



Sanger Unified School District

Our Journey on the Road of
Improvement



The Basics of Sanger

- Located in the Central Valley approximately 20 miles Southeast of Fresno.
- 188 square miles, predominately rural.
- 10,180 students
- Schools:
 - 13 elementary schools (2 of which are charter schools)
 - 1 intermediate school
 - 1 comprehensive high school
 - 3 alternative education schools, and an adult school.
 - 1 charter home-school program (K-12).

Where we were in 2004-05.....

- Just entered PI year 1 due to poor performance - EL sub-group.
- Five elementary schools were PI status (1 school at year four, 2 schools at year three, and 2 schools at year two), as well as intermediate school (year 2).
- API of 657.
- The district had not maintained adherence to the State textbook adoption cycle, or maintained a focused staff development program.
- Schools had little fidelity to State curricular standards. There was not an effective district-wide assessment system to monitor student achievement.





Lack of Focus and Clear Direction

- **Curriculum** – Independent Operators
- **Standards** – What I like to teach vs. What I am supposed to teach
- **Assessment** – No measurement tool except for the CST post-mortem
- **API vs. AYP** – Confusion about which was more important

Hitting Bottom....

- Though the district's intentions were good, little was coordinated or focused.
- Random acts of improvement would not suffice to surmount systemic District obstacles.
- **The Defining Moment:** The District's PI status and the sanctions associated made change imperative.



Three Guiding Principles

- Hope is not a strategy.
- Don't blame the kids.
- It is about student learning.





Superintendent's Directives

- Focused Professional Development
- Moving Administrators to become Instructional Leaders
- Administrative Coaching for School Site Leaders
- Collaboration – Professional Learning Communities



Supporting Partnerships

- Riverside County Achievement Team (RCAT)
- Fresno State University
 - Central Valley Education Leadership Institute (CVELI)
 - Springboard Schools
- Region VII, Regional System of District and School Support (RSDSS)



Coming Up to Speed: ELA Adoption in Mid-Cycle

- District ELA program was not standards aligned nor effectively implemented.
- Started selection process with bargaining unit..... “If you choose it, you will use it.”
- Board Action: “To adopt and fully implement.”
- Old series takes a vacation.....



Change the Culture

- Move the focus from the needs of adults to the needs of students
- Care and believe
- Create learning environments where it is easier to succeed than it is to fail



Key Questions for District and School Leadership

- What do we want students to learn?
- How we will know when they have learned it?
- How will we respond if they have not learned it?
- How will we respond when learning has already occurred?



Professional Learning Communities

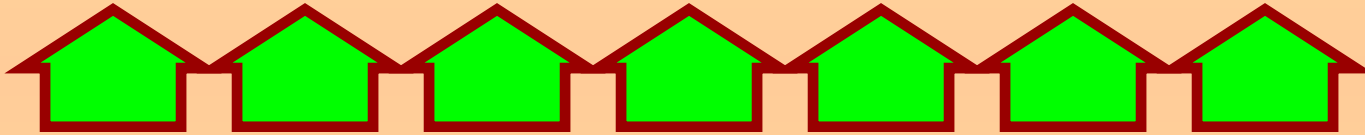
- Collaboration is the key – teams of educators working together
- Work with Riverside County Achievement Team (RCAT)
- Developing relationships – working below the “green line.”



Structure

Pattern

Process



Information

Relationships

Identity

Structure

Time created for weekly PLC meetings.

Strategy

“Essential” standards set at all grade levels.

Operations

Grade level performance assessments calendared for school year.

