

# OUR JOURNEY ~ AN OVERVIEW OF PLC & RTI

**Why the Focus on Professional Learning Communities and Response to Intervention?** The philosophy of PLC & the implementation of RtI, is nothing new. Rather, it is a framework by which we can continue our ongoing effort and commitment to ensure that every student learns at high levels, is college and career ready while becoming equipped with the skills necessary for success in the 21st century. PLC & RtI aligns everything that we are already doing to continue to make our work more efficient and effective by accomplishing the following:

- **Increases our Efficiency:** Predicated on supporting what works and aligning resources
- **Supports Effective Instruction:** Ensures that supporting effective instruction is the priority
- **Aligns Mandates:** It satisfies New York State and federal mandates
- **District Expectations:** It fulfills GCSD Goals/Vision/Mission
- **Research Based:** It is proven and vetted by years of research

## PLC – PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATION PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES

**Definition:** The belief that all students can learn at high levels when schools align resources to empower teams of teachers to continue to improve what works.

1. **Professional:** someone with expertise in a specialized field with advanced training who is expected to remain current in the evolving knowledge base of their profession.
2. **Learning:** moving beyond a focus on what is taught, to what is actually being learned. We engage in ongoing study and constant practice in the field of education.
3. **Community:** a group linked by common interests, common understandings, common practices, common beliefs and a collective responsibility.

**Rationale:** Continually improving what works is the best way to improve student learning while supporting great teaching.

**Major Ideas** (a school that is a professional learning community is founded on these):

1. **Student Learning:** Instructional decision are made based on the impact on student learning
2. **Collaborative Culture:** Instructional decisions are made in collaboration with other educators
3. **Focus on Results:** Instructional decision are evaluated and reflected upon based on the results they produce.

**4 Essential Questions** (We continually ask ourselves these questions):

1. What exactly do we expect all students to learn well?
2. How will we know if and when they have learned it?
3. How will we respond when some students don't learn?
4. How will we respond when some students have already learned?

**Key Quote:** “Educators committed to working collaboratively in ongoing processes of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve. Professional learning communities operate under the assumption that the key to improved learning for students is continuous, job-embedded learning for educators.” (Dufour, Dufour & Eaker 2008)



~ FORWARD TOGETHER ~

## RTI – PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION

**Definition:** The implementation of a timely, directed, and flexible system that ensures and supports every student to learn at high levels.

**Rationale:** “Our schools do a great job of providing students with the opportunity to learn, we must create a system that ensures learning and success for all students... not just those who want to learn.” (Buffum, Mattos & Weber 2009)

**Major Ideas:**

1. **Collective Responsibility:** A shared belief that the primary responsibility of each member of the organization is to ensure high levels of learning for every child. Thinking is guided by the question, “Why are we here?”
2. **Concentrated Instruction:** A systematic process of identifying essential knowledge and skills that all students must master to learn at high levels, and determine the specific learning needs of each student to get there. Thinking is guided by the question, “Where do we need to go?”
3. **Convergent Assessment:** An ongoing process of collectively analyzing targeted evidence to determine the specific learning needs of each student and the effectiveness of the instruction the child receives in meeting these needs. Thinking is guided by the question. “Where are we now?”
4. **Certain Access:** A systematic process that guarantees every student will receive the time and support needed to learn at high levels. Thinking is guided by the question, “How do we get every child there?”

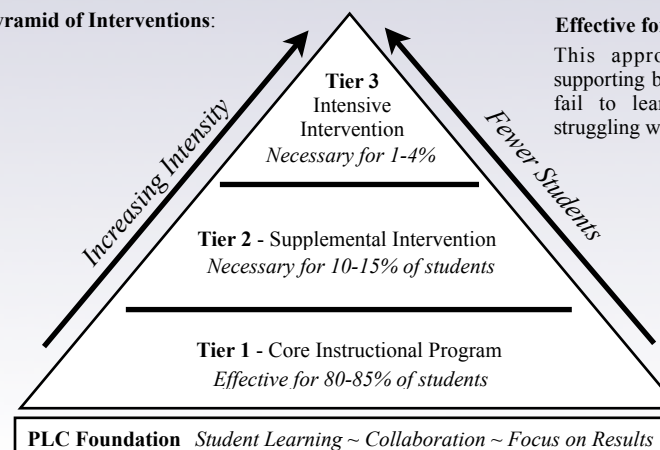
**Essential Questions:**

1. Why are we here?
2. Where do we need to go?
3. Where are we now?
4. How do we get every child there?

**Key Quote:** “Response to intervention is the practice of 1) providing high-quality instruction and interventions that match students’ needs and 2) using students’ learning rate over time and level of performance to make important educational decisions.”

(Buffum, Mattos & Weber 2009)

**Pyramid of Interventions:**



**Effective for All Struggling Students**

This approach can be used for supporting both types of students who fail to learn as well as students struggling with behavioral issues