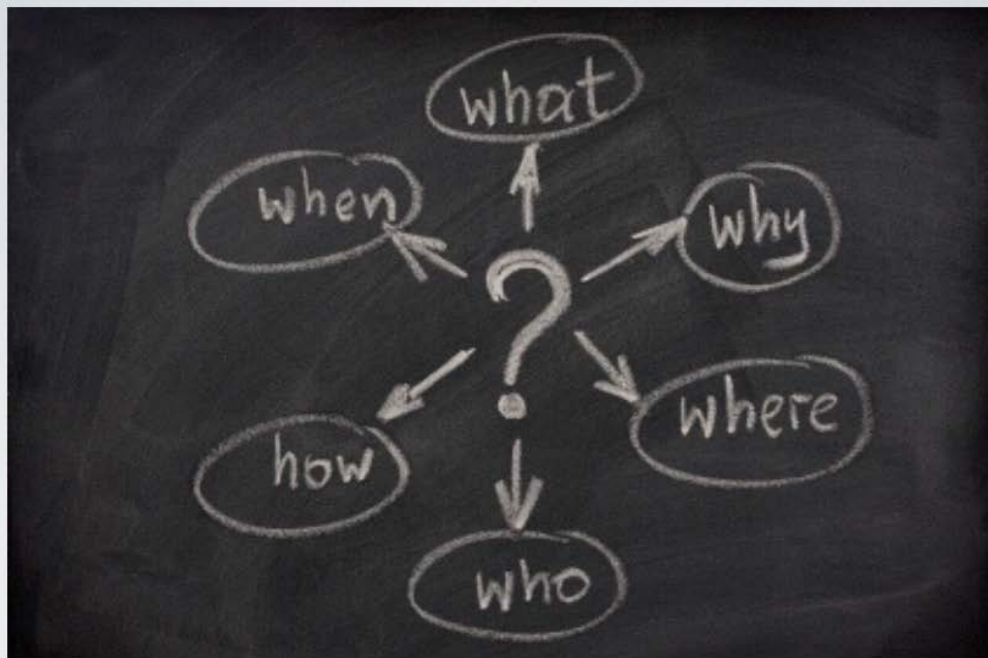
# THE ST. GEORGES' PLAYBOOK



# WHO MUST DO WHAT?

- This question addresses roles and responsibilities.



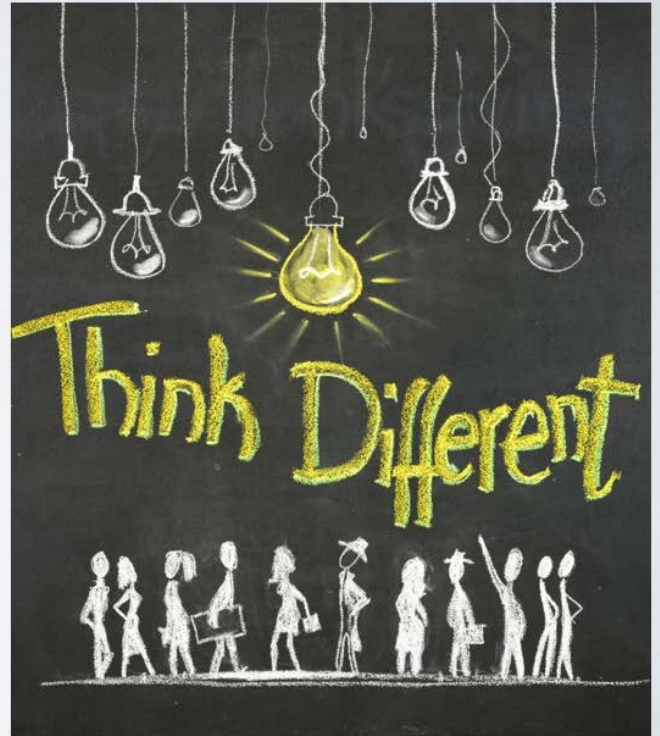


## MEETING IV: OVERCOMMUNICATE CLARITY

August 5th and 11th: 10:00-3:00

# ST. G PD MEETING AGENDA

- Commitment Clarification Exercise
- Communication Plan
- Cascading Communication Plan
- Key Elements in Effective Communication of the Vision



# COMMITMENT CLARIFICATION EXERCISE

- Each team members will provide a response to the following questions: What have we agreed upon today?
- If there is no consensus, the team will have further discussion to eliminate any discrepancies and clarify commitments and agreements.
- All commitments will be posted on the whiteboard and in the notes.



# COMMUNICATION PLAN

- Team members will develop a communication plan template that identifies the following:
  - Core Belief
  - Purpose
  - Goals (or Defining Objectives)
  - How (Interpersonal/Mass)



# CASCADING COMMUNICATION EXERCISE

- The team will decide which of the commitments and agreements should be communicated to the rest of the organization.
- Next, team members will go back to the teams they lead and communicate the commitments and agreements.
  - Communicate in-person, not written communication.
  - Allow for conversation and questions to clarify message.





# KEY ELEMENTS IN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION OF THE VISION

- Simplicity
- Metaphor, analogy, and example
- Multiple forums
- Repetition
- Leadership by example
- Explanation of seeming inconsistencies
- Give-and-take





## **APPENDIX D**

### **The Professional Learning Innovation - St. Georges Grant**

#### **Lessons in Literacy at St. Georges Technical High School, Year Two**

Innovation Grant Application: Reimagining Professional Learning

**Priority Area:** Increasing student achievement in the areas of literacy, specifically analysis and synthesis in the areas of discipline, specific literacy in the areas of reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

Shanta Reynolds, Principal

St. Georges Technical High School

New Castle County Vocational-Technical School District

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Middletown, DE 19709

302-449-3609

shanta.reynolds@nccvt.k12.de.us

## **Section 1: Activity Description: Need for the Activity and Alignment to School/District Goals**

### **Abstract**

St. Georges Technical High School (SGTHS), part of the New Castle County Vocational-Technical School District (NCCVTSD), analyzed district internal assessment data and SAT scores from the 2015-2016 school year to determine the needed areas of focus around our implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). SGTHS did not meet the district's goal to have 80% of SGTHS students proficient on the SAT. An analysis of the SAT's Evidence Based Reading and Writing (EBRW) scores indicated that only 56% of St. Georges' students met proficiency. Based on this data, it is evident that St. Georges needs to focus on literacy development to increase the number of students who are proficient on the EBRW of the SAT and meet or exceed the NCCVT and SGTHS goal. Furthermore, by working towards this goal, St. Georges will work to reduce the college remediation rate for its students. Based on the most recent data, 47% of the students from St. Georges needed collegiate remediation.

The St. Georges team analyzed the data and attempted to identify possibilities for improving CCSS implementation. The team determined that literacy; with an emphasis on analysis and synthesis, was a logical starting point for professional learning based on college and career needs. Based on the needs assessment data above, SGTHS will implement a two-phase professional development program personalized to the individual needs of each content and career area. The plan will be a continuation of this past year's "Lessons in Literacy" initiative that provided teachers with personalized learning

opportunities. In phase one, teachers will work collaboratively within the content and career areas to learn about and to develop discipline specific literacy strategies. During phase two, instructors will implement the strategies into their classrooms and engage in numerous cycles of inquiry focused on student data and the literacy initiative. Throughout this process, SGTHS will provide personalized, high-quality professional development to improve teacher practice and increase the instructional prowess of the teachers, which in turn should lead to an increase in student achievement and close our achievement gaps identified in our three main subgroups: race, gender, and career program.

The school will measure effectiveness of our program by analyzing the outcome of the module surveys, walkthroughs, evaluations, and internal/external assessments. The ongoing staff surveys will provide the school with information about the quality of the professional development and the impact of the program on teacher practice. The walkthroughs and evaluations will provide teachers with feedback about their practice and will serve as observable data that teachers are incorporating the strategies learned. Additionally, the utilization of the internal and external assessments (i.e. district unit assessments, SAT data, etc.) will provide the school with a clear understanding of the program's ability to improve student performance and narrow the achievement gaps. Specifically, these rich, relevant data sources will shed light on our program's effectiveness at closing the achievement gap between African American and Caucasian students, male and female students, and the gap that exists between our varying career

areas. St. Georges is asking for a \$39,995.57 innovative grant to help achieve these goals.

### **Needs Assessment Findings**

St. Georges analyzed internal and external data that focused on literacy, which included SAT, PLC (ACE), school-based surveys, and the SAI survey to determine our area of weaknesses in the ongoing “Lessons in Literacy” plan. NCCVTSD uses the SAT as a measure for college and career readiness. To further inform our literacy focus, student data from the EBRW portion of the SAT was disaggregated by ethnicity, gender, and career area. This data indicated a clear gap between the different subgroups.

Figure 1 shows that African American students’ proficiency on EBRW was 16 percent less than Caucasian students. Figure 2 indicates that male students’ proficiency was 20 percent less than females. Additionally, as shown in Figure 3, we found that within our school, the career programs of carpentry, plumbing, and web and print had the lowest percentage of students meeting the proficiency benchmark.

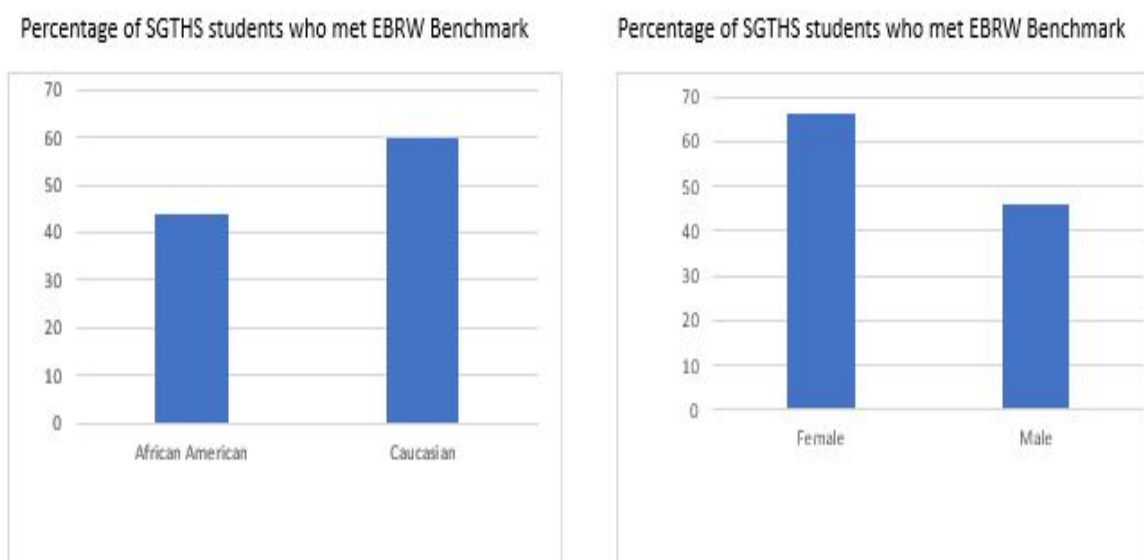


Figure D1. Percentage of St. Georges students that met the EBRW benchmark based on ethnicity.

Figure D2. Percentage of St. Georges students that met the ERW benchmark based on gender.

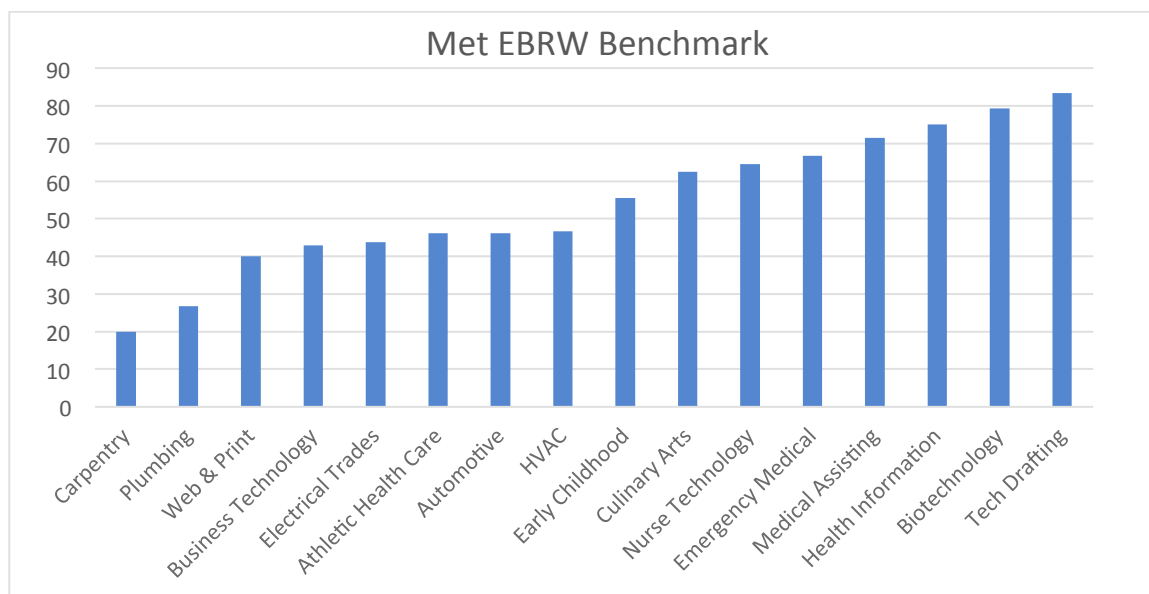


Figure D3. Percentage of St. Georges students achieving proficiency in EBRW based on Career Area

### **Goals/Intended Outcomes for Student Learning**

In comparison with 2016 national data from College Board, 44 percent of St. Georges students are not meeting proficiency for EBRW. These scores indicate that our students will require remediation at the college level.

The St. Georges team analyzed the data and attempted to identify possibilities for improving CCSS implementation. The team determined that literacy was a logical starting point for professional learning based on college and career readiness. In order for students to be college and career ready, they must have the ability to effectively analyze a variety of texts, think critically, and synthesize information in written and oral presentations. To make this a reality, students need to be exposed to a variety of literacy tasks, complex texts, and scaffolded, high quality questions across content areas. Additionally, St. Georges teachers look to consider the soft skills students will need in post-secondary settings. In addition to the core reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills, STGHS students need to develop the 21st century skills of communication, teamwork, and professional presentation that our career area advisory boards have indicated are paramount skills needed in the workplace. Explicitly teaching all these skills will decrease the percentage of St. Georges students taking remedial college classes.

**Intended outcomes for teacher practice.** To increase student achievement in the areas identified above, St. Georges' teachers will receive professional development on research-based instructional literacy practices. Opportunities to attempt, reflect, and

revisit these practices will help teachers effectively implement the instructional practices in their content and career areas.

**Description of alignment with school and NCCVTSD goals.** St. Georges focuses efforts, beliefs, and behaviors on enhancing student learning. We are willing to take risks and step out of personal comfort zones to ensure that all students receive the best education possible. We utilize research-based instructional strategies, such as Learning-Focused. We develop units and higher order thinking lessons around the NCCVTSD curriculum, which is fully aligned with the CCSS. The current state assessment, the SAT, is taken into consideration when preparing our students for post-secondary opportunities. With these goals in mind, St. Georges strives to provide quality instructional practices to effectively ensure our students are fully prepared for real life tasks and challenges.

St. Georges instructors use CCSS aligned NCCVTSD curricula in all content areas to engage students in high quality instruction and learning. BRINC, another district initiative, provides the opportunity for students to learn through Blended Learning and other nontraditional ways that utilize technology.

### **Implementation Narrative**

#### **Description of Prior Professional Development and its Impact**

During the 2016-2017 school year, St. Georges began implementing its “Lessons in Literacy” initiative, which was backed by the Reimagining Professional Learning Grant. The St. Georges staff were introduced to the ACE (Action, Collaboration, Evidence) modules, which took place via online work and face-to-face instruction and

support. These ACE modules served as our school-wide PLC structure. ACE first focused on developing foundational knowledge about literacy. Specifically, during fall 2016, educators went through four phases that covered 21st century literacy skills, reading, writing, speaking, and listening. This phase was critical because it provided a common language and foundational knowledge to build upon. During spring 2017, this work continued and teachers were able to choose a path to personalize their own learning and practice. Within the modules, educators read research-based articles, reflected on their own practices, developed practice activities, and collaborated with colleagues. As we look forward to the 2017-2018 school year, there is a clear need to continue our literacy work to ensure that creative, effective literacy practices are pervasive across all content and CTE area classrooms.

### **Description of Relevant Student and/or Faculty Demographics**

St. Georges Technical High School opened in 2006-2007 with a ninth-grade class of approximately 260 students. There are currently 1,118 students in grades 9-12. The students who attend St. Georges come from 33 different public and charter middle schools throughout New Castle County. Approximately 11.6 percent of the students at St. Georges are eligible for special education services. Fifty-two percent of the students are males and 48 percent of the students are females. Forty-four percent of the students are categorized as minority and 54 percent are categorized majority.

The school consists of 95 staff members, 49 percent of which have 9 or less years of teaching experience, including 78 teachers (19 career area teachers and 59 academic teachers), 1 librarian, 9 instructional support staff and 7 pupil support staff. Table 1



provides a breakdown of years of teaching experience. Research has shown that teachers with more than five years in the classroom seem to be the most effective. Note that 19% of our teachers have 4 years or less of teaching experience.

Table D1

*Teachers' Years of Teaching Experience*

Years of Teaching	Percentage of Staff Members
4 Years or Less	19%
5 - 9 Years	30%
10 - 14 Years	18%
15 - 19 Years	14%
20 - 24 Years	8%
25 - 29 Years	10%
30 Years or More	1%

**Description of Systems in Place or in Development to Support Professional Learning**

The school utilizes walkthroughs, peer visits, and professional learning communities to support professional learning. Administrators and teachers use walkthroughs and peer visits to provide formative feedback on instructional practice. Professional learning communities are used to reinforce curricular concepts and to review data.

**Walkthroughs.** During the 2016-2017 school year, the instructional leadership team used a coaching model that gave teachers and school leaders an opportunity to collaboratively discuss best practices and to establish goals to increase student

achievement. The coaching model was based on observation and feedback concepts noted in the guidebook, *Leverage Leadership*, by Paul Bambrick-Santoyo (2012). Currently, instructional coaches provide teachers with feedback on the elements of instruction, technology implementation, and the literacy initiative. Coaches typically spend 10 to 15 minutes observing instruction and then provide formative feedback.

**Action, collaboration, evidence (ACE).** ACE replaced the traditional PLC term because it had a negative connotation within our building. In ACE, teachers work collaboratively to learn various literacy specific strategies to enhance the learning environment for their students. During the ACE meetings, teachers spend time discussing and developing lesson activities that align to Common Core State Standards and our literacy focus. Additionally, teachers implement what they have learned from the ACE meetings into their classrooms and share their experiences. Both teachers and administrators work collaboratively in ACE.

### **Connections with Other School and District Initiatives**

The three-year strategic plan for district professional development states that NCCVT educators are equipped to provide students with an education that is personalized, innovative, relevant, and rigorous through ongoing, demand-driven professional development. During the 2016-2017 school year, St. Georges infused the district's focus on technology to develop blended learning opportunities for staff to support our literacy initiative. The higher-order thinking skills that St. Georges will highlight next school year focuses on literacy, specifically in the areas of analysis and synthesis of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. We plan to reach out to other

schools that have done reasonably well on the EBRW portion of the SAT to gain insight on the professional development and resources they are utilizing to gain higher levels of student achievement and close their achievement gaps.

### **Instructional Leadership Team Composition and Engagement**

At St. Georges, the administrative team has created a teacher-led committee called the Powerful Development Team (PDT). Teacher leaders were required to apply and interview to be a part of the team. Teacher leaders that were selected have been provided opportunities to attend professional learning workshops across the country and to develop relationships with one another through team-building exercises. The members of the committee meet biweekly to discuss initiatives and next steps. Additional off-site meetings are held to plan for upcoming initiatives. The team is made up of four administrators, an instructional coach, one career instructor, two academic instructors, and a special educator. Currently, the PDT has designed instructional goals for the 2017-2018 school year and is working on completing this grant collaboratively to further fund our “Lessons in Literacy” initiative for year two of our three-year plan. Together with our newest members of the PDT coming on board at the end of this school year, we aim to strengthen the foundation already created during year one of our professional learning. In preparing for the 2017-2018 implementation, a strong emphasis on students' writing skills at all grade levels, and personalized, discipline specific literacy strategies will be the impetus to closing our achievement gaps and collegiate remediation rates.