PLC effort creates sustainability

Information

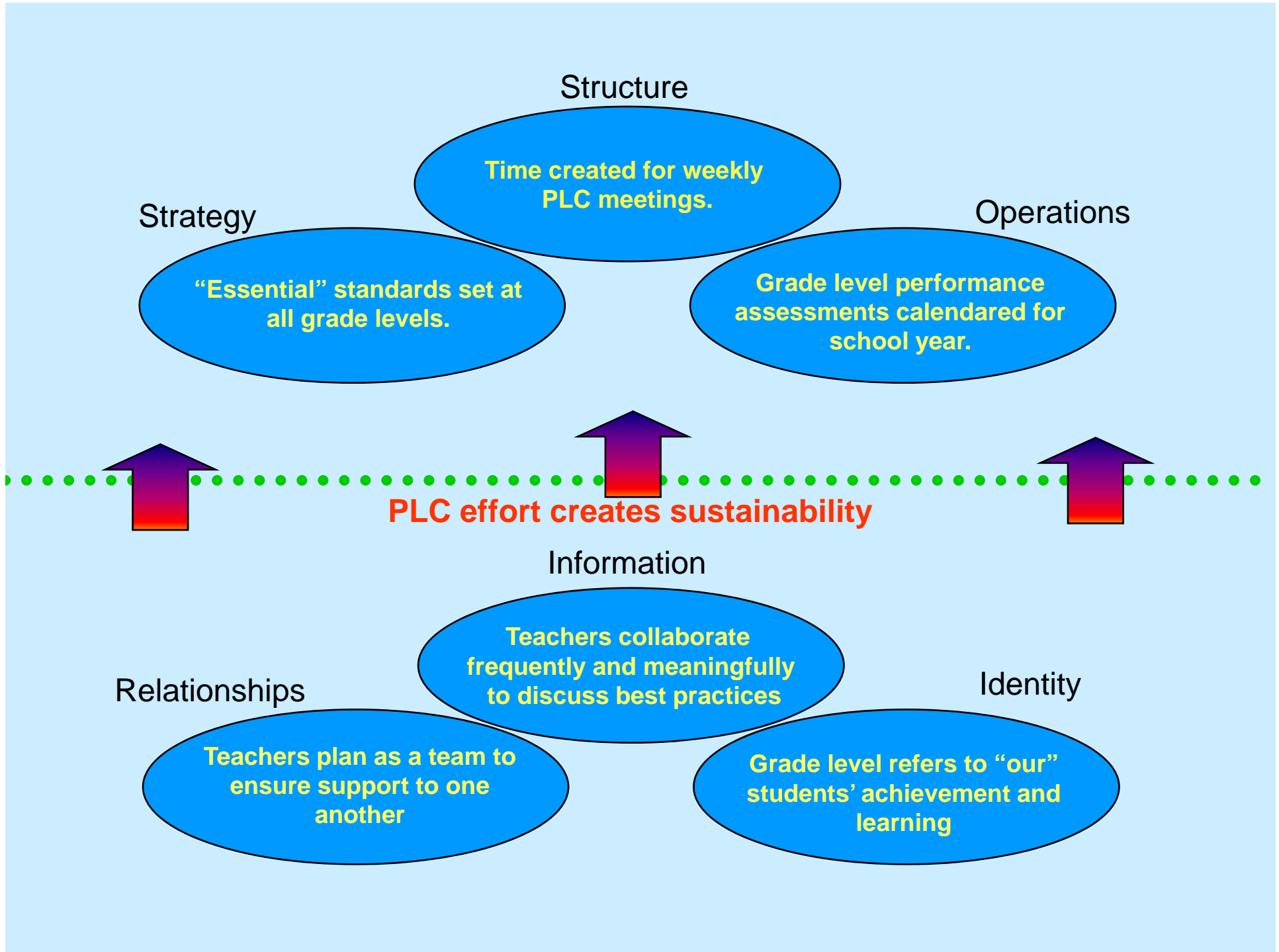
Teachers collaborate frequently and meaningfully to discuss best practices

Relationships

Teachers plan as a team to ensure support to one another

Identity

Grade level refers to “our” students’ achievement and learning





Collaboration based on Data

- Becoming data driven as a practice
- Developing common assessments focused on standards
- Own the kids, put faces on the numbers
- Regular ongoing conversations about “our kids”



Engagement and Intervention

- Engage **all** students in learning – Explicit Direct Instruction (EDI)
- Respond and intervene quickly, regularly, and differently when learning does not take place
- Techniques and Strategies
 - TAPPLE
 - CFU

Explicit Direct Instruction

Elements of EDI should be present in all lessons...

