

**Arizona Professional Learning Series for Creating Systems Change  
to Increase Literacy Achievement for All Students**

# **Teams Guide**



**Rooted in Systems Change**

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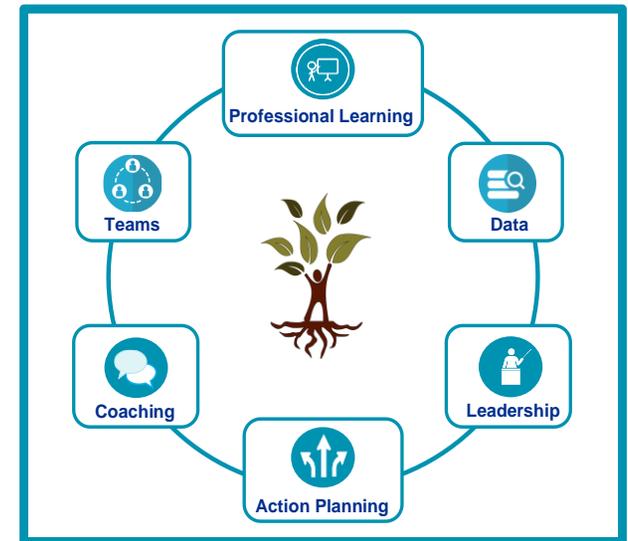


## AZPLS Teams Overview

The AZPLS design is organized to provide maximum participation and support. All staff are part of a team and have active roles in implementing and sustaining the strategies supporting the increase of literacy achievement for all students. The AZPLS is rooted in systems change with a comprehensive plan of checks and balances. Teams:

- ✓ Work together throughout professional learning.
- ✓ Collect, analyze, and utilize specific data.
- ✓ Function within a shared leadership design.
- ✓ Receive coaching support.
- ✓ Create Action Plans that fit and support the needs of the teams.

The research-based AZPLS systems collectively drive the process that leads to success when all components are in place and working collaboratively toward the same outcomes. The inclusive Teams component ensures the Collaborative Teams, Building Leadership Team (BLT), and District Leadership Team (DLT) are united in their efforts and work cooperatively toward the same outcomes.



### Collaborative Teams

Inclusionary practices bring general education teachers, special education teachers, and content area teachers together to plan teaching and learning for all students. Grade level Collaborative Team members work together to learn strategies that will support inclusionary practices to increase literacy achievement. During the professional learning, Collaborative Teams determine what support is needed to implement the teaching and learning strategies and Parent Events. Their needs are shared on the Action Planning Wall for further development by the Building Leadership Team.

### Shared Leadership

The AZPLS promotes a collaborative culture focused on shared responsibility, collective accountability, and inclusivity for the teaching and learning of all students. Everyone has a voice in decision making, feedback, and reflection while collaboratively working toward sustainable implementation of the AZPLS systems and strategies. The AZPLS shared leadership component follows the guidelines of the *PSEL 2015 and Promoting Principal Leadership for the Success of Students with Disabilities, 2017*. Collaborative work and shared leadership are highlighted in Standard 7: Professional Community of Teachers and Staff.

## Building Leadership Teams

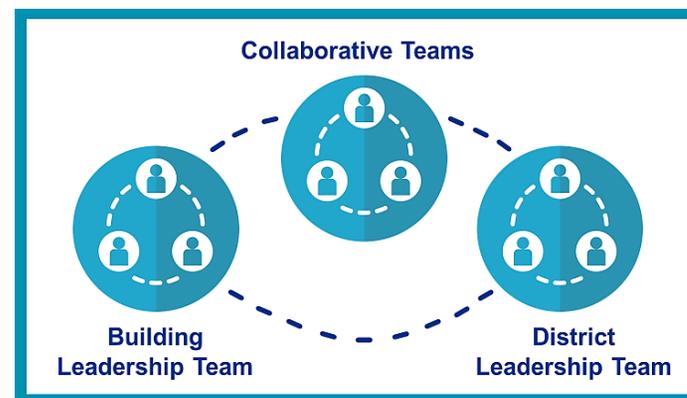
The Building Leadership Team includes the principal, coaches, a general education teacher, and a special education teacher. They attend the same professional learning as the Collaborative Teams where they gain an understanding of the strategies and needed support for the Collaborative Teams and Parent Events. They use the Action Planning Wall information gained during each module and AZPLS data to create a formal Action Plan. This Action Plan guides implementation, instills support, and drives sustainability strategies. The BLT is responsible for communicating implementation efforts, celebrations, and data updates to teachers and the DLT.