### **Additional Details to Support Alignment to the Professional Learning Standards**

The PDT will serve as the core group that will ensure the action plan is effectively implemented by designing the ACE modules and evaluating their effectiveness using the Guskey model of professional development to determine the effectiveness of the ACE groups and modules as they have done during the year one implementation (Guskey, 2002).

**Learning communities.** The PDT operates as a learning community. The team will also evaluate the action plan to assess if the intended results are being accomplished. Members will take collective responsibility for all decisions made to the action plan. They will also be responsible for communicating outcomes to staff members and other stakeholders.

**Leadership.** The PDT is made up of teacher leaders and administrators, who will develop capacity through professional development and leadership opportunities, will hold decision-making power, will serve as advocates on behalf of stakeholders, and will create support for smooth transition of new initiatives.

**Resources.** Through the grant, the PDT plans to prioritize monies to fund engaging professional learning opportunities, purchases supplies, and provide technology needed to advance student learning and the collection of data.

**Data.** The PDT will collect data (Pre/Post data, SAT, PSAT, etc.) that shows increase literacy skills among students, proficiency on the EBRW section of the SAT (80% goal), and a decrease in the subgroup SAT achievement gaps. Data will be utilized

to plan subsequent instruction, professional learning, and an overall action plan for year three.

**Learning design.** The PDT will build on the instructional initiatives (i.e. writing, reading, speaking and listening, peer collaboration, blended learning, etc.) that were instituted during the 2016-2017 school year. Each initiative will continue to play an integral role in ensuring all career and academic instructors have the skills and content necessary to teach students how to communicate effectively. While SGTSHS instructors are building an emphasis on writing, students will also improve their abilities to analyze and synthesize information, defend answers and opinions based on evidence, and clearly articulate and defend ideas orally.

**Implementation.** The team will continue to utilize research-based strategies that will encourage literacy skills and implement new initiatives as needed, while modifying and revising initiatives already created. Support systems via instructional coaching and personalized learning options for teachers will be put in place to ensure successful completion and continuation of key objectives.

**Outcomes.** The overarching goal is to increase student literacy skills. Consistent check-ins and formative reviews will be directly tied into peer-to-peer observations, as well as administrative walkthroughs and evaluations. Students achieving the performance target on internal and external assessments will serve as an indicator of successful implementation of the action plan. During the 2017-2018 school-year, teachers will focus on the RARE<sup>2</sup> writing strategy and utilize it to create a process of continuous skill development for students. It will require students to combine their

reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills in all content and career areas.

Throughout the school-year, teachers will analyze assessment data to inform their practice and evaluate student's proficiency level in reading and writing. Ultimately, 80% of St. Georges' students will meet or exceed SAT proficiency level (EBRW 480) and the gap in our identified subgroups will decrease.

### **Current and Potential Partners Named and the Scope of Work**

The following partners will assist the team in achieving the established goal: 1) University of Delaware- PDCE, 2) Area High Schools (Delcastle, Hodgson, Howard, Polytech), 3) Erik Palmer, and 4) Jim Knight Coaching Training.

### **Section 2: Monitoring Progress and Program Evaluation**

#### **Systems for Gathering and Analyzing Evidence for Impact of Professional Learning on Teacher Practice and Student Learning**

The school will measure effectiveness of our program by analyzing the outcome of the module surveys, walkthroughs, evaluations, and internal/external assessments. The staff surveys will provide the school with information about the quality of the professional learning and the impact of the program on teacher practice. The walkthroughs and evaluations will provide teachers with feedback about their practice and will serve as observable data that teachers are incorporating the strategies learned. Additionally, the utilization of the internal and external assessments (i.e. district unit assessments and SAT data) will provide the school with a clear understanding of the program's ability to improve student performance.

To evaluate the program throughout the year, the school will use walkthroughs and staff surveys. Administrators and teacher leaders will complete monthly walkthroughs throughout the year to collect data from each classroom. The data will allow administrators and teachers to review the effectiveness of the professional learning. Additional data will be collected and reviewed using teacher surveys. The surveys will be administered at the conclusion of each module to assess the implementation of the program, teacher perception, need for increased professional support, and the school-wide impact of the program. The PDT will engage in a monthly cycle of inquiry by analyzing data and qualitative information. The objective of these meetings is to interpret the evidence and then determine the needs of staff members. Based on the information produced from the data analysis, the PDT will devise a plan to address areas of weakness. The plan may include small group intervention, additional professional development, webinars, and/or online modules. Once the intervention has been implemented, the team will reassess the newly gathered data and determine if additional supports are necessary or if a new area of focus should be addressed.

The program will be implemented in two phases during the 2017-2018 school-year. The initial learning phase will take place during fall 2017. During this phase, teachers will develop an understanding of our reading and writing strategy, RARE<sup>2</sup>, at each grade level within their content and career areas, as well as discipline specific literacy strategies and the Data Wise cycle of inquiry process (Boudett, City, & Murnane, 2013). Once teachers have gained a clear understanding and developed specific expectations for RARE<sup>2</sup>, they will choose a focus class to implement the RARE<sup>2</sup> writing

strategies they have been working collaboratively by discipline and grade level to develop. Throughout this process, teachers will continue to meet within their department/career clusters to analyze data, share best practices, and receive additional instructional support. Teachers will utilize resources in both face-to-face ACE meetings and Schoology to ensure that the professional learning is focused on their greatest area of need as they implement the literacy initiative (Schoology, 2018). This process will ensure that all students are receiving the necessary literacy skills to be successful upon graduation and will also serve as a catalyst to narrow our achievement gaps. Specifically, our identified sub-groups will be continuously monitored to inform the ongoing literacy initiative as we move from phase one to phase two.

At the end of each phase, a program summary will be provided to stakeholders as a snapshot of progress and next steps. Additionally, once the program is fully implemented and the results are interpreted, a general overview of the program and results will be presented to the district. The resources and information outlining the program will be stored on Schoology, enabling sharing with other educational professionals (Schoology, 2018). In addition, The PDT will provide data to support continuation of this program for year three.



### Section 3: Budget and Budget Narrative

Table D2

#### *State of DE Department of Education State Funds Budget Form*

<b>State Subgrant:</b>	Reimagining Professional Learning Innovation Grant		<b>Project Start Date:</b>	7/1/2017	
<b>Project Title:</b>	Lessons in Literacy at STGHS, Year Two				
<b>LEA/Agency:</b>	St. Georges Technical HS/ NCCVTSD		<b>Project End Date:</b>	6/30/2018	
<b>Expense Types and Account Codes: Salaries (5100) and Other Employee Costs (5120)</b>					
Employee Name	Title	FTE Percentage	State Funds Requested	Matching Funds	Total Funds
<b><u>PROFESSIONAL:</u></b>					
	-	-	\$	\$	\$
Vacant	Teacher/Powerful Development Team		\$930.00		\$930.00
Vacant	Teacher/Powerful Development Team		\$930.00		\$930.00
Vacant	Teacher/Powerful Development Team		\$930.00		\$930.00
Vacant	Teacher/Powerful Development Team		\$930.00		\$930.00
Vacant	Teacher/Powerful Development Team		\$930.00		\$930.00
Vacant	Teacher/Powerful Development Team		\$930.00		\$930.00
Vacant	Teacher/Powerful Development Team		\$930.00		\$930.00
Vacant	Teacher/Powerful Development Team		\$930.00		\$930.00
Vacant	Teacher/Powerful Development Team		\$930.00		\$930.00
Vacant	Teacher/Powerful Development Team		\$930.00		\$930.00
		Professional Subtotal	\$9,300.00	\$0.00	\$9,300.00
<b><u>SUBSTITUTES:</u></b>			\$	\$	\$
		Substitutes Subtotal	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
		Support Staff Subtotal	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
		Students Subtotal	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b><u>SALARY TOTAL:</u></b>	<b>\$9,300.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$9,300.00</b>		

(continued)

Table D2

*State of DE Department of Education State Funds Budget Form (continued)*

<b>OTHER EMPLOYEE COSTS:</b>	\$	\$	\$			
FICA			6.20%	\$576.60	\$0.00	\$576.60
Medicare			1.45%	\$134.85	\$0.00	\$134.85
Pension			22.28%	\$2,072.04	\$0.00	\$2,072.04
Workman's Comp			1.45%	\$134.85	\$0.00	\$134.85
Unemployment Insurance			0.11%	\$10.23	\$0.00	\$10.23
			31.49%			
Health Insurance/Other Non-taxed Benefits					\$0.00	
<b>OEC TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$2,928.57</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$2,928.57</b>			
<b>SALARY AND OEC TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$12,228.57</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$12,228.57</b>			
<b>Expense Types and Account Codes: Travel (5400)</b>						
Destination		Purpose		# of Travelers	State Funds Requested	Matching Funds
					\$	\$
<b>TOTAL TRAVEL COSTS</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>			
<b>Expense Types and Account Codes: Contractual Services (5500)</b>						
Vendor Name		Service Provided			State Funds Requested	Matching Funds
University of DE - PDCE		Working with teachers as a non-evaluative coach for discipline specific literacy strategies.			<b>\$9,380.00</b>	<b>\$10,000.00</b>
						\$0.00
<b>TOTAL CONTRACTUAL SERVICES COSTS</b>	<b>\$9,380.00</b>	<b>\$10,000.00</b>	<b>\$19,380.00</b>			
<b>Expense Types and Account Codes: Supplies and Materials (5600)</b>						
Item Description	Quantity	Unit Price	State Funds Requested	Matching Funds		Total Funds
ASCD Membership	10	160	<b>\$1,600.00</b>			<b>\$1,600.00</b>

(continued)

Table D2

*State of DE Department of Education State Funds Budget Form (continued)*

<b>TOTAL SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS COSTS</b>	<b>\$1,600.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$1,600.00</b>		
<b>Expense Types and Account Codes:</b>					
<b>Capital Outlay (5700)</b>					
Item Description	Quantity	Unit Price	State Funds Requested	Matching Funds	Total Funds
			\$	\$	\$
<b>Replacement Equipment</b>					\$0.00
iPads for Swivls	9	299	\$2,691.00		\$2,691.00
Video Camera	2	2048	\$4,096.00		\$4,096.00
<b>TOTAL SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS COSTS</b>	<b>\$6,787.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$6,787.00</b>		
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>State Funds Requested</b>	<b>Matching Funds</b>	<b>Total Funds</b>		
	<b>\$29,995.57</b>	<b>\$10,000.00</b>	<b>\$39,995.57</b>		

**St. Georges Technical High School Budget Narrative**

**Section 1: Salaries.** There are ten teacher leaders who currently work on the Powerful Development Team. These individuals will be allotted thirty hours over the school year to develop, mentor, lead, and evaluate professional development based on literacy throughout the school year. These funds will pay them for their time outside of the regular school day. The “vacant” positions represent staff members who will be interviewed and chosen to form the new Powerful Development Team.

**Section 3: Conceptual service.** The University of Delaware will work as a non-evaluative coach for our teachers. When struggling with a literacy concept in their classroom, the University of Delaware would come in and help guide and provide more resources for that struggling teacher (<http://www.pdce.udel.edu/becoming-partner/>)

The Professional Development Center for Educators will:

- Support teachers' knowledge of and skills for engaging students in CCSS-ELA aligned disciplinary literacy skills, including reading, writing, speaking, and listening in the domains of mathematics, science, social studies, and ELA.
- Provide teachers with support in planning and implementing opportunities for students to learn domain-specific skills for reading, writing, speaking, and listening.
- Enhance teachers' pedagogical skills for engaging students in domain-specific reading, writing, speaking, and listening during regular classroom instruction.

### **Section 5: Supplies and Materials**

**ASCD membership.** This membership will be provided to members of the Powerful Development Team. This will allow the stakeholders to use the professional development resources and books provided by ASCD for continued learning within this learning community.

### **Section 6: Equipment**

**iPads for Swivls (9).** The iPads and Swivls will be loaned out to teachers to record the innovative lessons they are using in their classrooms. The Swivl is a robotic recorder and camera for the classroom but can do many more things to let the teacher help students as they work (Swivl, 2016). The iPhone, iPad or camera attaches to the Swivl to capture audio and video data which can be uploaded to the Swivl cloud (Swivl, 2016). These lessons will then be uploaded to Schoology (2018) and used as a resource bank for teachers to see examples of how literacy is being implemented within other classes. Swivls were purchased from the 2016-2017 Reimagining Professional Learning Grant, these are the iPads to use in conjunction with the Swivls.

**Video Camera (2).** The cameras will be used to record classroom spotlights, professional development sessions and student highlights. These items will be uploaded to Schoology for stakeholder accessibility.

## Section 4: Action Plan

### Area One: Design - Data, Learning Designs, Leadership, Resources

Outcome	Action Steps	Responsibilities	Resources	Timeline	Status with Evidence
Teachers will demonstrate an understanding of discipline specific literacy in the areas of reading, writing and speaking & listening and RARE <sup>2</sup> .	<p><b>Pre-Phase 1</b></p> <p>1) Train the trainer sessions: ACE facilitators will be selected and trained on the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Data Wise inquiry process (how to analyze data)</li> <li>b. Discipline specific literacy strategies/ the ACE modules</li> <li>c. Facilitating adult learners</li> <li>d. RARE<sup>2</sup> school wide expectations</li> </ul> <p>2) Full Day Professional development will focus on reviewing the St. Georges' literacy focus from the 2016-2017 school year and launching the 2017-2018 school year with discipline specific literacy, focusing on reading, writing and speaking/listening and RARE<sup>2</sup>.</p> <p><b>Phase 1</b></p> <p>1) Discipline specific literacy: Small Group ACE groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Teachers will collaborate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Powerful Development Team</li> <li>● Instructional Leadership Team</li> <li>● Administrators</li> <li>● Instructional coaches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Data Wise</li> <li>● <u>Evaluating Professional Development-</u> Guskey</li> <li>● Erik Palmer</li> <li>● Schoology</li> <li>● ASCD Resources</li> <li>● University of Delaware's Professional Development Center for Educators (for content area literacy resources)</li> <li>● Walkthrough tool</li> <li>● Discipline specific literacy needs assessment</li> </ul>	<p>August 2017-February 2018</p> <p>Aug 2017- train the trainer sessions</p> <p>Aug 2017- Full day PD to kick off the 17-18 school year</p> <p>Sept. 17-Feb 18- Phase 1</p>	<p><i>Note: Evidence to be collected will be ACE group implementation plans, district assessments, ACE agendas and minutes, Schoology data and analytics, literacy data from 2017-2018 assessments.</i></p>

	<p>weekly in small group, content specific PLCs (ACE groups) and Schoology courses to discuss and learn about the instructional focus.</p> <p>Part 1- professional learning for teachers on discipline specific literacy will alternate between online and face to face meetings and to be based on individual and department needs after the ACE facilitators conduct a group needs assessment.</p> <p>Part 2- professional learning for teachers on literacy strategies relating to the reading→ writing→ speaking/listening→ writing school wide model (using RARE<sup>2</sup>). Teachers will work through the process of teaching reading strategies in order for students to effectively analyze the text in preparation for writing tasks. Students will also be taught to engage in opportunities to discuss and present their ideas, which will</p>				
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	<p>better inform their writing to engage in the writing process. Teachers will determine based on grade level and content how implementation will occur. Meetings will alternate between online and face to face sessions.</p> <p>b) ACE groups will generate a plan for focus class implementation of chosen literacy strategies. These will be face to face sessions.</p> <p>c) After planning the implementation, teachers will work in ACE groups to demo lessons and receive feedback before delivering the lesson to students. Anchor /sample papers based on the chosen literacy strategies will be developed and used by teachers and students.</p> <p>2) Ongoing Phase 1 Monitoring Teachers will develop anchor/sample papers/model lessons based on discipline specific literacy strategies developed in their ACE</p>				
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	<p>groups and refine them through peer feedback.</p> <p>a. Teachers will use peer collaboration to support each other as they implement literacy strategies in their classes.</p> <p>b. Administrators, coaches, and teacher leaders will conduct formative walkthroughs to gather data to inform future professional learning to support literacy implementation.</p>				
<p>All teachers will implement discipline specific literacy strategies in the areas of reading, writing, speaking &amp; listening.</p>	<p><b>Phase Two</b></p> <p>1) Discipline specific literacy: Small Group ACE Focus</p> <p>a. Teachers will select a focus class to implement their plan from phase 1.</p> <p>b. Teachers will implement their ACE plan developed in Phase 1 and collect student achievement data to bring back to the ACE groups for reporting and analysis.</p> <p>c. Teachers will go through 1-2 cycles of inquiry:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Powerful Development Team</li> <li>● Instructional Leadership Team</li> <li>● Administrators</li> <li>● Instructional coaches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Data Wise</li> <li>● <u>Evaluating Professional Development</u>-Guskey</li> <li>● Erik Palmer</li> <li>● Schoology</li> <li>● ASCD Resources</li> <li>● University of Delaware's Professional Development Center for Educators (for content area literacy resources).</li> </ul>	<p>February 2018- June 2018 Phase 2</p>	<p><i>Note: Evidence to be collected will be ACE agendas and minutes, Schoology data analytics, walkthrough data, literacy data from 2017-2018 assessments.</i></p>

	<p>Implementation of the plan, data collection, review of data, determine instructional next steps.</p> <p>2) Ongoing Monitoring of Phase 2</p> <p>Administrative walkthroughs and peer visits will be utilized to ensure that literacy strategies are being effectively implemented.</p>				
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## Section 4: Action Plan

### *Area Two: Implementation and Support - Learning Communities, Data, Learning Design, Implementation*

Outcome	Action Steps	Responsibilities	Resources	Timeline	Status with Evidence
Professional development is personalized.	1) Individualization: Teachers will have opportunities to select from an assortment of professional learning sessions relating to discipline specific literacy within the ACE modules based on their instructional and discipline specific needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Powerful Development Team</li> <li>• Instructional Leadership Team</li> <li>• Administrators</li> <li>• Instructional coaches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schoology PD modules</li> <li>• Data Wise</li> <li>• ASCD resources</li> </ul>	Develop differentiated professional learning via ACE modules on Schoology during summer of 2017.	<i>Note: Evidence to be collected will be professional development modules on Schoology data and analytics.</i>
Professional development is continuous and sustainable.	1) Continued Growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Schoology will be utilized as an online platform that provides continuous support to teachers following professional development.</li> <li>b. Professional learning sessions will require specific outcomes, implementation, and reflective practices that take place during and after the professional learning.</li> <li>c. ACE sessions, professional learning and model classroom lessons will be taped periodically and posted on the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Powerful Development Team</li> <li>• Instructional Leadership Team</li> <li>• Administrators</li> <li>• Instructional coaches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schoology PD Modules</li> <li>• Data Wise</li> <li>• <u>Evaluating Professional Development</u>-Guskey</li> <li>• ASCD Resources</li> <li>• University of Delaware's PDCE (to train instructional leaders)</li> <li>• Walkthrough tool</li> <li>• Canon Professional Camcorder</li> </ul>	Throughout Phase 1: The teacher leaders, PDT, and administrators will analyze and inform professional development based on teacher and student data.  Throughout Phase 2: The teacher leaders, PDT,	<i>Note: Evidence to be collected will be PLC agendas and minutes, walkthrough data, Schoology data and analytics, literacy assessment data, videotaped lessons/PLCs</i>