Objective	Engagement	Concept	Skill	Guided Practice
All lessons	All lessons	Big Idea	Action - "How to"	Work Together
Action skill Measureable Academic Vocab Refer back to it	White boards Pair:Share Non-volunteers (TAPPLE)	Teacher led Demonstration/mod eling Realia	Steps Graphic Organizers Teacher "I Do"	Teacher "We Do" Student:Student Not independent w/ teacher monitoring

Monitoring Progress:

<u>Individual:</u> Drop In Forms CSP Model Lessons Point of Reference Support	<u>PLC:</u> Writing EDI Lessons Peer Observations Discuss results	<u>Leadership Team:</u> Walk-thru Data PLC Feedback - Binders Guides Professional Development
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Focus on English Language Learners

- Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE)
 - Focus on scaffolding of academic language
 - Access to Core Curriculum
- English Language Development (ELD)
 - Deploy at elementary level
 - English Language Development classes at Secondary level



Assessment to Guide Learning

District vs Site Assessments

- District Progress Assessment (DPAs)
Summative Assessment
- Progress Monitoring at the school sites
 - Common Formative Assessments
 - DIBELS
 - LitConn/ROLA
 - LAS Links

What do we want all students to learn?

Essential Standards

EDI Lesson

How will we know when each student has mastered the essential learning?

SMART Goals

Common Assessments

Data Analysis

Plan

How will we respond when a student experiences initial difficulty in learning?

How will we deepen learning for students who have already mastered essential knowledge and skills?

Reteach

Enrichment

Whole Class, Small Group Instruction, Deployment



Principals as Instructional Leaders

- Principal competency is critical
- Principal Summits: Designed to foster deeper understanding of both the principal and the District Office
- Principals attend and participate in staff development – must be practitioners
- Classroom observations and reflective coaching
- Must understand the significance of school's data



Parent/Community Involvement

- Board adopted District goal to strengthen parent involvement in the education process
- Programs offered to increase parent capacity as partners
- District Parent Survey
- Community of Caring Task Force



District Achievement

	<u>API 2002</u>	<u>API 2008</u>
District	599	778
Centerville	675	839
Del Rey	532	753
Fairmont	677	810
Jackson	624	845
Jefferson	531	815
John Wash	744	862
Lincoln	536	766
Lone Star	643	817
Madison	644	808
Quail Lake	756	925
SACS	721	865
Wilson	533	763
WAMS	549	740
Sanger High	592	750



Impact on Student Learning

	ELA '02	Math '02	ELA '08	Math '08
District	20.4	20.2	50.7	59.6
EL	6.9	10.4	35.9	50.7
Del Rey	7.9	11.7	37.1	56.1
EL	4.8	11.6	33.3	53.2
Jefferson	7.4	12.2	51.2	71.0
EL	3.3	5.0	44.0	64.3



Accolades Earned in 2007-08

- Five schools named State Distinguished School (8 schools district-wide currently Distinguished)
- Four schools named Title I Academic Achieving Schools (6 schools honored in the past three years)
- Two schools honored by “Just for the Kids” as Honor Roll Schools (3 schools recognized in the past three years)
- Ten schools receive Bonner Awards for Character and Virtue Education
- Sanger High recognized by US News and World Report as Bronze Medal winner in recognition of America’s best High Schools



What We've Learned

- You must change the focus from the needs of adults to the educational needs of children.
- Educational excellence is expensive. It requires targeted use and commitment of all available resources.
- You must develop a crystal clear vision focused on student learning.
- Competent and informed instructional leadership at the school site level is critical to improving student achievement.



What We've Learned

- Reliable and valid student achievement data collected on a regular basis is essential to informing and guiding instructional and district decisions.
- You must have a willingness to confront deficiencies.
- No one of us is as good as all of us. Collaborative teams are much more effective than individuals working in isolation.
- Every child, every day must know that there is an adult who cares about them and believes in them.

And above all....

You must have courage.