## District Leadership Team

The District Leadership Team includes the superintendent, special education director, curriculum director, principal, coaches, a parent representative, a general education teacher, and a special education teacher. The DLT learns what Collaborative Teams need to support all students and parent engagement. The DLT supports the BLT with aligning systems, practices, and policies necessary to implement and sustain the work.

## Feedback Loop

The District Leadership Team, Building Leadership Team, and Collaborative Teams interact to implement the strategies supporting systems change for increasing literacy achievement for all students. The format of the Collaborative Teams, BLT, and DLT creates a natural feedback loop where practice informs policy and policy supports practice. The Communication Protocol (page 3) outlines the interconnecting communication of the teams. The Building Leadership Communication Plan (page 4) details Action Plan progress and steps to close the gap to share with the Collaborative Teams and the DLT.



## Additional AZPLS Resources

**Module 2** focuses on the intentional collaboration of all general education teachers, special education teachers, content area teachers, parents, and students. It introduces implementation strategies to strengthen infrastructure, structure, and process of high-performing collaborative teams. It identifies school culture perceptions to improve and support inclusive practices.

The **Action Planning Guide** leads the BLT through the vital ongoing responsibility that drives the work. During each professional learning session, the staff is guided to collaboratively contribute their thoughts, ideas, and needs regarding specific module content. An Action Planning Wall is used as a visual tool for organizing the information and prioritizing contributions. The BLT uses the information to create formal, working Action Plan documents for each module that emphasizes the collective voice of the staff and the school community needs.

## Team Communication Protocol

	<b>Collaborative Teams</b>	<b>Building Leadership Team</b>	<b>District Leadership Team</b>
<b>Team Members</b>	Grade level general education teachers, content area teachers, special education teachers, and other staff needed to support student success (e.g., counselor, coach, school psychologist, SLP)	Site principal, coach, general education teachers (one from grades K-5; one from grades 6-8), and a special education teacher	Curriculum director, special education director, site principal, coach, general education teachers (one from grades K-5; one from grades 6-8), and a special education teacher
<b>Rationale</b>	To support each other in helping all students reach their full potential in literacy learning	To support teachers, parents, students, and the school community in helping all students reach their full potential in literacy learning	To support leadership and school communities in their work to help all students reach their full potential in literacy learning
<b>Information to Communicate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share data</li> <li>• Analyze student work samples</li> <li>• Plan instructional teaching and learning implementation</li> <li>• Provide suggestions for site Action Planning</li> <li>• Celebrate successes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyze teacher input and data to determine current module focus areas and strategies</li> <li>• Share data, Action Plan, implementation, and sustainability</li> <li>• Discuss DLT support needed for continued implementation and sustainability</li> <li>• Celebrate successes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BLT: share data, Action Plan, and implementation and sustainability efforts</li> <li>• BLT: describe current module focus areas and strategies</li> <li>• DLT: communicate support for continued implementation and sustainability at the district and school level</li> <li>• Celebrate successes</li> </ul>
<b>Responsible Individuals</b>	Team lead	Site principal	Curriculum director or special education director and site leadership
<b>Format Schedule</b>	In person meetings after every module professional learning and at least monthly thereafter	In person meetings after every module professional learning and monthly thereafter	In person meetings after each BLT completion of Action Plan following module professional learning
<b>Response Format and Timeline</b>	Meeting evites with target time frame	Meeting evites with target time frame	Meeting evites with target time frame

## **Building Leadership Team Communication Plan**

How will the Building Leadership Team share and communicate the following to school staff, Collaborative Teams, and the District Leadership Team?