	<p>Schoology ACE course to serve as models.</p> <p>d. The instructional coaches will offer weekly open lab classrooms for teachers to visit and see literacy strategies in action.</p> <p>e. The instructional coaches will directly support new staff members in implementation to ensure they receive literacy training from the 2016-2017 school year.</p> <p>f. The instructional coaches will support the professional learning throughout the phases by working with teachers individually and in small groups, observing classrooms and offering feedback.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swivls</li> <li>• iPads</li> </ul>	and administrators will analyze and inform professional development based on teacher and student data and walkthroughs. The feedback will be provided to the individual teachers based on their focus class.	
School culture embraces reading, writing, speaking, and listening strategies and the personalized professional	<p>1) Enhancing School Culture</p> <p>a. ACE sacred Wednesdays- all instructional staff and administrators participate in ACE sessions held each Wednesday morning. No meetings are permitted to be scheduled, and non-ACE support staff are scheduled on Wednesday to cover for those</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Powerful Development Team</li> <li>• Instructional Leadership Team</li> <li>• Administrators</li> <li>• Instructional coaches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schoology PD Modules</li> <li>• Non-verbal representation templates protocols</li> <li>• Surveys</li> </ul>	<p>Biweekly Schoology Monitoring</p> <p>Quarterly check-ins</p> <p>Monthly Walkthroughs</p>	<p><i>Note: Evidence to be collected will be Schoology data and analytics, walkthrough data, survey data, non-verbal</i></p>

development in the ACE groups.	<p>teachers who usually are assigned to supervise students, so they can attend ACE. Faculty meetings are now done as “cyber faculty meetings,” so time can be devoted to ACE.</p> <p>b. Schoology assignments are monitored for completion to ensure that teachers and administrators are participating. If absent on an ACE face-to-face session, a makeup session is offered for all staff.</p> <p>c. Walkthroughs are conducted to provide evidence that teachers are embracing the literacy strategies.</p> <p>d. Surveys are administered at the end of each ACE module to inform professional learning and to enhance the program for all teachers.</p> <p>e. Non-verbal representations (i.e. data charts noting progress) of the instructional focus implementation.</p> <p>f. Model classroom lessons and/or ACE sessions will be videotaped and uploaded to Schoology to be used as additional resources for individualized support.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walkthrough tool</li> <li>• Canon Professional Camcorder</li> <li>• Swivls/iPads</li> </ul>		<i>representation evidence, videotaped lessons</i>
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## Section 4: Action Plan

### *Area Three: Evaluation - Learning Communities, Data, Resources, and Outcomes*

Outcome	Action Steps	Responsibilities	Resources	Timeline	Status with Evidence
Cycle of inquiry strategies will be utilized to inform decisions.	<p>1) Continued Evaluation</p> <p>a. Team members who attended Harvard's Data Wise Institute in 2016 will train ACE group facilitators in the cycle of inquiry.</p> <p>b. Educators will be provided professional development to explain the cycle of inquiry and the purpose of continual reflection based on student data and monitoring of identified subgroups.</p> <p>c. Educators will be using the cycle of inquiry in their ACE groups during phase 2.</p> <p>d. Teachers will be analyzing student work samples to inform their discipline specific literacy strategy selection and will ultimately increase student performance on the SAT and decrease the achievement gap between are varying subgroups.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluating Professional Development- Guskey</li> <li>Data Wise</li> <li>Schoology ACE Modules</li> <li>ASCD Resources</li> <li>Walkthrough tool</li> </ul>	<p>Data Wise training completion: Summer 2017</p> <p>Cycle of Inquiries end of MP1, MP2, MP3, and MP4 by the PDT</p> <p>Cycle of inquiries by ACE groups during phase 2.</p>	<p><i>Note: Evidence to be collected will be ACE group agendas and minutes, PDT agendas and minutes, literacy assessment data, walkthrough data.</i></p>

	<p>e. PDT will conduct professional learning quarterly cycle of inquiries to inform professional development.</p> <p>f. Teachers and administrators will use data to discuss the effectiveness and needs for implementing literacy strategies after reviewing walkthrough data in phase 2.</p>				
<p>Powerful Development and Instructional Leadership teams will evaluate and inform professional learning based on Guskey's professional development framework.</p>	<p>2) Informing Professional Learning</p> <p>a. The Powerful Development and Instructional Leadership teams will be trained on Guskey's Framework to evaluate professional development.</p> <p>b. The Powerful Development and Instructional Leadership teams will evaluate data gathered from each professional development session based on Guskey's Framework.</p> <p>c. Ongoing data throughout the process will be utilized to inform next steps for professional development via monthly data review meetings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Powerful Development Team</li> <li>• Instructional Leadership Team</li> <li>• Administrators</li> <li>• Instructional coaches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluating Professional Development- Guskey</li> <li>• Schoology ACE Modules</li> <li>• ASCD Resources</li> </ul>	<p>Summer 2017 Guskey Training for new members of the PD and ILT teams.</p> <p>2017-2018 school year quarterly check ins by PDT.</p>	<p><i>Note: Evidence to be collected will be professional learning evaluations, walkthrough data, literacy assessment data, ACE agendas and minutes.</i></p>

<p>Ongoing monitoring of the implementation of the strategies taught in the professional learning ACE sessions.</p>	<p>3) Continued Monitoring</p> <p>a. The Powerful Development and Instructional Leadership teams will create a literacy walkthrough tool to gather data from formative walkthroughs. Each month walkthroughs will be conducted, and the team will convene to analyze the data collected from the student “look-fors”. Using the Data Wise protocol, the opportunities for students to utilize analysis skills will be analyzed and at the end of the focus group implementation, the student “look-fors” will show an increase by 80% in all classrooms.</p> <p>b. The Powerful Development and Instructional Leadership team members will interact with teachers through Schoology to provide feedback, expectations, and suggestions to reinforce the literacy strategies discussed during professional learning.</p> <p>c. Administrators and teachers will participate in ACE groups collaboratively.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Powerful Development Team</li> <li>• Instructional Leadership Team</li> <li>• Administrators</li> <li>• Instructional coaches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Erik Palmer</li> <li>• Schoology PD Modules</li> <li>• ASCD Resources</li> <li>• Walkthrough tool</li> </ul>	<p>Walkthrough tool: Summer 2017</p> <p>Schoology feedback: Bi-Weekly</p> <p>ACE Participation: Bi-Weekly</p>	<p><i>Note: Evidence to be collected will be walkthrough data, Schoology data and analytics, PLC agendas and minutes.</i></p>
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## APPENDIX E

### Powerful Development Team Schoology Sites

The screenshot displays the Schoology interface for the 'St. Georges Powerful Development Team'. The top navigation bar includes links for Home, Courses, Groups, and Resources. The user's name, Shanta Reynolds, is visible in the top right corner. The left sidebar contains various navigation options: Group Options, Updates, Discussions (8), Albums (1), Members (12), Resources, Backchannel Chat, Conferences, Screencast-O-Matic, and UDLib/SEARCH. The main content area shows a list of resources under the heading 'Resources'. The list includes:

- Data Wise**: Added by Mr. Schaefer · Jun 25, 2016
- St. Georges Powerful Development Team Meetings**: Added by You · Feb 8, 2016
- Additional Resources**: Added by You · Oct 17, 2015
- Teaching the Core Skills of Listening and Speaking**: Added by You · Apr 30, 2016
- DASL Materials- Reading, Speaking, Listening and Writing Materials**: Added by You · May 27, 2016

The bottom of the sidebar shows an Access Code: 28GHH-ZBM7X, with a Reset button.

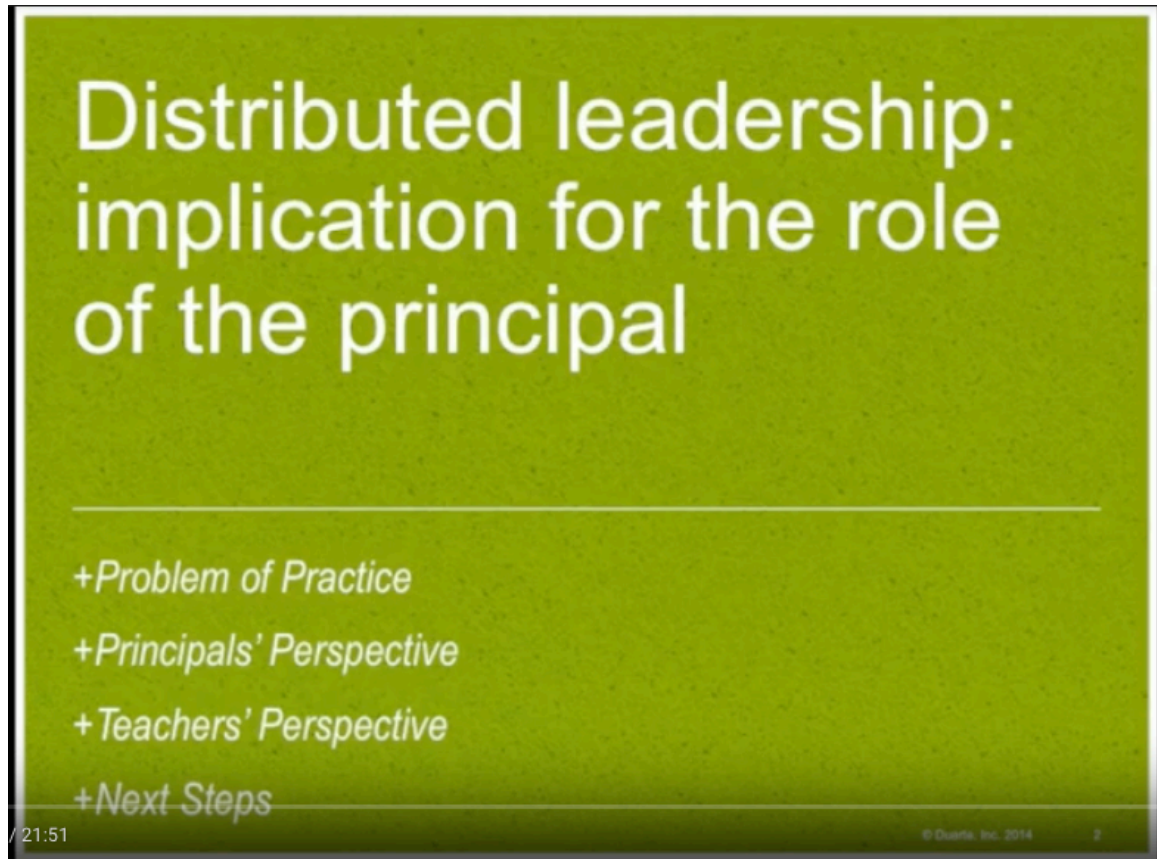
A screenshot of the Schoology page used by the PDT to disseminate useful information and to store resources to assist the team.

The screenshot shows the NCCVT professional learning community interface. The top navigation bar includes 'Home', 'Courses', 'Groups', and 'Resources'. The user 'Shanta Reynolds' is logged in. The main header displays the course title: 'St. Georges ACE 2016-2017: Section 1- Bowe , Section 2- Poore , Section 3- Hanson , Section 4- Jimerson , Section 5- Stark , Section 6- Schaefer , Section 7- Comegys , Section 8- Culver' for 'St. Georges High School'. A sidebar on the left lists various tools: Materials, Updates, Gradebook, Grade Setup, Mastery, Badges, Attendance, Members, Analytics, Workload Planning, ASSISTments App, Backchannel Chat, and BrainPOP. The main content area features a 'Rolling Agenda Links' section with a list of modules: Overview, Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Instructional Support. Each module is marked as 'Must Complete' and '8 sections' available after a specific date. The 'Instructional Support' module includes a description of resources available from the instructional support team.

A screenshot of the reading, writing, speaking and listening modules for teachers to complete every other week in their professional learning community ACE (Action, Collaboration, Evidence) meetings.

## APPENDIX F

### Distributive Leadership: Implications for the Role of the Principal Video

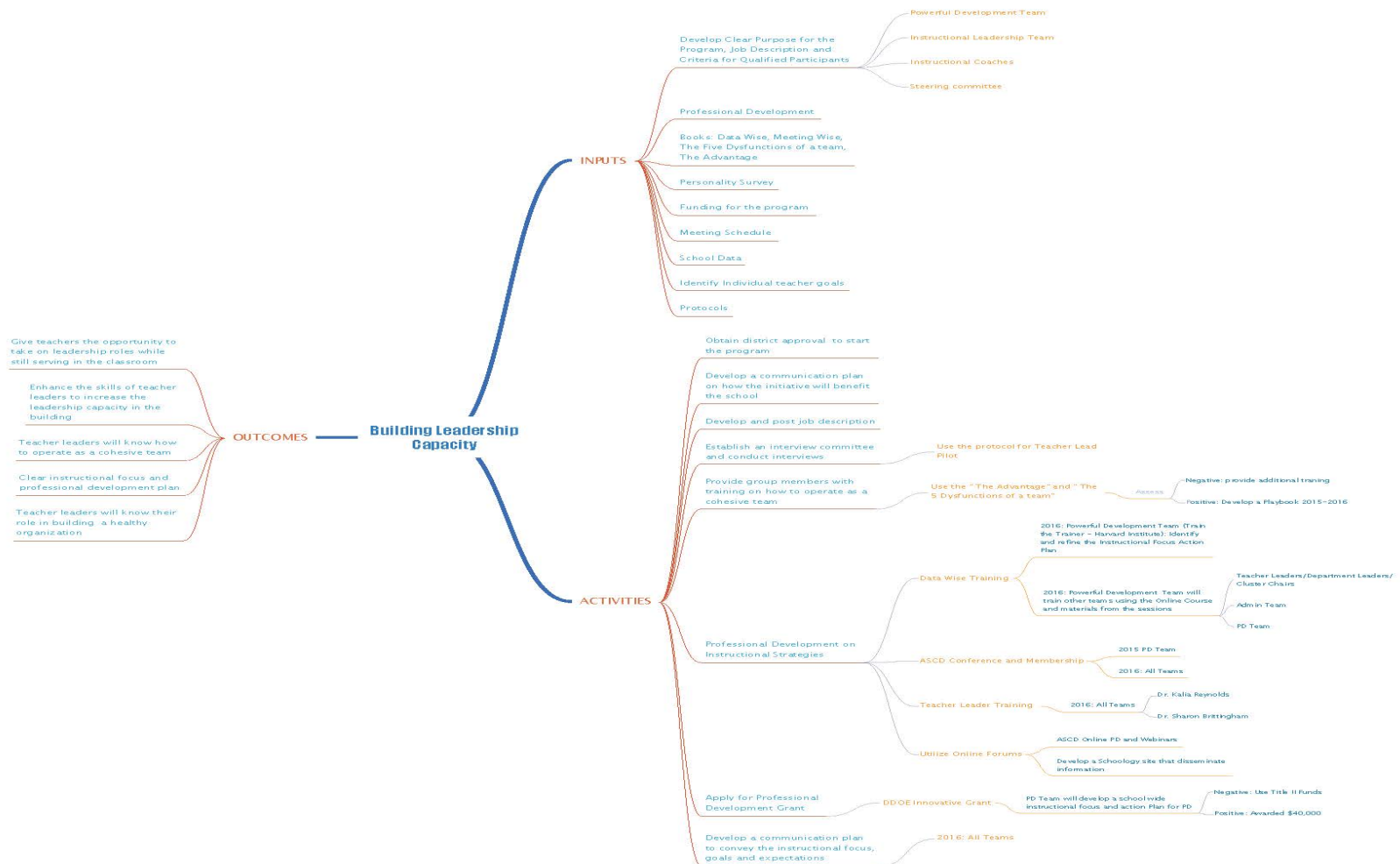


The distributive leadership implication for the role of the principal video provides an overview of the duties and responsibilities of being a high school principal from the perspective of two principals that work in the NCCVT School District. The video also captures the perspectives of two instructors who are members of the PDT. Here is the link to the video:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B6U115oSfh2QamhsYzY5QXlPV3c/view?usp=sharing>

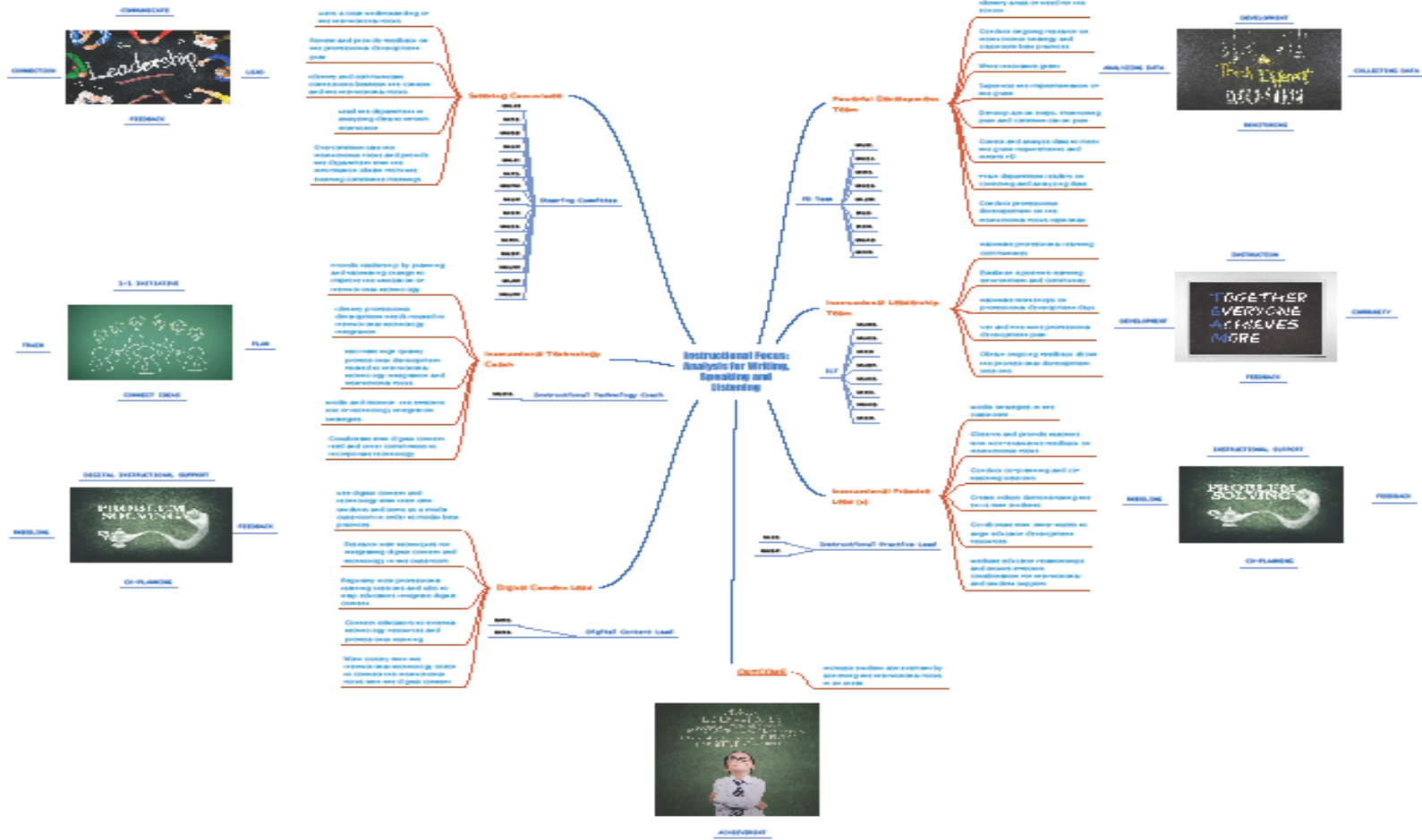
## APPENDIX G

### Building Leadership Capacity Mindmap



## APPENDIX H

## Leadership Team Structures and Literacy Target Sheet



## **APPENDIX I**

### **Program Evaluation: Building the Leadership Capacity in the School**

#### **Executive Summary**

A program evaluation was conducted to gather information related to the training of the Powerful Development Team (PDT) at St. Georges Technical High School and to assess the organizational health of the school. One of the major skills the PDT learned was how to create a healthy organization using the four disciplines outlined in Patrick Lencioni's (2012) book, *The Advantage*. The four disciplines are:

- Discipline 1: Build A Cohesive Leadership Team
- Discipline 2: Create Clarity
- Discipline 3: Over-communicate Clarity
- Discipline 4: Reinforce Clarity

Using the framework of these four disciplines, the program evaluation considered the following two questions:

1. *Process Question*: To what degree did the training that I delivered help teacher leaders and administrators know how to execute Lencioni's four-disciplines model discussed in the book, *The Advantage*?

