Pilot Butte School

The "BEAR Necessities" of L.I.T.
(Learning Improvement Teams)

"Ultimately, there are two kinds of schools: learning enriched schools and learning impoverished schools. I have yet to see a school where learning curves...of the adults were steep upwards and those of the students were not. Teachers and students go hand in hand as learners...or they don't go at all."
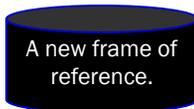
- Barth, Learning by Heart (2001), p. 23

A Learning Community is:

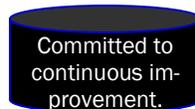| A paradigm shift in thinking.	A new frame of reference.	Driven by adult learning.	Committed to continuous improvement.	Devoid of excuses.	Deeply implemented.
This ethos infuses every single aspect of a school's operation. Everything looks and feels different than it did before.	That which we focus on manifests itself. Professionals shift their point of view to see the "same old" as different.	Adult learning drives student learning. Teachers embrace professional learning without reservation or judgement.	There is a sense of urgency; the status quo is never sufficient.	High effective schools positively impact student learning regardless of student background.	Practices are data driven, action oriented, and experimental; analysis of all three occurs regularly and frequently.

Understanding

A Professional Learning Community is:

An on-going process in which educators work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve.

Learning by Doing
A Handbook for Professional Learning Communities at Work
Richard DuFour
Rebecca DuFour
Robert Eaker
Thomas Many

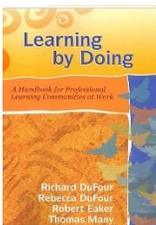(DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, Many, 2010)

3 Big Ideas

1. *We accept learning as the fundamental purpose of our school and therefore are willing to examine all practices in light of their impact on learning.*

2. *We are committed to working together to achieve our collective purpose. We cultivate a collaborative culture through development of high-performing teams.*

3. *We assess our effectiveness on the basis of results rather than intentions. Individuals, teams, and schools seek relevant data and information and use that information to promote continuous improvement.*

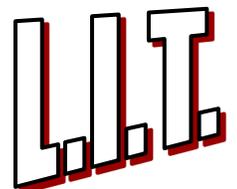## 4 Critical Questions

1. *What is it that we expect our students to learn?*

2. *How will we know when they have learned it?*

3. *How will we respond when they don't learn?*

4. *How will we respond when they already know it?*

L.I.T.

PBS L.I.T.: Purpose, Pods & Planning

Learning Improvement Teams (LITs) are the foundation of Pilot Butte School as a professional learning community. The primary purpose of these teams is to improve student achievement.

Solution Tree research indicates that in order to deeply implement, a minimum of 30 hours are required. All teachers at Pilot Butte School belong to an L.I.T. which are organized into four grade grouped pods:

Pre-K&K

Grades 1-2

Grades 3-5

Grades 6-8

Each of these groups is required to meet weekly for a minimum of 1 hour. This needs to a concentrated pocket of time. Though tempting, we strongly recommend that noon hours be avoided because distractions and time lost are inevitable.

Please note that the first Monday of every month is reserved for a school wide professional staff meeting. The remaining weeks are for pods to meet.

Administration will be directive in pod processes and direction until after Christmas.

Notes/Questions/Ideas:

PBS L.I.T.: Non-Negotiables

The difference between becoming a professional learning community that impacts student learning and claiming to be one, even though there is no evidence of achievement gains, is the quality of teacher collaboration.

-(Kushnir, G., 2011)