<b>Quarterly Data</b>	
<b>CURRENT ACTION PLAN PROGRESS</b>	
<b>Where Are We Headed?</b>	
<b>Where Are We Now?</b>	
<b>Celebrations</b>	
<b>HOW WILL WE CLOSE THE GAP?</b>	
<b>Updates to Professional Learning Needs</b>	
<b>Updates to the Coach Service Delivery Plan/Coaching Focus</b>	
<b>Updates to Parent Support</b>	



## Structured Team Meeting Collaboration

### Collaborative Teams

Strong collaborative teams develop over time and require commitment to the process. That requires using schoolwide team meeting procedures that include norms, roles, agenda, collaborative inquiry method, and consensus decision making. General education teachers, special education teachers, and content area teachers plan and work together to teach learning strategies to all students. To do so effectively, structured collaboration and leadership support are essential. Collaborative Teams choose a **Common Meeting Day/Time** that leadership ensures will be respected.

To create and sustain highly effective Collaborative Teams, a team structure needs to be followed. Collaborative Team meetings and processes should be revisited annually through professional learning and coaching supports to sustain high levels of implementation.

### Team Norms

Effective teams need established ground rules to guide team members' behavior and work. Norms are the rules that the team agrees to follow as it conducts its work. When norms are consistently followed, there is an increase in trust in team members and their intentions and a decrease in disagreements. **Creating Meeting Process Norms** guides the process for establishing Team Norms.

### Team Roles

Roles and responsibilities within meeting structures are vital for efficiency and effectiveness. Roles should be assigned and rotated for each meeting, so all team members have the opportunity to serve in all roles. The Facilitator ensures discussions stay on topic and are discussed thoroughly by all team members. The Recorder documents responses during team activities and maintains a record of team discussions. The Reporter shares the team's information with the larger group. The Timekeeper ensures discussion topics are addressed within the designated time. Engaged Participants listen with an open mind and contribute by sharing knowledge, information, and experience. **Facilitator**, **Recorder**, **Reporter**, **Timekeeper**, and **Engaged Participant** Role Cards should be placed in front of each team member at each meeting.

### Team Meeting Agenda

The **Collaborative Team Meeting Agenda and Notes** sets the guidelines and plan of the meeting. It provides clear expectations for what needs to occur during a meeting. It should be created and sent to all team members prior to the meeting. This prepares attendees for what will be discussed and the work that needs to be accomplished.

### **Collaborative Inquiry Method**

The three questions collaborative inquiry method is used to establish future goals, current status, and steps for closing that gap. This is a continuous cycle that keeps the focus on the needs of the team and the students. This cohesive method leads teams into strategic implementation to increase literacy achievement for all students.

### **Consensus Decision Making**

Consensus decision making is a way of reaching agreement between all members of the team. Instead of simply voting for an item and having the majority of the team getting their way, a team using consensus is dedicated to finding solutions that everyone actively supports, or at least can live with. Everyone commits to supporting the decision and implementing it.

### **Collaboration Skills**

Strong Collaborative Teams require each team member to identify and practice collaboration skills. After each Collaborative Team meeting, team members should use **Collaborative Skills** to self-assess their level of collaboration skills. As team members improve, teams grow stronger.

### **Collaborative Team Meeting Checklist**

The **Collaborative Team Meeting Checklist** supports effective teams and team meetings. It provides insight into the levels of infrastructure for collaboration, structure of team meetings, and team meeting processes in place. Each Collaborative Team should use the survey to identify any needs for implementation.

### **Building Leadership Team**

The same team structure should be followed using the **Building Leadership Team Meeting Agenda**.

### **District Leadership Team**

The same team structure should be followed using the **District Leadership Team Meeting Agenda**.