2. *Outcome Question:* What percentage of teacher leaders and administrators believe that St. Georges Technical High School is a healthy organization (i.e. rubric score of 4 or higher)?

The process question was measured through personal interviews with each participant. The summary results revealed that the discipline with the lowest rating is over-communicating clarity, although it was determined that improvements need to be made in all four disciplines for St. Georges to obtain a healthy rating. It is recommended that additional training be conducted, and an action plan be developed to address this third discipline for communication.

## **Introduction**

### **Purpose of the Evaluation**

The purpose of the evaluation was to gather information related to the training of the Powerful Development Team (PDT) at St. Georges Technical High School.

Specifically, the evaluation provided feedback on the training the PDT received on how to operate as a cohesive group. The findings will be used to improve the training and to assist with establishing a healthy organization that is whole, consistent and complete.

### **Description of Program**

The Powerful Development Team was created for teachers and administrators to work collectively to create engaging and productive learning activities for staff that will lead to an increase in student achievement. The team participated in activities that are intrinsically meaningful for themselves. They also accomplished worthwhile school goals and increased their leadership skills. One of the major skills the PDT learned is creating a healthy organization using the four disciplines outlined in Patrick Lencioni's (2012) book, *The Advantage*. The following are the four disciplines.

**Discipline 1: Build a cohesive leadership team.** The PDT learned what it means to function as a leadership team by participating in a series of activities that focused on building a cohesive team by embracing the five behavioral principles (Trust, Conflict, Commitment, Accountability, and Results). The activities included taking a personality test, sharing personal stories, participating in team effectiveness activities, and discussing personal and school-wide goals.



**Discipline 2: Create clarity.** In addition to being behaviorally cohesive, the PDT were intellectually aligned and committed to the same answers to six simple but critical questions. The PDT utilized protocols to collectively answer the following six questions:

1. Why do we exist?
2. How do we behave? What do we do?
3. How will we succeed?
4. What do we do? How will we succeed?
5. What is important right now?
6. Who must do what?

**Discipline 3: Over-communicate clarity.** Next, the PDT developed a playbook based on the answers to the six questions. The team also developed a surface level plan to communicate the playbook to the faculty clearly, repeatedly, and enthusiastically.

**Discipline 4: Reinforce clarity.** In order for our organization to establish and maintain long-term health, the PDT learned how to establish a system to reinforce clarity. Every policy, program, and activity will be designed to focus the faculty towards realizing our school's vision.

### **Evaluation Questions**

As part of my preliminary evaluation, I identified one process and one outcome question. Successful completion of the four-discipline model training (process) will lead to a healthy organization (outcome).

1. **Process Question:** To what degree did the training that I delivered help teacher leaders and administrators know how to execute Lencioni's four-disciplines model discussed in the book, *The Advantage*?
2. **Outcome Question:** What percentage of teacher leaders and administrators believe that St. Georges Technical High School is a healthy organization (i.e. rubric score of 4 or higher)?

The process question evaluated the effectiveness of the four-disciplines model training delivered to teachers and administrators. The process question was measured by interviewing each participant.

The outcome question determined the health of the school using an organizational health survey created by the author of the text, Patrick Lencioni (2012). The primary purpose of this survey was to provide a simple indicator of the relative health of the organization, as well as help interpret and act on the results.

### **Design and Methodology**

**Sample.** The sample for this evaluation consists of eight teachers and administrators that are members of the PDT at St. Georges Technical High School. Their demographic characteristics are presented in Table 1 below.

The teachers in the program were interviewed and selected by a panel and the administrators were volunteer participants in the program. There are 4 teachers, 1 administrative intern, and 3 administrators in the sample group. As shown in Table i1, the group is diverse based on race and subjects taught. In the sample, the majority (75%)

of the instructors have between 5 to 6 years of teaching experience. The larger teacher population shows the majority (38%) of the teachers have 5 to 9 years of experience.

Table I1

*Demographics of the Powerful Development Team*

Race	Gender	Years	Grade	Primary Subject
B	F	6	10th	English/Department Chair
W	M	6	11th	Special Education /Inclusion
W	M	5	10th - 11th	Social Studies
B	M	12	9th - 12th	Culinary Arts/Career and Technical
W	F	23	9th - 12th	Admin Intern
B	F	14	9th - 12th	Administration
W	M	11	9th - 12th	Administration
W	M	16	9th - 12th	Administration

*Note.* B = Black/African American and W = White/Caucasian.  $n = 8$

**Instruments.** The process question was measured by individually interviewing participants. I asked semi-structured questions that required the teachers and administrators to explain if the training helped them gain an understanding of how to execute Lencioni's (2012) four disciplines model for establishing a healthy organization.

The outcome question was measured by the organizational health report survey. The survey is a five-item Likert-type survey that requires teachers and administrators to rate their perception of the health of our organization (see Appendix K). The instrument provided feedback on each component of the four disciplines model (i.e. building a cohesive leadership team, create clarity, over-communicate clarity, and reinforce clarity) used to determine organizational health.

**Data collection.** During the week of April 4, 2016, I communicated an interview schedule with the PDT via email. The email assured the team that the interview information will be confidential and that each participant will need to sign a consent form. The email explained that the interview was voluntary and will be recorded. If at any time during the interview the respondent wishes to discontinue the use of the recorder or the interview itself, the recorder will be stopped, and the interview ended. If the respondent(s) does not want to be recorded, they will be offered an opportunity to respond to the questions in writing. On April 9, 2016, all PDT members were interviewed. The interview lasted approximately 15 minutes.

On April 11, 2016, I sent an email to the PDT requesting that they go online and complete the Organizational Health Report Survey. The email included directions for accessing, completing, and returning the survey. Respondents had until April 15, 2016 to complete the survey. Two weeks after the first email, I sent an email reminder to respondents that did not return their survey results by April 15th. Each respondent received a “participant code” to ensure anonymity.

**Data analysis procedures.** I utilized the following steps to analyze the results of interview. First, I browsed through all transcripts and made notes of my first impressions. I reread the transcripts carefully and made additional notes. Second, I started to label or code relevant pieces (i.e. words, phrases or sections). The notes were coded based on information that was repeated, information that the respondent explicitly stated was important, and information that was surprising. Third, I decided which codes were the most important and created categories by bringing several codes together. Next,

I labeled categories and decided which ones were the most relevant and how they are connected to each other. Then, I created a figure (i.e. Mind map) summarizing the results and finally, reported on the results.

I analyzed the Organizational Health Report Survey by examining the score indicated for each area of the four disciplines model (see Appendix K). I identified the areas that the respondents indicated were low (1.00 - 2.99) or medium (3.00 - 3.99). If the majority of the group indicated that the discipline is low, I will use the suggestions that are provided at the end of the organizational health report. If the majority of the respondents indicated that the discipline is high (4.00 - 5.00), I will conclude that they believe the discipline is healthy, and we should continue our current work.

### **Timeline**

**Interview.** March 28th - April 6th - The pilot test of the interview questions will take place. The PDT will be informed when and where the interview will take place.

April 6th - 9th: On April 9th each participant will be interviewed.

April 11th -15th: Code and interpret data.

April 15th - 24th: Write the final report.

**Survey.** March 28th - April 6th - Pilot test of the survey question will take place.

April 11th: I will send an email to the PDT requesting they go online and complete the organizational health report survey.

April 15th: Due date for surveys.

April 16th - 20th: Analyze data.

April 20th - 24th: Write final report.

## Findings

### Process Question Results

**Process question.** To what degree did the training that I delivered help teacher leaders and administrators know how to execute Lencioni's four-disciplines model discussed in the book, *The Advantage*?

An interview was conducted with eight St. Georges Technical High School staff members (4 administrators and 4 teachers) that are part of the PDT. They responded to the following 5 questions:

1. The team building training you participated in last summer was based on the four disciplines (building a cohesive team, create clarity, over-communicate clarity, and reinforce clarity) discussed in the book *The Advantage*. What aspects of the training did you feel were most beneficial in helping you execute the four-disciplines model? Why?
2. What training was least beneficial? Why?
3. Which discipline do you feel more training is needed? Why?
4. What changes or improvements to training would you suggest to the facilitator?
5. How will or did you use the four disciplines to improve the health of our organization?

Results in Table i2 show that the majority of administrators and teachers believe that the most beneficial aspect of the summer training on the four disciplines was building a cohesive team by participating in team building activities and events.

A teacher reported,

I felt the relationship-building portion was important. Going to the ASCD conference in Nashville, completing the personality survey, talking about our

personal stories, and participating in team building activities helped the team come together as a cohesive group that was ready to develop an instructional focus for the school year.

Teachers also valued learning about each other's individual strengths and weaknesses. A teacher noted,

Working together to learn our individual strengths and weaknesses was the most helpful part. It was good to identify who was on the team and how we could best work together. It set the stage for a good working relationship.

Table I2

*Most Beneficial Aspect of the Summer Training on Four Disciplines*

Opportunities	<i>n</i>	Percent of Administrator Responses	<i>n</i>	Percent of Teacher Responses
Building a cohesive team by participating in team building activities and events	3	75.0	4	100.0
Learning about each other's individual strengths and weaknesses	1	25.0	3	75.0
Creating clarity by developing an instructional playbook	1	25.0	2	50.0
Reading about the 5 dysfunctions of a team	1	25.0	0	0.0

In Table i3, the majority of teachers and administrators identified that not spending enough time on developing a communication plan was least beneficial. A teacher stated, "I enjoyed the team building activities, but I believe other training was left

aside. For example, we developed relationships and created a great instructional playbook, but we didn't spend enough time developing a staff communication plan."

Teachers also expressed enough time wasn't allocated to establishing clarity. A teacher noted,

The training as a whole was beneficial. I have a difficult time with the words "least beneficial", so I will refer to the most difficult part of the training. Creating clarity takes time (possibly a year), and I do not think we were able to achieve "pure clarity." Personalities and egos, along with pride, stood in the way, and we just didn't have enough time to break through it all.

Table I3

*Summer Training That was The Least Beneficial*

Opportunities	<i>n</i>	Percent of Administrator responses	<i>n</i>	Percent of Teacher responses
Not enough time allocated to develop a communication plan	3	75.0	4	100.0
Not enough time allocated to establishing clarity	1	25.0	3	75.0
More time was needed to catch up the individuals that missed the team building exercises	0	0.0	1	25.0
No response	1	25.0	0	0.0

In Table i4, all the teachers and administrators believed that more training is needed on over-communicating clarity. An administrator noted,

I think we need to reinforce or communicate clarity throughout the year and in a consistent manner, so that the staff stays the course. Our staff starts the year knowing clearly what we represent as an organization, but then some get complacent, colleagues turn a blind eye, and now the clarity becomes tarnished.



Reinforcing clarity will increase accountability, and we need more training on how to fully accomplish this discipline.

Teachers also feel that more training is needed on creating clarity. A teacher noted, “We need to revisit the training on creating clarity and communication. I think over the year we have forgotten some of the great things that happened during the summer training, which is completely understandable.”

Table I4

*The Discipline Where More Training is Needed*

Opportunities	<i>n</i>	Percent of Administrator responses	<i>n</i>	Percent of Teacher responses
Building a cohesive team	1	25.0	1	25.0
Creating clarity	1	25.0	4	75.0
Over-communicating clarity	4	100.0	4	100.0
Reinforcing clarity	3	75.0	2	50.0

Table i5 shows, that half of the administrators believed we need to improve the structure of the meetings. An administrator noted, “We need to go over the norms at each meeting, utilize the parking lot strategy, and stress that solutions should be offered with concerns.”

Half of the teachers believed that the meeting times need to be changed. A teacher reported,

I think the summer training was really good and the summer meetings overall productive. Instead of the 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm meetings, after school we can

commit to off-site meetings (or onsite but hiding) during the school day. The group will be more focused and fresh if we take this approach. We could also look at having a few Saturday meetings.

Half of the teachers also believed that the program will be improved if there were less instructional initiatives. A teacher noted, “I feel we took on too many instructional initiatives this school year. I am excited that we all are going to work on one major instructional initiative next year.”

Table I5

*Changes or Improvements to The Training*

Opportunities	<i>n</i>	Percent of Administrator responses	<i>n</i>	Percent of Teacher responses
Group leadership training	0	0.0	1	25.0
Change the meeting times	1	25.0	2	50.0
Limit instructional initiatives	1	25.0	2	50.0
Provide more structure to the meetings (norms, protocols, etc.)	2	50.0	1	25.0

In Table i6, half of the administrators and the majority of the instructors improved the health of the organization by applying the four disciplines to the school initiative they selected. An administrator reported,

I applied the four disciplines to the areas that I supervise. I have grown tremendously when it comes to understanding my personality and its weaknesses. This improvement has strengthened my relationships by building trust between myself and the math, health, PE, student advisors, nurses, and driver education

teachers. The trust improved communication back and forth, as well as sharpened our critical lenses toward issues.

Table I6

*Using the Four Disciplines to Improve the Health of The Organization*

Opportunities	<i>n</i>	Percent of Administrator responses	<i>n</i>	Percent of Teacher responses
Applied the disciplines to my selected school initiative	2	50.0	3	75.0
To get to know others inside and outside my department	0	0.0	2	50.0
To resolve conflicts by looking at problems through different viewpoints	2	50.0	1	25.0

### Outcome Question Results

**Outcome question.** What percentage of teacher leaders and administrators believe that St. Georges Technical High School is a healthy organization (i.e. rubric score of 4 or higher)?

I analyzed eight individual responses to the organization health report survey, which contained 17 questions. The scores are based on a 5-point Likert-type scale. Table 7 displays data collected from administrators and teachers. The two lowest mean scores (2.75) for teachers occurred with questions 12 and 14. Questions 12 and 14 focused on healthy organizations aligning their employees around organizational clarity by communicating key messages through repetition, simplicity, multiple mediums, and

cascading messages. The two highest mean scores for teachers existed with question 5 (4.50) and question 16 (4.50). Question 5 explains that the leadership team members have a clear and common understanding of the organization's single most important near-term priority. Question 16 explains that the leadership team meetings are interesting, with members passionately and openly debating important issues, see Table i7.

The two lowest mean scores for administrators occurred with questions 2 (2.25) and 12 (2.00). Questions 2 and 12 focused on healthy organizations aligning their employees around organizational clarity by communicating key messages through repetition, simplicity, multiple mediums, and cascading messages. The two highest mean scores for administrators existed with questions 3, 5, 8 (4.25), and 16 (5.00). Question 3 explains that leadership team members are compelling and focused only on topics that are important to the organization. Question 5 conveys that the leadership team members have a clear and common understanding of the organization's single most important near-term priority. Question 8 explains that the leadership team members have an accurate understanding of one another's roles and the interdependencies between them. Question 16 conveys that the leadership team meetings are interesting with members passionately and openly debating important issues.

There was a slight difference between the teachers and administrators mean scores with questions 2, 7, and 15. Question 2 emphasizes that the leadership team members spend time communicating the initiatives and priorities. The administrators' mean score was 3.50 and the teachers' mean score was a 2.25 (1.25 difference between mean scores). Question 7 focuses on employees receiving rewards and recognition that

are clearly tied to specific behaviors and accomplishments. The administrators' mean score was 3.50 and the teachers' mean score was 2.50 (1.00 difference between mean scores). Question 15 emphasizes that the leaders and managers set goals and review progress with their employees. The administrators' mean score was 2.75 and the teachers' mean score was 3.75 (1.00 difference between mean scores).

There is a wide spread of responses for question 6. Question 6 focuses on leadership team members demonstrating support for one another, stick to agreements made during meetings, and present a unified message to employees. The standard deviation for administrators was  $SD = .50$  and the standard deviation for teachers was  $SD = 1.29$ .

Respondents received a score for each discipline after they completed the survey. This information is located in Table i8. The mean scores indicate that none of the disciplines were rated high (4.00 - 5.00). The responses fall in the medium range (3.00 - 3.99). The discipline that received the highest mean score (3.40) for administrators was Discipline 2: Create Clarity. The discipline that received the lowest mean score (3.10) for administrators was Discipline 3: Over-Communicate Clarity.

The discipline that received the highest mean score (3.90) for teachers was Discipline 1: Build a Cohesive Group. The discipline that received the lowest mean score (3.00) for teachers was Discipline 4: Reinforce Clarity.

Table I7

*Comparison of The Organizational Health Report Survey Teachers' Responses to Administrators' Responses*

Survey Items	Administrators			Teachers		
	Mean	SD	<i>n</i>	Mean	SD	<i>n</i>
1. Leadership team members are clear and aligned around the values or behavioral attributes that make the organization unique	3.50	0.58	4	4.00	0.00	4
2. Leadership team members spend time communicating the initiatives and priorities	3.50	1.00	4	2.25	0.50	4
3. Leadership team members are compelling and focused only on topics that are important to organization	3.75	0.50	4	4.25	0.50	4
4. Leadership team members know what is happening in departments other than their own and ask questions and call out problems outside their own areas	3.00	0.82	4	3.00	0.82	4
5. Leadership team members have a clear and common understanding of the organization's single most important near-term priority.	4.50	0.58	4	4.25	0.96	4
6. Leadership team members demonstrate support for one another, stick to agreements made during meetings and present a unified message to employees	3.75	0.50	4	3.50	1.29	4
7. Employees receive rewards and recognition that are clearly tied to specific behaviors and accomplishments	3.50	1.00	4	2.50	1.00	4
8. Leadership team members have an accurate understanding of one another's roles and the interdependencies between them	3.75	0.50	4	4.25	0.50	4
9. Leadership team members admit their mistakes and weaknesses to one another, and ask for help when need it	3.25	0.96	4	4.00	0.00	4
10. Employees receive timely and regular reports about decisions made during leadership team meetings	3.25	1.26	4	2.75	0.50	4

(continued)

Table I7 (continued)

*Comparison of the Organizational Health Report Survey Teachers' Responses to Administrators' Responses*

Survey Items	Administrators			Teachers		
	Mean	SD	n	Mean	SD	n
11. Leadership team members are clear and aligned around the organization's strategy and key competitive differentiators	3.75	.96	4	4.00	.00	4
12. Employees would say they receive consistent, repetitive and redundant communication from leaders about the direction and progress of the organization	2.75	.96	4	2.00	.00	4
13. Leadership team members put the interests of organization first, willingly making sacrifices when it is in the best interest of the overall good	3.25	.96	4	3.50	.58	4
14. Employees throughout the organization would be able to consistently and clearly describe the organization's values, strategies and goals	2.75	.96	4	2.75	.96	4
15. Leaders and managers set goals and review progress with their employees	2.75	.96	4	3.75	.50	4
16. Leadership team meetings are interesting, with team members passionately and openly debating important issues.	4.50	.50	4	5.00	.00	4
17. When hiring, leaders consistently apply some process for evaluating candidates according to cultural fit, in addition to competencies.	4.00	.00	4	3.75	.50	4

Table I8

*Comparison of the Organizational Health Summary Teachers' Responses to Administrators Responses*

Discipline	Administrators			Teachers		
	Mean	SD	n	Mean	SD	n
Discipline 1: Build a Cohesive Group	3.20	.43	4	3.90	.35	4
Discipline 2: Create Clarity	3.40	.83	4	3.60	.66	4
Discipline 3: Over-communicate Clarity	3.10	.92	4	3.06	.75	4
Discipline 4: Reinforce Clarity	3.18	.69	4	3.00	.61	4

*Note.* Low: 1.00 - 2.99 Medium: 3.00 - 3.99 High 4.00 - 5.00

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Based on the data collected on the process and outcome questions, it is evident the training that was delivered to teacher leaders and administrators about executing the four disciplines needs improvement. There are a few major areas that need to be improved to enhance the effectiveness of the training. It was also noted that the health of St. Georges is not at the highest point, and there are components that need to be addressed to maximize the successes of the organization.