1. All teachers must participate in the process no exceptions.

2. Each LIT must have a leader who will determine meeting dates and be part of a guiding coalition.

3. LITs will, at minimum, meet for a concentrated 60 minutes weekly.

4. All LITs understand that the "Four Questions" are focus of their collaborative efforts.

5. All LITs submit a LIT Meeting Summary weekly.

6. All LITs must develop team norms around, at minimum:
   - Rules of behavior
   - Process to ensure all opinions are heard
   - Process for determining consensus
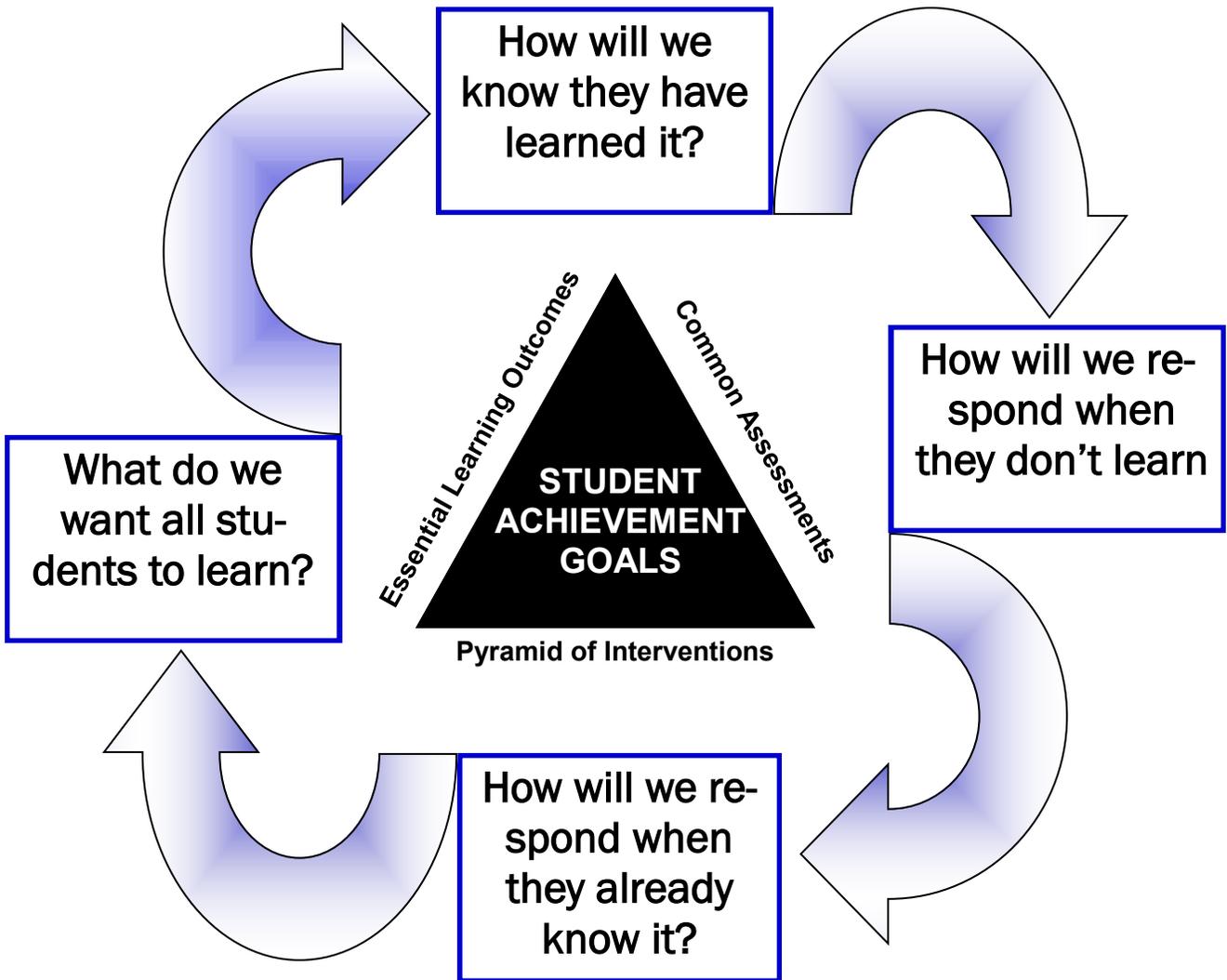
What is the key to effective collaboration

Challenging Beliefs vs *Sharing*

PBS L.I.T.: Cyclical Process

To accomplish student achievement goals, Learning Improvement Teams must engage in a cyclical process for collective inquiry and action research.

How will we know they have learned it?

How will we respond when they don't learn

What do we want all students to learn?

Essential Learning Outcomes

Common Assessments

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT GOALS

Pyramid of Interventions

How will we respond when they already know it?

INCREASING THE ODDS:
Student Achievement and Increasing What Matters

John Hattie (2009) found that the top teacher-student relationship variables associated with higher levels of student achievement are:

- Non-directivity: this is to say encouraging student choice and independence

- Empathy

- Warmth

- Encouragement of higher order thinking

The encouragement of higher order thinking bears highlighting. In the 1950s, Benjamin Bloom developed a six-level "taxonomy" for classifying intellectual behavior. By classifying learning from its simplest to most complex levels, Bloom's taxonomy represents one way to measure the extent to which teachers are providing their students with intellectually challenging classroom experiences.