Allocating more time and training to developing clarity and establishing a communication plan were areas that administrators and teachers agreed needed improvement. Allocating more attention to clarity and communication were reoccurring themes in the findings as they related to not enough training provided in the summer (see Tables 2 and 3) and changes or improvements to the training (see Table 4).



Building a cohesive team and creating clarity were identified as the strongest disciplines applied at St. Georges with a rating that was medium. Improvements need to be made in all four disciplines in order for St. Georges to obtain a healthy rating. The discipline with the lowest rating is over-communicating clarity. It makes sense that this is an area of weakness identified in the organizational health summary because it was established that the summer training was lacking in the area of over-communicating clarity.

### **Limitations**

The limitation of using the interview method to evaluate the process was that the respondents may not be as open to providing their perceptions about the training because I was conducting the interview. I attempted to limit this disadvantage by asking respondents to be completely honest about the training.

The limitation to having teachers complete the organizational health survey was that survey response options could have lead to unclear data because respondents may have interpreted certain choices differently. For example, the answer option “somewhat agree” may represent different things to various subjects and have its own meaning to each respondent. Prior to distributing the survey, I provided a clear definition of the response options to limit confusion.

### **Recommendations**

There was not enough time and training allocated to over-communicating clarity.

### **Recommendations for Action:**

1. Contract with an outside agency to provide additional training on relevant processes and practices for over-communicating clarity.

2. Develop an in-depth action plan (i.e. what, who, when, how) for communicating clarity to stakeholders in the organization.
3. Build in checkpoints to assess the effectiveness of communicating clarity in the organization.

The discipline with the lowest rating was over-communicating clarity.

**Recommendations for Action:**

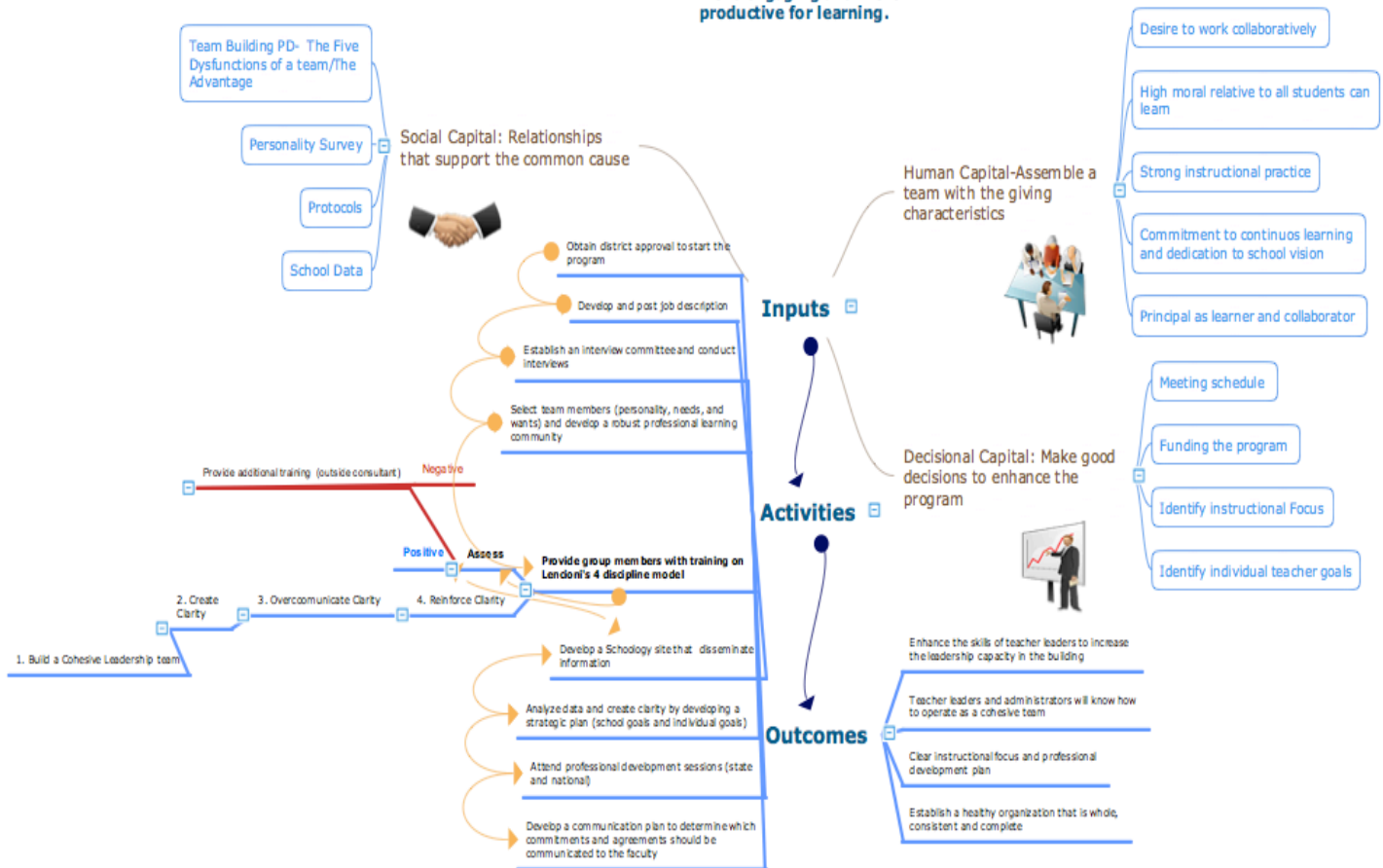
1. Repeat, repeat, repeat: Leaders must be willing to over-communicate by saying the same message again and again.
2. Keep it simple: Leaders must deliver a clear and uncomplicated message about where the organization is headed and how they can contribute to getting there.
3. Use multiple mediums: Leaders must utilize all mediums of communication to deliver clarity.
4. Streamline a focus and have identified initiatives explicitly connected to that focus.

## A. Logic Model:

### Logic Model: St. Georges Powerful Development Team

**Purpose:** This logic model represents the development of a leadership program at my school. The goal is to form a team that will work collectively to do things more engaging and more productive for learning.

Reynolds: EDUC 863



## Appendix J

### Evaluation Design Worksheet

**Evaluation Purpose:** The purpose of the evaluation is to assess if teacher leaders and administrators know how to operate as a cohesive team.

Evaluation Question	Sample	Variables/ Instruments	Data Collection Procedures	Data Analysis Procedures	Timeline (Data Collection)
To what degree did the training that I provided help teacher leaders and administrators know how to execute Lencioni's four-discipline model (build a cohesive team, create clarity, over-communicate clarity, and reinforce clarity) discussed in the book, <i>The Advantage</i> ?	8 people	Semi-structured Interview questions requiring teachers and administrators to explain how well the training helped them operate as a cohesive group, create clarity, over-communicate clarity, and reinforce clarity.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop Semi-Structured Interview Questions: Pilot questions with an administrator and teacher not involved in the program. Revised based on teacher and administrator feedback.</li> <li>2. Send email informing participants when and where the interview will take place. Provide respondents with information on how confidentiality will be maintained.</li> <li>3. Have participants sign a consent form.</li> <li>4. Respondents will answer questions individually.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read/review complete sets of interviews and record general summaries.</li> <li>2. Encode responses and then organize, summarize, and display the coded data.</li> <li>3. Use codes to illustrate findings.</li> <li>4. Revise summaries and displays accordingly.</li> </ol>	March 28 - April 6 April 6 - 9 April 11 - 15 April 15 - 24

(continued)

*Evaluation Design Worksheet (continued)*

Evaluation Question	Sample	Variables/ Instruments	Data Collection Procedures	Data Analysis Procedures	Timeline (Data Collection)
What percentage of teachers and administrators believe that St. Georges Technical High School is a healthy organization (i.e. rubric score of 4 or higher)?	8 people	5-point Likert-type scale Survey that requires respondents to rate the organizational health of St. Georges Technical High School.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Utilize the Organizational Health Survey: Pilot test with an administrator and teacher not involved in the program. Revised based on teacher and administrator feedback.</li> <li>2. Send teachers and administrators the directions for signing up, completing and returning the survey results to the evaluator in his mailbox by April 11th.</li> <li>3. Assign participants id numbers as surveys are returned.</li> <li>4. Send email reminder to teachers and administrators who do not return survey results by April 20th.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Analyze the report and look for trends.</li> <li>2. Utilize the suggestions provided at the end of the report (rating lower than a 4).</li> </ol>	March 28 - April 6 April 11 April 15 April 16 - 20 April 20 - 24

## Appendix K

### Organizational Health Report Survey

**Instructions:** Use the scale below to indicate how each statement applies to your organization. Please use the entire scale to represent your most accurate response and be as honest as possible. While it is important to be thoughtful, don't agonize over each response. The survey should not take more than 5 minutes.

1. Leadership team members are clear and aligned around the values or behavioral attributes that make their organization unique, and which are required of all employees and new hires.

*Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Hard to Say   Agree   Strongly Agree*

2. Leadership team members spend so much time communicating with employees about the direction and progress of the organization that they would be genuinely surprised if an employee was unaware of company initiatives and priorities.

*Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Hard to Say   Agree   Strongly Agree*

3. Leadership team meetings are compelling and focused only on topics that are important to organization.

*Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Hard to Say   Agree   Strongly Agree*

4. Leadership team members know what is happening in departments other than their own and ask questions and call out problems outside their own areas.

*Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Hard to Say   Agree   Strongly Agree*

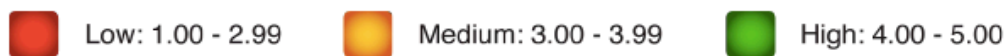
5. Leadership team members have a clear and common understanding of the organization's single most important near-term priority.  
*Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Hard to Say   Agree   Strongly Agree*
6. Leadership team members demonstrate support for one another, stick to agreements made during meetings, and present a unified message to employees.  
*Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Hard to Say   Agree   Strongly Agree*
7. Employees receive rewards and recognition that are clearly tied to specific behaviors and accomplishments.  
*Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Hard to Say   Agree   Strongly Agree*
8. Leadership team members have an accurate understanding of one another's roles and the interdependencies between them.  
*Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Hard to Say   Agree   Strongly Agree*
9. Leadership team members admit their mistakes and weaknesses to one another and ask for help when they need it.  
*Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Hard to Say   Agree   Strongly Agree*
10. Employees, one level below the leadership team, would say that they receive timely and regular reports about decisions that are made during leadership team meetings.  
*Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Hard to Say   Agree   Strongly Agree*
11. Leadership team members are clear and aligned around the organization's strategy and key competitive differentiators.  
*Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Hard to Say   Agree   Strongly Agree*

12. Employees would say that they receive consistent, repetitive, and redundant communication from leaders about the overall direction and progress of the organization.
- Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Hard to Say   Agree   Strongly Agree*
13. Leadership team members put the interests of the organization first, willingly making sacrifices when it is in the best interest of the overall good even when there is a cost to them individually or to their department.
- Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Hard to Say   Agree   Strongly Agree*
14. Employees throughout the organization would be able to consistently and clearly describe the organization's values, strategies, and goals.
- Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Hard to Say   Agree   Strongly Agree*
15. Leaders and managers set goals and review progress with their employees in an effective, consistent, and non-bureaucratic way.
- Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Hard to Say   Agree   Strongly Agree*
16. Leadership team meetings are interesting with team members passionately and openly debating important issues.
- Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Hard to Say   Agree   Strongly Agree*
17. When hiring, leaders consistently apply some process for evaluating candidates according to cultural fit, in addition to competencies.
- Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Hard to Say   Agree   Strongly Agree*



## Appendix L

### Organizational Health Summary Example



## **Appendix M**

### **Interview Questions**

#### **Interview Protocol**

##### **Script**

Welcome and thank you for your participation today. My name is Shanta Reynolds and I am in the doctorate program at the University of Delaware. I am conducting a study on the Powerful Development Team training that took place this summer. The purpose of this study is to obtain information to improve the program. I am also doing this assignment to fulfill a requirement for my doctorate degree. Thank you for completing the surveys. This follow-up interview will take about 30 minutes and will include 5 questions regarding your opinion about the training that took place last summer. I would like your permission to tape record this interview, so I may accurately document the information you convey. If at any time during the interview you wish to discontinue the use of the recorder or the interview itself, please feel free to let me know. All of your responses are confidential. Your responses will remain confidential and will be used to develop a better understanding of how you and your peers view the training that took place.

At this time, I would like to remind you of your written consent to participate in this study. I am the responsible investigator, specifying your participation in the

evaluation of the powerful development team. You and I have both signed and dated each copy, certifying that we agree to continue this interview. You will receive one copy and I will keep the other under lock and key, separate from your reported responses.

Thank you.

Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary. If at any time you need to stop, take a break or return a page, please let me know. You may also withdraw your participation at any time without consequence. Do you have any questions or concerns before we begin? Then with your permission we will begin the interview.

**Process Question:** To what degree did the training that I delivered help teacher leaders and administrators know how to execute Lencioni's four disciplines model discussed in the book, *The Advantage*?

1. The team building training you participated in last summer was based on the four disciplines (building a cohesive team, create clarity, over-communicate clarity and reinforce clarity) discussed in the book, *The Advantage*. What aspects of the training did you feel were most beneficial in helping you execute the four-disciplines model? Why?
2. What training was least beneficial? Why?
3. Which discipline do you feel more training is needed? Why?
4. What changes or improvements to training would you suggest to the facilitator?
5. How will or did you use the four disciplines to improve the health of our organization?

## APPENDIX N

### Summary of the Powerful Development Team's Achievements



The summary of the PDT's achievement is a video highlighting all the members of the PDT and the tasks that they have completed. The teachers and administrators explain the details of their initiatives and the impact it has had on their professional growth. In addition, they discussed what it was like to be a part of the team and how the work has influenced the school environment. Here is the link to the video: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B6U115oSfh2QZEwtMHROVERUUWM/view?usp=sharing>

## **APPENDIX O**

### **ELP Survey Data Overview**

#### **Introduction**

##### **Purpose of the Evaluation**

The purpose of the survey is to gather information about the impact of the trainings on the PDT's preparedness to facilitate ACE meetings and provide professional learning pertaining to the instructional focus. The survey will also provide information about the effectiveness of the PDT in guiding the implementation of the school-wide instructional focus.

##### **Description of Program**

**Participants.** The PDT consists of four administrators (including myself) and four teachers volunteering and working together to determine and achieve the instructional focus. Steps to determining the instructional focus include identifying the areas of need for the school, conducting ongoing research on instructional strategies and classroom practices, applying for grants to support the instructional focus, developing action steps to achieve the instructional focus, creating, and monitoring a communication plan for the instructional focus, collecting and analyzing data, training instructors on how to effectively use data, and conducting professional development on the instructional

focus. PDT members also serve as leaders on other instructional committees in the building as explained below.

**Steering Committee.** The steering committee consists of the teacher leaders (department chairpersons) and cluster chairpersons (leaders for their respective career areas). They are responsible for acquiring a sound understanding of the instructional focus, reviewing and providing feedback on the professional development plan, and identifying and communicating connections between the content and the instructional focus. Additionally, they lead their department/career areas in data analysis to inform instruction. Finally, they over communicate the instructional focus and provide the department/career areas with information obtained during the steering committee meetings. Four PDT members serve on this committee. The PDT members take the lead in updating the steering committee about the instructional focus.

**Instructional leadership team/ACE facilitators.** As the main facilitators of the ACE meetings, they assist with establishing a positive learning environment and community, facilitate workshops on professional development days, vet and fine-tune professional development, and solicit ongoing feedback about the professional development and the rollout of the instructional focus. Everyone PDT members is a participating member of this committee.

**Instructional practice leads.** The two instructors that serve in this position are responsible for assisting the staff with the instructor's focus. They model strategies in the classroom, observe, and provide teachers with non-evaluative feedback on the instructional focus, conduct co-planning sessions, create videos demonstrating the skills

with students, and collaborate with other teams to align educator development resources. The two instructors serving in this role are also PDT participants.

**Digital content leads.** The two instructors that serve in this position are responsible for providing teachers with training on incorporating digital content into their lessons. They use digital content and technology with their students and facilitate a model classroom to enable other teachers to observe best practices. They are also charged with researching new techniques for integrating digital content and technology in the classroom, regularly hosting professional learning sessions and labs, connecting educators to external technology resources and professional learning, and working closely with the instructional technology coach to connect the instructional focus with the digital content. The two instructors serving in this role are also PDT participants.

**Instructional technology coach.** This instructor provides leadership by planning and facilitating change to improve the utilization of instructional technology. This educator identifies professional development needs related to instructional technology integration, facilitates high quality professional development related to instructional technology integration and instructional focus, and collaborates with digital content leads and other committees to incorporate technology. This instructor is also a PDT participant.

### **Training Overview**

PDT team members underwent training and teambuilding activities throughout the year. They learned more about each other's personalities, work preferences, strengths, and weaknesses. They learned to support each other through a process of

continual improvement. To build the collaborative culture, they completed and discussed the results of the Myers-Briggs personality assessment and Data Wise's Compass Points, set personal goals for themselves, and learned how to employ the Meeting Wise agendas and protocols (ie. establishing group norms, why's problem solving tool and affinity protocol) to organize the team's expected body of work. The group had bi-weekly morning meetings to discuss the initiatives and progress, as well as afternoon training sessions facilitated by an instructor, administrators or an outside consultant. The professional development sessions focused on the following ideas:

- Facilitating discussions between two or more people when opinions vary, and emotions run strong.
- Developing and executing a comprehensive plan for enhancing instruction and student learning.
- Training on research-based literacy strategies and other instructional strategies that have an impact on student learning.
- Applying the six essential characteristics of a PLC to the ACE model.

With a focus on sharpening the team's skill sets, each PDT member selected an attainable goal that required collaboration and was aligned with an identified need within St. Georges. Goals selected by the PDT members included teaching stakeholders about the growth mindset, collaborative learning opportunities for administrators and teachers, and organizing peer-to-peer walkthroughs. These "low hanging" areas of need gave the PDT members an opportunity to lead and utilize the skills learned from participating in their professional development sessions.



In striving to reach St. Georges robust vision, we applied for and received the Reimagining Professional Learning Grant from the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) in 2016. The \$30,000 grant provided stipends for PDT members working on the initiative. It also funded training from the Delaware Academy of School Leadership (DASL). With a portion of the grant funds, we were able to purchase innovative technology to be used in the classroom to support the instructional focus. Writing the grant was a collaborative task during the spring of 2015-2016. As part of the grant writing process, the PDT analyzed data that indicated literacy needed to be the primary instructional focus. As a result, the St. Georges' three-year school-wide literacy focus began to emerge. After the action plan was solidified, the PDT developed online modules to guide the weekly ACE (Action, Collaborate, Evidence) meetings with faculty. Throughout this process, the PDT had an opportunity to learn and grow by leading a group of passionate educators to strive to reach our vision.

### **Design and Methodology**

**Sample.** The sample for this evaluation consists of seven teachers and administrators that are members of the Powerful Development Team (PDT) at St. Georges Technical High School. Their demographic characteristics are presented in Table O1 below:

Table O1

*Demographics of the Powerful Development Team*

Race	Gender	Years	Grade	Primary Subject
B	F	6	10th	English/Department Chair
W	M	6	11th	Special Education /Inclusion
W	M	5	10th - 11th	Social Studies
B	M	12	9th -12th	Culinary Arts/Career and Technical
B	F	14	9th - 12th	Administration
W	M	11	9th - 12th	Administration
W	M	16	9th - 12 <sup>th</sup>	Administration

*Note.* B = Black/African American and W = White/Caucasian.  $n = 7$

The teachers in the program were interviewed and selected by a panel and the administrators were volunteer participants in the program. There are 4 teachers and 3 administrators in the sample group. As shown in Table 1, the group is diverse based on race and subjects taught. In the sample, the majority (75%) of the instructors have between 5 to 6 years of teaching experience. The larger teacher population shows the majority (38%) of the teachers have 5 to 9 years of experience.

## Findings

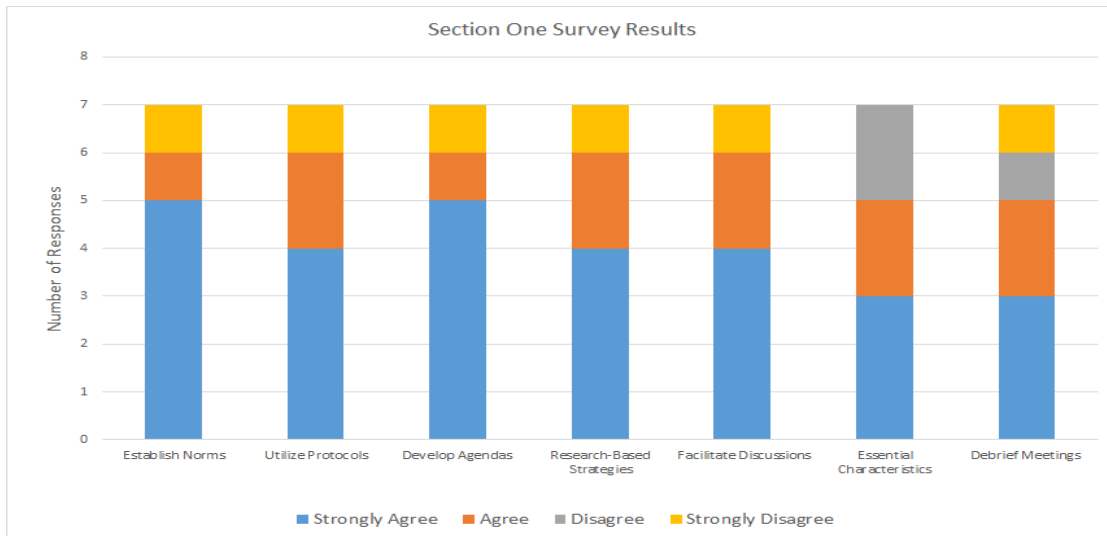
**Results.** The first section of the survey pertained to training the PDT to facilitate morning ACE meetings. They responded to the following questions written in statement form:

1. Being a part of the instructional leadership team at St. Georges Technical High School has provided me with the skills to establish norms to help the group participate in a manner that is respectful, as well as conducive to effective feedback.

2. Being a part of the instructional leadership team at St. Georges Technical High School has provided me with the skills to utilize protocols that guide meaningful, efficient communication, problem-solving, and learning.
3. Being a part of the instructional leadership team at St. Georges Technical High School has provided me with the skills to develop agendas that establish structured meetings.
4. Being a part of the instructional leadership team at St. Georges Technical High School has provided me with the skills to identify appropriate researched-based strategies that will impact student learning.
5. Being a part of the instructional leadership team at St. Georges Technical High School has provided me with the skills to facilitate discussions between two or more people when opinions vary, and emotions run strong.
6. Being a part of the instructional leadership team at St. Georges Technical High School has provided me with the skills to apply the six essential characteristics of a PLC to the ACE model.
7. Being a part of the instructional leadership team at St. Georges Technical High School has provided me with the skills to debrief and summarize meetings, as well as what to do when a meeting isn't going as planned.

Respondents indicated their agreement with each statement based on a 4-point

Likert scale (1-strongly agree, 2-agree, 3-disagree, 4-strongly disagree).



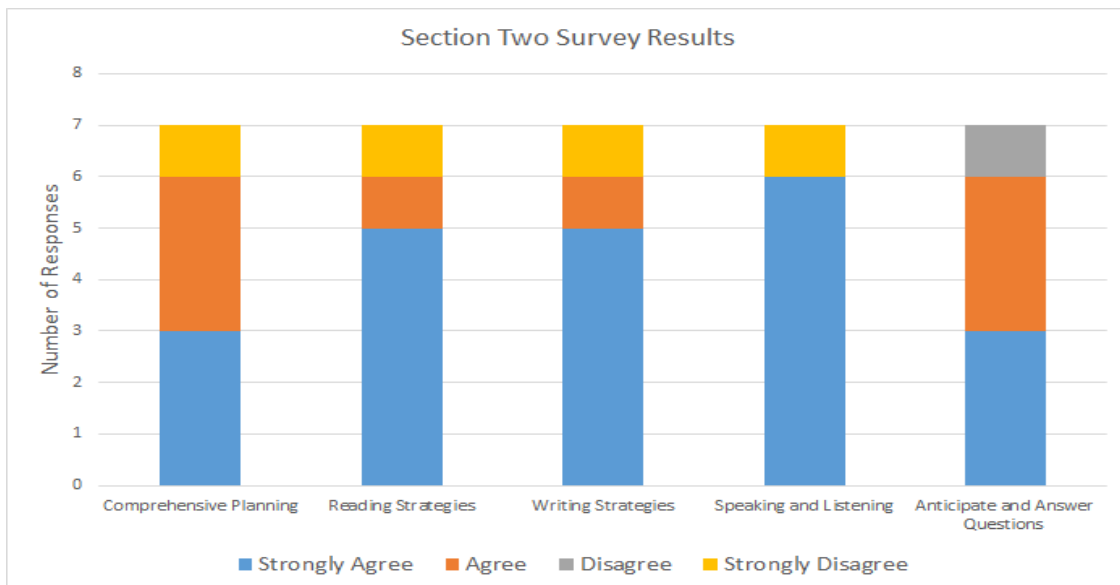
*Figure O1.* Responses to section one of the ILT end of year survey pertaining to training the instructional leadership team to facilitate ACE meetings.

Figure O1 indicates that respondents generally agreed with the statements. The average Likert-type scale score for each of the questions 1 to 7 was 1.57, 1.71, 1.57, 1.71, 1.71, 1.86, and 2.00 respectively. The statements that the respondents most agreed with were being trained to establish norms and trained to establish agendas. The statement that respondents least likely agreed with was being trained to debrief and summarize meetings, as well as what to do when a meeting isn't going as planned.

The second section of the survey pertained to training the PDT to provide professional learning on the instructional focus. They responded to the following questions written in statement form:

8. Being a part of the instructional leadership team at St. Georges Technical High School has provided me with the knowledge to develop and execute a comprehensive plan for enhancing instruction and student learning.

9. Being a part of the instructional leadership team at St. Georges Technical High School has provided me with the knowledge to provide training on researched-based reading strategies.
10. Being a part of the instructional leadership team at St. Georges Technical High School has provided me with the knowledge to provide training on researched-based writing strategies.
11. Being a part of the instructional leadership team at St. Georges Technical High School has provided me with the knowledge to provide training on researched-based speaking and listening strategies.
12. Being a part of the instructional leadership team at St. Georges Technical High School has provided me with the knowledge to anticipate and answer questions related to the instructional focus.



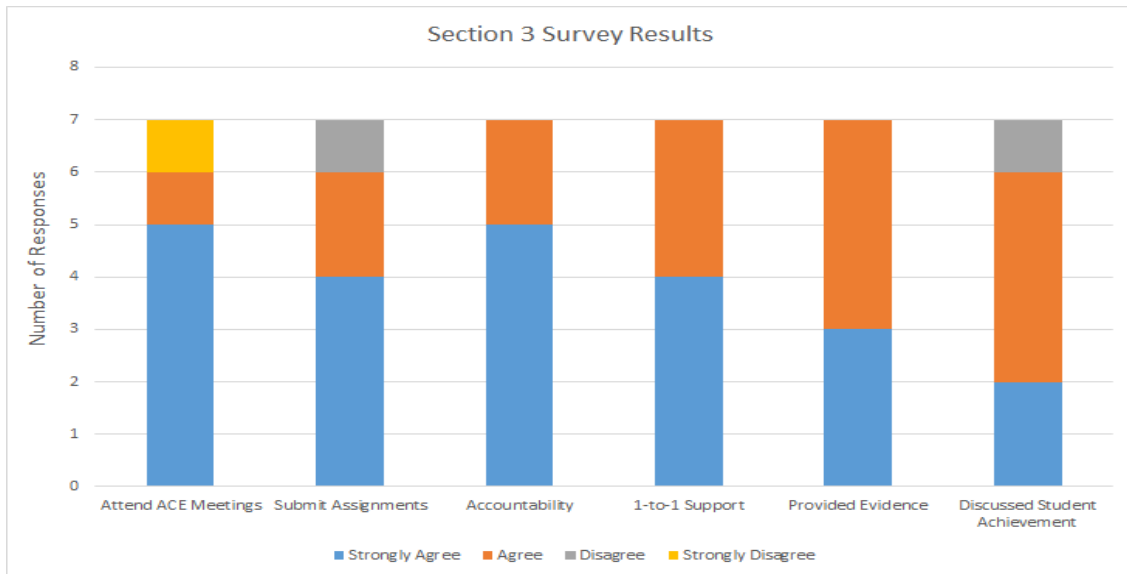
*Figure O2.* Responses to section two of the ILT end of year survey pertaining to training to provide professional learning on the instructional focus.

Figure O2 also indicates general agreement with the statements. Average Likert-type scale scores for statements 8 to 12 were 1.86, 1.57, 1.57, 1.43, and 1.71 respectively. The strongest agreement was with being trained with the knowledge to provide training

on research-based speaking and listening skills and the least agreement was with the statement pertaining to being trained to develop and execute a comprehensive plan for enhancing instruction and student learning.

The third section of the survey pertained to the overall impact the leadership team had on guiding the implementation of the school-wide instructional focus. Respondents answered the following questions written in statement form:

13. The staff at St. Georges Technical High School have attended the ACE meetings.
14. The staff at St. Georges Technical High School have submitted the required assignments.
15. The staff at St. Georges Technical High School are being held accountable by the administration to attend and submit required assignments.
16. The staff at St. Georges Technical High School receives one-on-one support from the instructional coaches and ACE facilitators on implementing the instructional focus.
17. The staff at St. Georges Technical High School provided evidence that the research-based strategies are being implemented into their lessons.
18. The staff at St. Georges Technical High School have discussed how the research-based strategies have improved student achievement.



*Figure O3.* Responses to section three of the ILT end of year survey pertaining to impacts of the leadership team’s implementation of the school-wide instructional focus.

Figure O3 indicates general agreement with the statements although generally slightly less favorable agreement with these statements than with the statements in the other sections. Average Likert-type scale scores for statements 13 to 18 are 1.57, 1.57, 1.29, 1.43, 1.57, and 1.86 respectively. The statement that respondents most strongly agreed with was about administration holding staff members accountable for attending ACE meetings and submitting required assignments. The statement that respondents least agreed with was discussing how the research-based strategies learned have improved student achievement.

## Discussion

Section 1 results (questions 1 to 7) show that the PDT members generally agreed that the instructional leadership team at St. Georges Technical High School provided them with the skills to establish norms, utilize protocols, develop agendas, identify

appropriate research-based strategies, and facilitate difficult discussions between two or more people. Resources utilized for the trainings included *Data Wise* by Kathryn Parker Boudett, Elizabeth City, and Richard Murnane (2013); *Meeting Wise* by Kathryn Parker Boudett and Elizabeth City (2014); *Crucial Conversations* by Kerry Patterson, Joseph Grenny, Ron McMillan, and Al Switzler (2012); and *The Advantage* by Patrick Lencioni (2012). These resources were invaluable to professionally developing the group. The data supports that the PDT learned about meeting preparation and facilitation with very specific professional development about dealing with difficult team members. It is interesting to note that one outlying participant strongly disagreed that he/she received the skills to facilitate meetings.

The data in section 1 shows that participants were generally in agreement that they were taught how to apply the the six characteristics of a PLC to the ACE model and how to debrief and and summarize a meeting. They received specific training about protocols to use if a meeting isn't going as planned. Dr. Kalia Reynolds, Director of Instruction and Curriculum in the Avon Grove School District, PA, conducted this professional development (PD) session. The Professional development focused on the following skills: shared mission and vision, values and goals, collaborative teams focused on learning, collective inquiry, action orientation and experminatation, commitment to continuous improvement and results orientation. The data also shows that two participants disagree that they were taught these skills. After reviewing the attendance log, there was one individual that was unable to attend the face-to-face training, although a video of the training was provided to all participants. In the future, I will have a follow-



up meeting with the individuals that are absent from the session to ensure they viewed and understood the information presented in the video.

Section 2 results (questions 8 to 12) indicated that the PDT was trained to provide professional learning on the instructional focus. The results show that participants agreed that they were provided the knowledge to develop and execute a comprehensive plan, provided training on research-based reading strategies, writing strategies, speaking, and listening strategies, and anticipated and answered questions related to the instructional focus. The PDT attended workshops at the National ASCD Conference that focused on general and discipline specific literacy. The literacy instructional coach, Mrs. Christa Jimerson, utilized information from *Investigating Disciplinary Literacy* by Christina L. Dobbs, Jacy Ippolito and Megin Charner-Laird (2017) to conduct training with the PDT. Mrs. Jimerson also used *Taking Action on Adolescent Literacy* by Judith L. Irvin, Julie Meltzer, and Melinda Dukes (2007). These resources helped guide the group in developing a literacy action plan. Christine Schumacher, Instructional Technology Coach, led the PDT in a book study on *Teaching the Core Skills of Listening and Speaking* by Erik Palmer (2014). The Delaware Academy for School Leadership (DASL) was hired to deliver professional development on key components of strategic planning and demonstrated how to develop a logic map to clarify action steps that would be taken to meet our objectives.

Upon reflection on the statement that received the lowest average Likert-type scale score in the second section of the survey pertaining to developing and executing a comprehensive plan for enhancing instruction and student learning, it is possible that the

training provided was too complex and beyond the scope of some of the participants' skills sets. Basically, it was too much material packed into a tight time frame, in a single day. Finally, the team had limited opportunities to apply the skills that were taught during the training.

Section 3 results (questions 13 to 18) indicated that the PDT had an impact on the implementation of the school-wide instructional focus with general agreement among the respondents that teachers attended meetings, submitted assignments, and the administrators held teachers accountable for submitting assignments. This was accomplished through ongoing communication (faculty, weekly newsletter, staff professional development calendar, and feedback on assignment submissions) and administrative participation and monitoring (administrators attended meeting, collected sign-in sheet and scheduled make-up sessions for participants that were absent).

Survey results showed that the staff received one-on-one support from the instructional coaches and ACE facilitators. The instructional coaches had an additional planning period (90 minutes) to assist staff with implementing instructional strategies that aligned with their daily lesson. The ACE facilitators allocated time during the ACE meetings to address individual concerns and questions. In addition, once a week, ACE facilitators made themselves available on non-ACE meetings days to work with individual teachers that requested their assistance.

It is interesting to note that all the participants strongly agreed or agreed that the staff provided evidence that the research-based strategies learned are being implemented in teachers' lesson plans. Staff members were required to submit on Schoology examples

of incorporating literacy strategies into their lessons. The PDT provided instructors with feedback on their implementation. Staff members were recognized in the weekly staff newsletter (“Hawk Highlights”) for successfully implementing strategies into their lesson plans.

Less favorable survey results were obtained on the statement pertaining to instructors discussed how the research-based strategies implemented have increased student achievement. Discussion about the successes and challenges of the implementation of the research-based strategies took place on the Schoology discussion board and during the face-to-face ACE meetings. Instructors specifically discussed how the strategies are assisting students with gaining a deeper understanding of the content to enable better preparation for their district summative assessments. There was one participant that disagreed that instructors discussed how the research-based strategies learned increased student achievement.

Oftentimes, impacts of major educational initiatives are not immediate. At least several years are necessary to make holistic and fundamental changes in incorporating effective literacy strategies into daily instruction to enhance student achievement. The PDT discussed this possibility throughout the process and most team members agreed that the impacts of the trainings would not be significant until at least year three of implementation. Year one focused on defining literacy, year two concentrated on identifying and implemented strategies specific to each discipline, and year three focused on cross-curricular strategies. It was anticipated that the discussion around increased

students' achievement was limited to year one. I expect perceivable impacts in year two of implementation with major gains starting in year three.

## **Conclusion**

The PDT's intended outcome was to increase the leadership capacity in the building to accomplish our goals aligned with the school-wide instructional focus on literacy. After the recruiting of PDT members, the objective was to increase the leadership capacity in the building by preparing the recruited faculty members to facilitate and provide professional learning on the instructional focus. Based on the survey results, the majority of the PDT members believed that they were provided the skills and knowledge to guide and deliver training on the instructional focus. The PDT also believed that they had a positive impact on the implementation of the school-wide instructional focus on literacy. The training provided to the PDT enabled them to develop a strategic plan, find funding to support the plan, and create face-to-face and online modules on literacy. Also, because of the trainings, the PDT members were able to establish productive working groups around protocols and build a system that held all staff members accountable for completing and submitting the assignments. Based on discussions held during the ACE meetings and the evidence submitted by staff members, students are demonstrating that they have a clearer and deeper understanding of the content and skills being taught in the core content areas. The training received by the PDT had a positive impact on teacher learning which led to increased student achievement focused on literacy at St. Georges.

## **Limitations**

A limitation to this survey is the small number of respondents. Although all seven staff members directly involved with the program took the survey, the small sample size may decrease the power and validity of the results. Interviews on a specific part of the training, which was the training on the four disciplines outlined in Patrick Lencioni's (2012) book, *The Advantage* (article fact #5) were conducted to address this limitation.

Another limitation was having my staff take a survey that assessed the quality of a program that I developed and directed. Participants may be hesitant to provide honest feedback about the program since I am also their administrator. I attempted to limit this disadvantage by having the Instructional Technology Coach hold a meeting, that I did not attend, to explain the purpose of the survey. She emphasized the anonymity of the survey and stressed the importance of providing an accurate perception of the program.

## **Recommendations**

A recommendation is to have PDT members conduct additional training sessions on how to facilitate and provide professional learning on the instructional focus. Additional training sessions will give some members of the PDT an opportunity to showcase their understanding of the topics and other members a chance to enhance their understanding by revisiting the process and gaining clarity from a different presenter. The training will be open to staff members to continue the process of building the leadership capacity within the building.

### **Recommendations for Action:**

1. Identify the PDT members that are comfortable and prepared them to conduct trainings on the topics.
2. Develop a professional development action plan that addresses the following: *what, how, when, and where*. Additional training and opportunities to learn and apply the concepts related to comprehensive planning will be offered and will involve multiple days of training.
3. Communicate the action plan to the staff.
4. Develop a survey to assess the effectiveness of the professional development sessions.
5. Develop a walkthrough tool that will help assess the level of implementation of the literacy strategies in the classroom. The walkthrough tool will be used by administrators and the data collected will serve as a data point to determine the success of the implementation and future professional development sessions.

### **Recommendations for Action:**

1. The PDT team will utilize materials and books that were used in the training to determine the instructional strategies that should be included on the walkthrough tool.
2. After the tool is developed, have an outside consultant provide feedback about the tool and make the necessary adjustments.
3. Determine the procedures for using the tool and how the data will be analyzed. Administrators will pilot the tool with teachers that are on the PDT.
4. Share the non-evaluative tool with the staff and explain that it will be used to provide feedback about the implementation of the instructional strategies. Also, explain that the data will be used to determine the topics for the monthly professional development days and that school-wide data obtained from the walkthrough tool will be shared with the staff.

**APPENDIX P**

**ELP Proposal**

Building the Leadership Capacity to Achieve Instructional Focus  
and Increase Student Achievement

Shanta Reynolds, M. Ed.

University of Delaware Doctoral Candidate

ELP Proposal

December 2016

## **Overview**

I have served as the principal of St. Georges Technical High School (St. Georges) in the New Castle County Vocational Technical School District (NCCVT) since 2012. During this time, the district has sought to increase leadership capacity in the buildings by providing professional development to teachers and administrators on distributive leadership. However, we have not been able to effectively increase leadership capacity in the buildings because there was no strategic plan that connected school level initiatives to distributive leadership. There also has not been a system established where teachers and administrators are working together to find solutions to school level issues.