Over the past few years, McREL has collected data from more than 27 000 classroom observations that offer a dismaying glimpse into the level of instruction that appears to be occurring in the nation's classrooms. In well over half of these observations, student learning reflected the two lowest levels of Bloom's taxonomy: remembering (25%) and understanding (32%). Meanwhile, students were developing the higher-order thinking skills of analysis (9%), evaluation (3%), and creation (4%) in less than one-sixth of the classrooms observed.

Certainly not all learning can focus on higher order thinking; teachers must develop students' ability to recall and understand basic concepts before they can move on to more critical thinking. Nonetheless, the fact that so much of what goes on in classrooms appears to be focused on low-level thinking suggest that high expectations and challenging instruction may be the exception, rather than the norm, for most students.

Excerpt from:

Goodwin, B.(2011) *Simply Better: Doing What Matters Most to Change the Odds for Student Success.. ASCD: Alexandria, Virginia.*
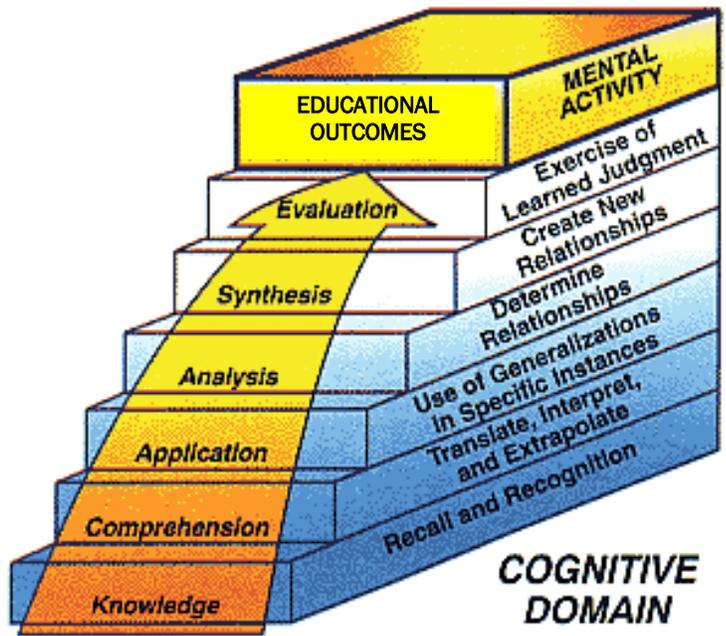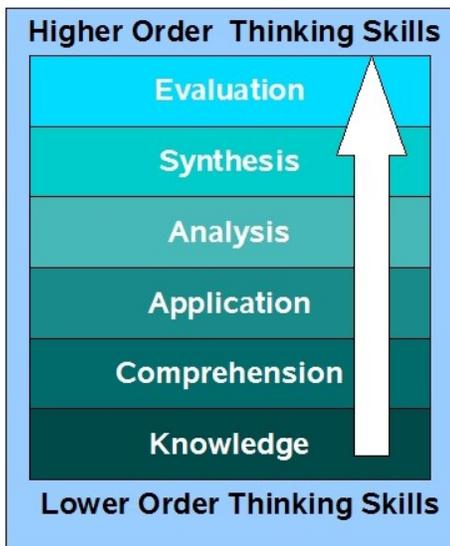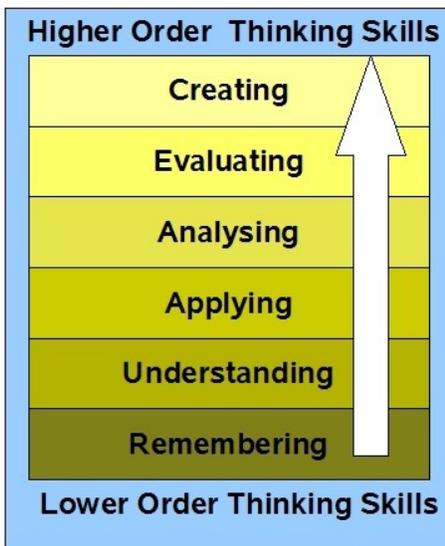
BLOOM'S TAXONOMY OF THINKING SKILLS

Figure 1-4. Dr. Bloom's hierarchical taxonomy for the cognitive domain (knowledge) includes six educational objective levels.

BLOOM'S TAXONOMY OF THINKING SKILLS

Original

Revised

How might a focus on higher levels of thinking affect student achievement