In 2004, NCCVT was involved in the Delaware Distributive Leadership Initiative (DDLI). The DDLI was a program assigned to the Delaware Academy of School Leadership by the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) to develop and coordinate distributive leadership efforts across the state. Buttram and Pizzini (2009) served as the lead researchers for this initiative. School districts were invited to submit a proposal to begin developing their own model of distributive leadership. NCCVT was one of the four districts that was awarded a \$25,000 mini grant from the DDOE. The researchers (Buttram & Pizzini, 2009) noted the following outcomes for moving forward with distributive leadership for the participating school districts: (a) distributive leadership should be attached to other improvement efforts in the school, and (b) teachers and administrators should be working together to solve school issues, to hear each others' perspectives, and decide as a unit how to move the school forward.



My Educational Leadership Portfolio (ELP) will focus on building the leadership capacity necessary to achieve our instructional focus and student achievement goals. Specifically, the ELP will center on developing teams of teachers and administrators to work together to improve teacher practices focused on literacy. This will enhance the instruction of teachers, which should lead to an increase in student achievement.

### **Organizational Context**

New Castle County Vocational Technical School District (NCCVT) is a vocational school district in Delaware consisting of four high schools. NCCVT's vision "is to deliver world-class Career and Technical programs combined with rigorous academic curricula to equip students with the 21st century skills that will best serve the State of Delaware, and global community" (NCCVT, 2018, para. 1). When students graduate, they earn a diploma and a certificate of completion in their selected career area. Students in the NCCVT school district are prepared to be successful in the workforce and/or in a two- or four-year college or apprenticeship program.

St. Georges is a part of the NCCVT school district and opened in 2006-2007 with a ninth grade of approximately 260 students. There are currently 1,063 students in grades 9 - 12, who have come from 33 different public and charter middle schools throughout New Castle County. The following is the demographic breakdown of the students that attend St. Georges: 52% of the students are male and 48% are female, 40% of students are categorized as minority, and approximately 12.5% of students are eligible for special education services.

The school consists of 91 staff members, and out of 76 teachers (19 career area teachers and 57 academic teachers), 50% have nine years or less of teaching experience, 26.3% of the staff have 10 - 19 years of experience, and 23.6% have 20 years or more.

Table P1 shows the years of teaching experience for teachers at St. Georges.

Table P1

*Breakdown of Years of Teaching Experience*

Years of Teaching	Percentage of Staff Members
4 Years or less	13.2%
5 - 9 Years	36.8%
10 - 14 Years	14.5%
15 - 19 Years	11.8%
20 - 24 Years	11.8%
25 - 29 Years	9.2%
30 Years or More	2.6%

Since 2011, the staff at St. Georges has been involved in school- and district-based professional development sessions related to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). These professional development sessions have included an introduction and explanation of the new standards, along with effective strategies, higher-order thinking, close reading, depth of knowledge and discipline specific literacy, growth mindset and learning focused strategies (LFS). In addition, St. Georges participated in the Delaware Department of Education Common Ground for the Common Core training during the 2014 - 2015 school year. The impact of the professional development sessions over the

last few years has resulted in some staff actively implementing learned strategies while some staff remained at a novice level. This was evident through the lack of implementation witnessed by the St. Georges administrative team during classroom walkthroughs and summative evaluations. Students' performance on the SAT is another indicator that the intended outcome, which is to improve instruction that leads to an increase in student achievement, has not been fully achieved on standardized assessments. For example, Table P2 shows the average SAT scores for St. Georges students (11th and 12th graders) during the 2014 - 2015 school year. The table highlights that students scored above the district average in each category, but slightly below the state average in critical reading and writing.

Table P2

*SAT Average Scores for the Class of 2014-2015*

	School	District	State
Math	454	426	449
Critical Reading	447	416	449
Writing	422	396	429
Total	1,323	1,238	1,327

Traditionally, the instructional focus at St. Georges has been developed and executed by the principal with occasional assistance from the department chairs that served on the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT). The ILT met once a month for 30

minutes in the morning to discuss upcoming events and brainstorm ideas for upcoming professional development. The ILT was responsible for setting-up, facilitating, and creating systems to sustain the learning that took place during the staff professional development sessions. They received limited training on team building, strategic planning, and data analysis. As a result, the ILT was mostly the function of the principal.

Principals are charged with managing every aspect of the building. The school leaders, who were responsible for meeting the instructional goals and sustaining professional learning were also in charge of managing daily operations of the building, student safety, maintaining a positive relationship with the surrounding community, and many other non-instructional duties that are essential to effectively running a school. This is evident based on the data collected from the SAM project. The SAM project is a professional development process using a unique set of tools to track and change a principal's focus from school management tasks to instructional leadership activities directly connected to improving teaching and learning (SAM, 2017). In 2013 - 2014, the data collected on the NCCVT school district indicates that an overwhelming majority of administrators spend more than half of their day on non-instructional duties. Fullan (2014) reports that, "If principals are to maximize their impact on learning, we must re-conceptualize their role so that it clearly, practically, and convincingly becomes a force for improving the whole school and the results it brings" (p. 6). This multiple-role expectation has prevented the administration from concentrating on successfully implementing the instructional focus goals by establishing and training a team to address school concerns.

## **Problem Statement**

### **Importance of Distributive Leadership**

In light of the increasing complexity and demands in education, we must move past the idea of one or a few people being the center of knowledge, expertise, and power as it relates to instruction in the building. One person cannot be an expert in all matters, so it is essential that principals allow people to lead where they have expertise. My goal with this ELP is to build the leadership capacity in my building to accomplish the school-wide instructional focus on literacy.

A major focus of the ELP is to establish the leadership capacity in my school. A distributive leadership perspective will be used to accomplish this goal. According to GLISI, “Distributive leadership is about creating leadership density, building and sustaining leadership capacity throughout the organization. A distributive leadership perspective recognizes that people in many different roles can lead and affect the performance of their school in different ways” (2015, p. 1). Spillane (2006) explains that the distributive model of leadership focuses upon the interactions, rather than the actions of those in formal and informal leadership roles. As illustrated in Figure P1, a leadership system of practice is comprised of a collection of interconnected components: leaders, followers, and situations. The researcher’s perspective “shifts the unit of analysis from the individual actor or group of actors to web of leaders, followers, and situations that give activity its form” (Spillane et al., 2004, p. 10). The distributive leadership model is primarily concerned with *leadership practice* and how leadership influences organizational and instructional improvement.



*Figure P1.* A leadership system of practice is comprised of a collection of interacting components: leaders, followers, and situations.

Research shows that distributed leadership can benefit school improvement in a number of ways. First, distributive leadership encourages teacher commitment. Harris and Spillane (2008) noted that distributive leadership has normative power. This suggests that an organization should not rely on one heroic leader but focus on the team to address school-wide issue. Distributive leadership is a non-hierarchical and inclusive approach that fosters collaborative and ethical practice (Starratt, 2004). Performance declines when individuals feel alienated and powerless, the “ability to empower others” encourages the commitments and capacities of organizational members (Leithwood & Duke, 1999, p. 48) through having instructors actively involved in accomplishing the school wide goals. Sheppard (1996) supports this ideal by reporting that when the beliefs

and contributions of teachers are considered important, teachers are more likely to support school goals.

Secondly, distributive leadership also has representational power. This implies that leadership should be flexible enough to meet various challenges and new demands (Harris & Spillane, 2008). The field of education is dynamic and complex. We consistently encounter changes to curriculum, instructional strategies, and assessments to meet the needs of our students. Spillane's (2006) work indicates that leadership is instilled in the vision of improving teaching and learning. He emphasizes that distributive leadership is not a static plan or prescribed blue print, but it is a framework for guiding work to accomplish improvements. The framework encourages us to involve other educators in leadership functions, based on their interest, task, and expertise. Hierarchical position should not be a sole qualifier to address evolving issues and new initiatives for school improvement.

Third, distributive leadership has empirical power. There is increasing research that distributive leadership makes a positive difference to organizational outcomes and student learning (Harris & Spillane, 2008). Specifically, there are causal links between distributive leadership, instructional improvement, and student outcomes when there is a clear plan on how the "leader plus theory" is going to be incorporated within the school (Wright, 2008). The leader plus theory is the idea that leadership tasks should be carried out by multiple actors within the school setting (Wright, 2008). The research indicates that patterns of leadership distribution matter within an organization and that distributed leadership practice is more likely to equate with improved organizational performance

and outcomes (Leithwood, Seashore-Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004; Leithwood et al., 2007).

In spite of the importance of distributive leadership for school improvement, the literature is less clear about what it looks like in practice. Studies typically show that an implementation of distributive leadership in a school includes the following features: a) select leaders and building relationships, b) establish supports, and c) focus on improving teaching and learning (Spillane, 2006).

**Selecting leaders and building relationships.** The first step is to create the opportunity and establish a strong teacher and administrator led team. Teachers and administrators will engage in leadership work together as co-leaders of the group. There will be no one in charge of the team, but there will be interdependence between leaders, followers, and situations. The leaders will influence the followers and help shape their practice, especially in relation to teaching and learning. Leithwood, Jantzi, and McElheron-Hopkins (2006) found that such “planful alignment” of distributive leadership was associated with positive organizational change.

**Establishing supports.** Individuals involved in the distributive leadership process will understand it is part of their job to cultivate influence. To prevent burnout and increase buy-in, the team members will assist with identifying positions and individuals that can support the implementation of the instructional goals selected by the team. Team members will grow from this experience because they will have an opportunity to interact with multiple colleagues in leadership positions.



**Focus on improving teaching and learning.** The distributive leadership process will focus on improving teaching and learning. The individual goals and the school-wide instructional focus selected by the team will focus on areas of weakness. From the data, the team has concluded that literacy will be our school-wide instructional focus.

I plan to use distributive leadership as a tool to develop a framework to empower teachers to take on leadership positions that address school issues. Three issues point to the need for distributive leadership to be implemented at St. Georges:

1. Information collected from interviews with three principals in the New Castle County School District on the topic of distributive leadership and the implications for the role of the principal.
2. The result of a district-wide staff satisfaction survey, which suggested that teachers may not feel valued by colleagues, school administrators, and district staff.
3. Student achievement data on literacy will be included. The data indicates that students are underperforming and that the current structure lacks teacher involvement in determining a school-wide instructional focus.

### **Distributive Leadership: Implication for the Role of the Principal**

During the 2015-2016 school year, I interviewed Dr. Stanley Spoor, principal of Howard High School of Technology and Dr. Clifton Hayes, principal of Delcastle Technical High School. The information collected during the videotaped interview indicated that the role of principals has expanded and become more complex. Both administrators report on the intricacy and constraints of the multi-role aspects of educational leadership. They reported that they are not solely the instructional leader, but also the chief finance officer, human resource officer, and operational manager for their

building. They are also charged with building relationships with the surrounding community and addressing the day-to-day issues that demand their attention.

Usdan, McCloud, and Podmostko (2000) stated “The principal’s responsibilities have increased, and the job has become more complex due to accountability demands for improved student achievement. Principals typically work 10-hour days, and many believe the job is just not ‘doable’ as it is configured now” (p. 5). In addition, Fullan (2014) found that:

Principals’ responsibilities have increased enormously over the past two decades. They are expected to run a smooth school; manage health, safety, and the building; innovate without upsetting anyone; connect with students and teachers; be responsive to parents and the community; answer to their districts; and above all deliver results. (p. 6)

Dr. Spoor and Dr. Hayes discussed that they must empower teacher leaders and assistant principals to take on some of these duties and responsibilities to successfully operate the school and increase student achievement. They also indicated that there are many barriers that hinder distributive leadership, such as overloading teachers that also have a primary responsibility of instructing students, which they must attend to first before addressing other school duties. The principals also mentioned that it is important to be thoughtful about finding the right balance when trying to establish a distributive leadership environment.

The two principals also reported during these interviews that effective distributive leadership will maximize the principal’s time on instruction and will empower teachers to problem solve and address school-wide issues. This is supported by the findings of Hargreaves and Fink (2003), which concluded that principals who distribute leadership

across their schools contribute to sustainable improvement within the school organization. The work of Hargreaves and Fink provided insight into targeting a problem, which requires sustained educational leadership. Specifically, the researchers believed that distributive leadership and opportunities for leadership successions are imperative to a school's success.

### **District-Wide Staff Satisfaction Survey**

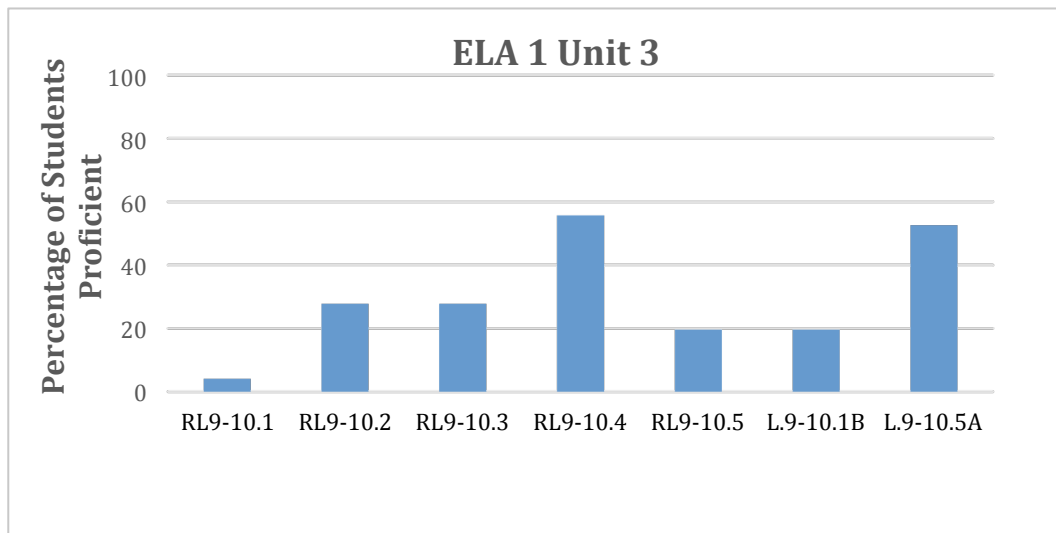
The NCCVT school district conducted a staff satisfaction survey in 2014 - 2015 to study the performance of the district as it relates to instruction, operations, and communication. Three of the survey questions focused on the staff's perceptions about whether their suggestions are considered by colleagues, school administrators, and district staff. The questions are relevant to distributive leadership because they provided insight on the existence of collaborative culture throughout the district.

One essential component of successfully working together is valuing each other's suggestions and opinions. The survey was completed by 73% of the total district staff (465 out of 633 district staff members) where 33% of the respondents strongly agreed that their suggestions for school improvement are given consideration by their colleagues, and 28% strongly agreed that their suggestions for school improvements are given consideration by their administrative team. Only 18% of respondents strongly agreed that their suggestions for school improvement are given consideration by district staff. This survey illustrates that less than half of the staff strongly agree that their suggestions are not being considered by the leaders who could enact change. Effective collaboration between teachers and administrators is a key component of distributive

leadership. Principals need to create structures and opportunities for staff to effectively work together (Mendel, Watson, & MacGregor, 2002).

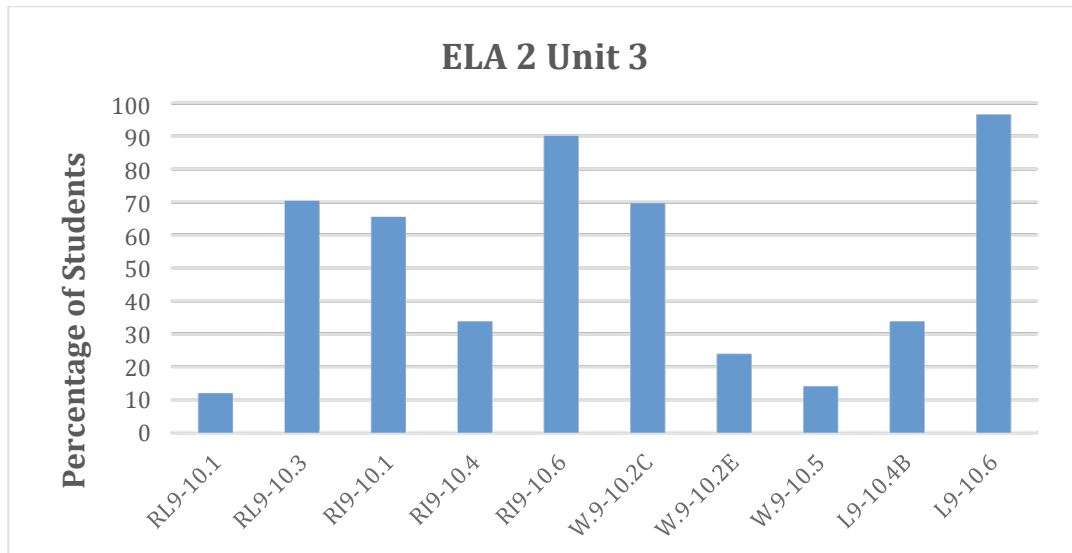
### **Instructional Focus on Literacy**

St. Georges' Powerful Development Team (PDT) analyzed internal district assessment data and Smarter-Balanced scores to determine our area of weakness in the implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The NCCVT school district uses common assessments to measure student proficiency in English Language Arts (ELA). Four internally-designed unit assessments from College Board's Springboard program are given in each grade level, and assessment items on each unit assessment correspond to a CCSS. While the district's goal is to have 80% of NCCVT students achieve a proficient level on CCSS, Figure P2 below shows that St. Georges students did not meet any of the CCSS goals. For instance, the CCSS RL9-10.4, "determining the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text," had the highest proficiency rate of 55.7%. The lowest proficiency rate, noted as 4.1%, was RL9-10.1, "citing strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says."



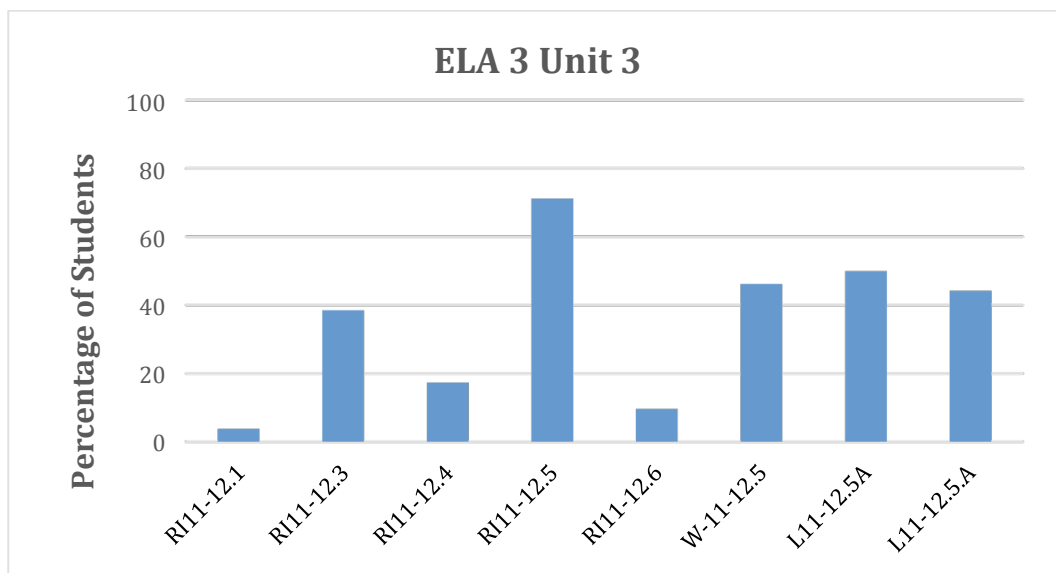
*Figure P2.* Percentage of St. Georges students achieving proficiency on CCSS ELA using ELA 1 Unit 3 Assessment.

Figure P3 below shows that students achieved the target on two CCSS, RI9-10.6 and L9-10.6, which require students to “determine an author’s point of view or purpose and acquiring and using accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, respectively.” The figure also shows that students were within 20% of achieving the NCCVT target for proficiency on three other standards.



*Figure P3.* Percentage of St. Georges students achieving proficiency on CCSS ELA using ELA 2 Unit 3 Assessment.

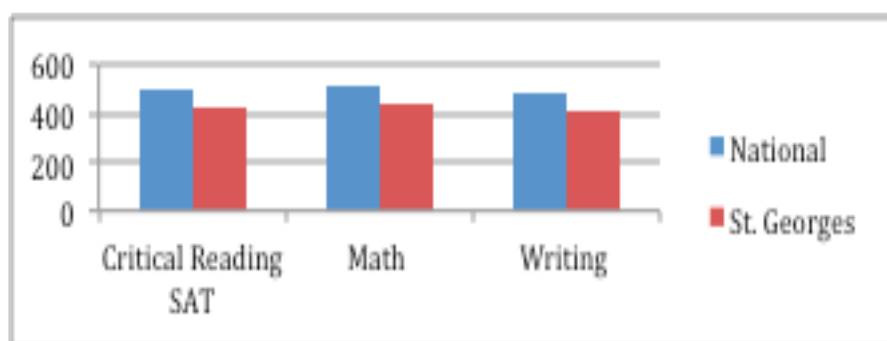
Figure P4 below shows that St. Georges students did not meet the target for any of the CCSS on the ELA 3 assessment. The average proficiency rate for the eight standards on the assessment was 35%, which is well below the 80% target.



*Figure P4.* Percentage of St. Georges students achieving proficiency on CCSS ELA using ELA 3 Unit 3 Assessment.

A performance level comparison of St. Georges students and the State of Delaware on the Smarter Balanced standardized mathematics assessment shows that St. Georges students achieved a 19% proficiency rate, which is 4% lower than the state average of 23%. A similar comparison of ELA/Literacy Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium results showed that St. Georges scored a 58% proficiency rate. Although this was above the state average by 6%, it did not meet the district and school proficiency target. Based on an analysis of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium and internal common assessment data, it is evident St. Georges needs to focus on its implementation of the CCSS to meet the district's 80% proficiency target in ELA and increase proficiency rates in mathematics to keep pace with state averages.

In comparison, with 2015 national data from College Board regarding average SAT scores for 11th grade SAT school day testing, as shown in Figure P5, St. Georges scored below the national average in all three areas. Critical Reading, while the national mean was 495, St. Georges was 421; Mathematics, the national mean was 511 while St. Georges' students scored 431; and the national mean for writing was 484, but St. Georges' students scored 407.



*Figure P5.* Comparison of St. Georges and national 2015 SAT scores for 11th grade school day testing.

## **Improvement Goal**

My ELP portfolio will examine the development of three leadership teams I created for teachers and administrators to work collectively on achieving the instructional focus on literacy. Specifically, I will focus on the following three elements necessary to achieve the instructional focus goals and to increase distributive leadership: a) selecting leaders and establishing the Powerful Development Team (PDT), b) building leadership capacity, and c) teaching leadership skills and literacy strategies. The teams will participate in activities that are intrinsically meaningful for themselves and will have the autonomy to make decisions not afforded to them as classroom instructors. The goal is for the group to accomplish school goals that focus on literacy, increase their leadership skills, and establish a cohesive team of teachers and administrators that are working together to solve school-wide problems. I will assist the team with executing these goals by developing a process for selecting instructors to serve on the team. I will also help teachers select personal and school-wide goals to work on, and provide teachers with professional development opportunities to improve their knowledge and skills around leadership and literacy.

### **Selecting Leaders and Establishing the Powerful Development Team**

The first step in building the leadership capacity in the building is selecting teachers to be part of a teacher- and administrator-led PDT. The job description will be posted in the principal's weekly newsletter each week for one month. Teachers will be required to submit a letter of interest and interview to be a part of the team. Teacher leaders who are selected will have opportunities to increase their leadership skills and



literacy knowledge by attending professional development sessions across the state and country. They will also develop relationships with one another through team-building exercises. The training will involve the following: learning how to operate as a cohesive team, developing a strategic plan, and implementing strategies for working with adult learners.

Furthermore, teachers will work collaboratively with administration to design initiatives (e.g., SAT prep, peer walkthroughs, growth mindset, literacy in career and technical areas) that they are passionate about leading within the building. This aligns with the main idea of distributive leadership, which is to have administrators and teachers working together to accomplish instructional goals. Each team member will be charged with developing a logic model to support the personal goal they are working on. The members of the committee will meet biweekly to discuss the initiative proposals and next steps.

The PDT will design instructional goals for the school year and will work collaboratively to complete a grant to fund the school's instructional focus on literacy. The team will serve as a guiding committee that oversees the literacy initiative in relation to the grant. They will evaluate the literacy action plan to assess if the intended results are being accomplished. Members will take collective responsibility for all decisions made in the action plan. They will also be responsible for communicating outcomes to staff members and other stakeholders. Teacher leaders will work with administrators to finalize the planning process and prepare for the 2016 - 2017 school-wide professional development. This will include the creation of a true ILT and coaches to create,

facilitate, and support professional development for the 2016 - 2017 school year.

### **Establishing Support**

The PDT cannot be the only group involved in this process. In order for improvement to take place, I need to tap the expertise of multiple teacher leaders in my school to enhance the improvement efforts and results (Marks & Prinity, 2003). The second part of the process is to add two additional tiers to support teachers with learning and implementing literacy strategies. I will utilize my school budget and request assistance from the superintendent to create learning coach positions. These individuals will serve as learning coaches assisting teachers with implementing strategies into their daily practice. During the 2016 - 2017 school year, the learning coaches will be responsible for supporting teachers during the school day with the implementation of literacy strategies, technology, and mathematics. Specifically, they will co-teach, assist with lesson planning, and model planning.

There will also be a newly designed ILT that will be responsible for facilitating the professional learning communities that have been renamed Action, Collaboration, and Evidence (ACE). The instructors serving on the ILT will be responsible for leading nine ACE groups with close to ten faculty members in each group. The ACE meetings concentrate on strategies to increase student literacy skills by focusing on reading, writing, speaking, and listening with an emphasis on analysis. The individuals selected for these roles will go through the same selection process as the PDT. As described in Table P3, there are three teams that will hold responsibilities to support the school in achieving the instructional focus.

Table P3

*Building the Leadership Capacity Group Breakdown*

Team	Members	Numbers	Responsibilities	Year Established
PDT	Admin and Teachers	8	Steering committee for literacy initiative and ACE facilitators	2015
ILT	Teachers	8	ACE facilitators	2016
Learning Coaches	Teachers	6	In-class teacher support on major initiatives	2016

The PDT, ILT, and learning coaches serve as an example of distributive leadership because they are engaged with executing, supporting, and sustaining the instructional focus on literacy, technology or mathematics. The following are additional details about the ILT and learning coaches. As stated, these teams will assist with the implementation and reinforcement of the instructional goals.

**Instructional Leadership Team.** The ILT will be trained on how to work with the adult learning model and how to effectively facilitate a professional learning community. They will also be trained on the literacy content that will be delivered in their ACE groups. Every Tuesday, the instructional coaches will meet to simulate the professional learning that will take place in their ACE groups on Wednesdays. In addition, they will also have an opportunity to discuss highlights and barriers that they are encountering in their ACE groups and receive feedback from their peers and administration. They will actively determine topics for the upcoming professional development days based on the needs communicated by the staff during the ACE group meetings.

**Instructional Practice Coaches.** The instructional practice coaches will be responsible for improving the instructional practice of fellow educators using a variety of high-impact support strategies focused on frequent, targeted feedback in each educator's development areas. These include co-planning, co-teaching modeling, lesson development, and providing non-evaluative observations. There will be a total of two coaches who will focus primarily on supporting the goals for the school's instructional focus on literacy. The instructional coaches will receive training based on Jim Knight's (2009) work on instructional coaching and will also participate in the training provided for the ILT. The instructional practice coaches will receive release time; one will have a 90-minute release time in the first semester and the second will have a 90-minute release time in the second semester.

**Digital Practice Coaches.** The digital content coaches will help the educators they support to build their instructional technology knowledge and impactful employment of digital instructional resources to improve student academic outcomes. In addition to researching and modeling best practices with their own students, digital content coaches will also connect educators to technology resources and host professional learning sessions on how to integrate digital content and technology into instruction. The digital coaches will assist with preparing the staff for the district one-to-one initiative that will be launched during the 2017 - 2018 school year. There will be two digital coaches who will receive training based on Jim Knight's (2009) work on instructional coaching and will also participate in the training provided for the ILT. The digital coaches will receive

release time; one will have a 90-minute release time in the first semester and the second will have a 90-minute release time in the second semester.

**Instructional Technology Coach.** The instructional technology coach will assist classroom teachers to include digital platforms in their lesson plans and integrate effective strategies and multiple technologies to differentiate, personalize, and enhance student learning. The instructional technology coach is a full-time position; this individual will work closely with the digital leads on completing their tasks. The instructional technology coach will also take the lead in making sure that the one-to-one initiative rolls out successfully at St. Georges. In addition, he/she will also work with the digital coaches, ILT, and instructional coaches to ensure a clear connection between the school-wide instructional focus on literacy, and the district focus on incorporating more technology in the classroom. The instructional technology coach will participate in school and district professional development focusing on literacy, technology, and leadership.

**Research Lead.** The research lead will conduct research on literacy strategies to inform the online modules that will be created for the ACE groups. He/she will serve as the point of contact for the school with the instructional focus on literacy and will work with the Delaware Academy of Leadership to identify resources that align with the ACE modules. The research lead will also establish a system to collect and analyze data on the effectiveness of the literacy modules created for the ACE groups. He or she will work closely with the ILT and other coaches, will spend the majority of his/her time assisting and training the ILT and instructional coaches, and will also participate in all of the

school-level professional development sessions. There is no release time with this position.

**Math Coach.** The math coach will work solely with the math department. Based on district and state standardized assessment data, mathematics is our weakest area. The math coach will conduct research-based, content-focused coaching with the math department. Specifically, he or she will train the math instructors in developing a classroom that promotes the conceptual understanding of mathematics. The math coach will receive training through the Delaware Mathematics coalition and will participate in the Jim Knight (2009) training. The math coach is a full-time position.

### **Teaching Leadership Skills and Literacy Strategies**

The St. Georges PDT analyzed the data and attempted to identify possibilities for improving CCSS implementation. The team determined that literacy, with an emphasis on writing and speaking/listening for analysis, was a logical starting point for professional learning based on college and career needs. The PDT applied for and received a \$40,000 competitive grant sponsored by the Delaware Department of Education to help achieve our literacy goals. St. Georges will implement a three-phase professional development program personalized to the individual needs of each instructor. The plan will begin with a needs assessment for teachers to establish the appropriate learning community for that instructor. The instructors will meet with their needs-based professional learning communities, referred to as ACE meetings, and engage in a cycle of inquiry focused on literacy analysis. The goal of the personalized ACE

meetings is to increase the instructional skill of the teachers, which should lead to an increase in student achievement.

The program will be implemented in phases over multiple school years. The initial awareness and introductory phase will take place during the first half of the 2016 - 2017 school year. During this phase, teachers will develop an understanding of literacy and how the literacy initiative can be supported within their classroom, ultimately choosing a focus class with which to develop an implementation plan for teaching analysis skills in the areas of writing and speaking/listening. The PDT will follow the same process outlined in the grant to develop a plan of action for the second phase, which will take place during the second half of the 2016 - 2017 school year. This skill development phase will include all instructors collaborating both in PLCs and via Schoology to ensure that the professional development is focused on their area of greatest need as they expand the implementation plan to all courses. This process will continue until instructors have mastered teaching literacy skills to students in their class or the data determines that a different approach is needed to increase student achievement. After students have mastered the skills outlined, the PDT will analyze the data to determine the literacy skill that will be the instructional focus for the next phase. Phase three, full implementation, will begin in the 2017 - 2018 school year with teachers reviewing the literacy focus based on the previous year's data, choosing areas of personalized learning, and continuing to implement literacy skills in all their classes.

The school will measure the effectiveness of our program by analyzing the outcome of quarterly surveys, walkthroughs, evaluations, and internal/external

assessments. The quarterly staff surveys will provide the school with information about the quality of the professional development and the impact of the program on teacher practice. The walkthroughs and evaluations will provide teachers with feedback about their practice and will serve as objective data to measure the success of incorporating strategies learned. The utilization of the internal and external assessments (e.g., district unit assessments and SAT data) will demonstrate the program's ability to improve student performance.



Table P4

*Description of Planned Artifacts*

Number	Artifact	Type	Audience	Description	Action Steps	Timeline	Status
<b>Selecting Leaders and Establishing the Powerful Development Team</b>							
1	Professional development Logic Model	Strategic plan	PDT	Represents the development of the powerful development team (i.e. inputs, activities, and outcomes).			Progress
2	PDT Job Description and Team Functioning Sheet	Planning Product	Staff at St. Georges	Description of characteristics and qualifications needed to serve on the PDT and a breakdown of the goals and procedures the team will follow.			Complete
3	PDT Summer Training Materials	Professional development product	PDT	Presents information about the PDT's purpose and goals. The information utilized for the summer training is included in the presentation.			Complete
4	PDT Schoology Site	Website	PDT	Provides the PDT with readings, videos and additional resources relevant to leadership and literacy. Information gathered from previous trainings are hosted on the	1. Add additional folders for the ILT and coaches. 2. Survey team to determine what other items should be included on the site.		Progress

				site.			
5	Program Evaluation	Program Analysis	PDT	A program evaluation was conducted to gather information related to the training of the PDT and to assess the organizational health of the school.			Progress
<b>Building Leadership Capacity</b>							
6	Distributive Leadership: Implication for the Role of Principal	Video	Principals PDT	Share the role of principals and highlight how distributive leadership can assist with addressing school issues.			Complete
7	Summary of the PDT's Achievements <a href="https://youtu.be/H8R23EDVHY">https://youtu.be/H8R23EDVHY</a>	Video	PDT School Admin Board Members	Presents the individual and team goals that the PDT completed. This video was presented to the NCCVT school board.			Complete
8	Building Leadership Capacity Mindmap	Strategic Planning	PDT ILT Coaches	Displays how leadership will expand throughout the school. Provides an overview of the inputs, activities and outcomes for each group.	1. Identify the professional learning experiences the ILT and coaches will receive.		Progress
9	Leadership Team Structure and Literacy target sheet	Strategic Planning	All of the leadership teams in the building	Provides an in-depth overview of the roles and responsibilities for all the			Complete

				leadership groups in the building. A description of how each group will support the school wide literacy initiative is also included.			
<b>Teaching Leadership Skills and Literacy Strategies</b>							
10	Reimaging Professional Learning Innovation Grant	Competitive Grant	Delaware Dept. of Education PDT	Description of a three-year plan for professional development on literacy			Complete
11	Empirical Research Document	Empirical Research	Faculty	Provides an overview of studies about distributive leadership. Specifically, the document outlines the purpose of the study, research findings and authentic application.			Complete

1. **PDT logic model.** The powerful development team (PDT) logic model is a mind map outlining the development of the PDT. The logic model identifies the social capital, human capital, and decisional capital needed to establish the team. In addition, the logic model identifies the input, activities, and outcomes of the plan to increase the leadership capacities in the building by forming a team that will work collectively to enhance learning.

2. **PDT job description and team functioning sheet.** The PDT job description provides the candidates with details on what qualification and characteristics are needed to serve on the team. It also provides candidates with details on what they will be required to do and the overarching goals that the team will tackle. The functioning sheet explains how the team will operate as a group. Specifically, the document provides the result of the personality test taken by each team member, the established group norms, explanation on the importance of utilizing an agenda, and descriptions of the protocols that will be utilized to structure the discussions and activities.
3. **PDT summer training material.** The PDT summer training material is a PowerPoint presentation that highlights the instructional core, and the theory of change, strategy, and structure/system as it relates to the development of the PDT. The training material also walks participants through the four major disciplines noted in Lencioni's (2012) book *The Advantage*. The following concepts were used to build a cohesive team and to create clarity about what is important in the school and develop a clear mission:

Discipline 1: Build a Cohesive Leadership Team

Discipline 2: Create Clarity

Discipline 3: Over-communicate Clarity

Discipline 4: Reinforce Clarity

An outline of the future meeting (PDT Roadmap) and an instructional playbook for the school year is also included in the materials. The logic model was used to

determine the sequence and resources used for the summer professional development sessions.

4. **PDT Schoology site.** The PDT Schoology site is an online platform that hosts team member's profiles, agendas, readings, training videos, and other resources relevant to leadership and the school-wide focus on literacy. The team is encouraged to submit comments on the discussion board and add relevant resources. This site is primarily used to disseminate information to the team about next steps on the initiatives that the team is working on and to store helpful resources to assist the team. Developing a Schoology page is a step that is listed on the logic model.
5. **Program evaluation.** A program evaluation was conducted to gather information related to the training of the PDT at St. Georges and to assess the organizational health of the school. One of the major skills the PDT learned was how to create a healthy organization using the four disciplines outlined in Lencioni's (2012) book listed above. Using the framework of these four disciplines, the program evaluation considered the following two questions:

*Process Question:* To what degree did the training that I delivered help teacher leaders and administrators know how to execute Lencioni's four-disciplines model discussed in the book *The Advantage*?

*Outcome Question:* What percentage of teacher leaders and administrators believe that St. Georges Technical High School is a healthy organization (e.g., rubric score of 4 or higher)?

6. **Distributive leadership: Implication for the role of principal.** The distributive leadership implication for the role of the principal video provides an overview of the duties and responsibilities of being a high school principal from the perspective of two principals who work in the NCCVT school district. In the video, Dr. Stanley Spoor, principal at Howard High School of Technology, and Dr. Clifton Hayes, principal at Delcastle Technical High School, explain the importance of building the leadership capacity in the building and discuss some of the barriers to distributive leadership. The video also captures the perspectives of two instructors that are members of the PDT. They discuss the initiatives that they are working on, the support they are receiving from the building level administration, and how this process has impacted them as leaders.
7. **Summary of the PDT's achievements.** The summary of the PDT's achievement is a video highlighting all the members of the PDT and the tasks that they have completed. The teachers and administrators explain the details of their initiatives and the impact it's has had on their professional growth. In addition, they discussed what it was like to be a part of the team and how the work has influenced the school environment. The video was shared at the NCCVT board meeting, and the team was recognized by the principal, superintendent, and the NCCVT board of education for their accomplishments.
8. **Building Leadership Capacity Mindmap.** The building leadership capacity Mindmap illustrates the input, activities, and outcomes for PDT, ILT, and Coaches (CS Odessa, 2018). This tool will assist with ensuring that each group

supports each other in achieving the instructional focus. The Mindmap will also indicate the resources that are needed for each group to accomplish their goals.

9. **Leadership team structure and literacy target sheet.** The leadership team structure and literacy target sheet provide an in-depth overview of the roles and responsibilities for each group in the building as it relates to the literacy focus. This tool is also important for ensuring that the groups are supporting each other in accomplishing the instructional focus. This sheet will be used to reassure the groups that we are all working together to meet the instructional focus on literacy.
10. **The Reimaging Professional Learning Innovation Grant.** The Reimaging Professional Learning Innovation Grant was written by the PDT to support the school-wide instructional focus on literacy. The grant thoroughly explains why the team decided to select literacy as the instructional focus. Also, it explains how the PDT will be the group that is primarily responsible for developing the online and face-to-face professional development session, monitoring implementation, and analyzing data to determine progress. The grant resulted in \$40,000 awarded to St. Georges to support the three-year school-wide professional development plan focusing on literacy.
11. **Empirical research document.** The empirical research document provides information from a variety of studies about distributive leadership. The studies highlight the merits and limitation of distributive leadership and how distributive leadership can lead to instructional improvement in high schools. There is also

research that explains the impact different types of leadership have on student achievement. This research helped to establish the foundation or focus of the leadership groups, which is to concentrate purely on instruction. The chart provides a brief overview of the studies and findings from five empirical studies. In addition, there are short examples of how the findings connect to the work that I am doing with the PDT.