## Teams Summary

All Teams Work within All AZPLS Systems:  
Professional Learning, Coaching, Collaborative Teams, Data, Action Planning, Leadership

	<b>Collaborative Teams</b>	<b>Building Leadership Teams (BLT)</b>	<b>District Leadership Teams (DLT)</b>
<b>Members</b>	Grade level teachers, content areas teachers, special education teachers, and other staff needed to support student success (e.g., counselor, coach, school psychologist, SLP)	Site administrator, coach, general education teacher (one from K-5; one from 6-8), and special education teacher	Curriculum director, special education director, site administrator, coach, general education teachers (one from K-5; one from 6-8), special education teacher
<b>Intent</b>	To support each other in reaching students' full potential in literacy learning.	To support teachers and school community in reaching students' full potential in literacy learning.	To support leadership and school communities in reaching all students' full potential in literacy learning.
<b>Practice</b>	<p>Reflect on Team needs and growth areas in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration</li> <li>• Instructional planning and delivery</li> <li>• Use of data to guide decision-making using the three inquiry questions</li> </ul> <p>Utilize Dimensions of Formative Assessment as a framework for planning instruction and gauging how students are responding to instruction.</p> <p>Implement schoolwide, evidence-based literacy teaching and learning strategies across content areas so students become independent learners.</p> <p>Implement high leverage, differentiated instructional practices to meet the individual needs of all students.</p>	<p>Create schoolwide Action Plan with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher input during module professional learning</li> <li>• Focus areas and strategies to meet the needs of Collaborative Teams, individual teachers, parents, and students</li> <li>• Ongoing reflection and development using the three inquiry questions</li> <li>• Ongoing professional learning for Collaborative Teams, instructional planning, and delivery of schoolwide literacy strategies</li> <li>• Job-embedded professional learning within a culture of coaching</li> <li>• AZPLS Parent Events</li> <li>• Implementation celebrations</li> <li>• Develop the AZPLS Systems to support high levels of implementation and sustainability</li> <li>• Communicate progress to the DLT</li> </ul>	<p>Engage in the inquiry process with BLT members to identify district support needs.</p> <p>Develop district-level systems and polices that support the implementation and sustainability of practices at the school site</p> <p>Celebrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interrelating systems</li> <li>• Implementation and sustainability</li> <li>• Increasing literacy achievement of all students</li> </ul>



## Using Data to Sustain Implementation Fidelity

The Arizona Professional Learning Series (AZPLS) provides schools with a Data System that drives implementation and demonstrates progress through extensive data collection and analysis. Each data tool is created specifically for the AZPLS to ensure sustainable implementation efforts toward long-term systems change. The AZPLS **Data Guide** outlines the data tools and how to administer data collection, run reports, and collectively analyze the data. The data analysis provides districts and schools with the information needed to action plan intentional professional learning and coaching supports to enhance Collaborative Teams, schoolwide teaching and learning strategies, instructional planning with the Dimensions of Formative Assessment and differentiated instruction to meet the literacy needs of all students.

Three tools specifically designed to support ongoing implementation and sustainability of Collaborative Teams are:

### **Collaborative Team Meeting Checklist**

Highly effective Collaborative Teams have strong infrastructure, structure, and processes in place. The **Collaborative Team Meeting Checklist** is conducted quarterly after a Collaborative Team meeting. Each member reflects on the infrastructure, structure, and process of that team meeting. Their results are compiled and analyzed to support ongoing implementation efforts toward high levels of collaboration.

### **Collaboration Skills Self-Assessment**

Strong Collaborative Teams develop over time and involve commitment to the process. That requires using schoolwide team meeting procedures with an agenda, roles, norms, collaborative inquiry method, and a decision-making process. It also requires each team member to identify and practice collaboration skills. After each Collaborative Team meeting, team members reflect on their individual levels of collaboration using the **Collaboration Skills** self-assessment.

### **Fidelity of Implementation Checklist**

The Fidelity of Implementation Checklist supports District and Building Leadership Teams' reflection processes toward sustainable implementation. Section C. is dedicated to Collaborative Teams; however, collaboration items are embedded throughout all components of the Checklist to ensure high level implementation. The **Fidelity of Implementation Checklist** is conducted annually with coaches and the Building Leadership Team.



## Sustaining Collaborative Teams

### **Creating a Sustainable Teams System**

The systems embedded from the start provide direction for the Building Leadership Team, Collaborative Teams, and District Leadership Team to reflect and refine their implementation practices. The AZPLS Sustainability Guide provides direction for establishing the inter-team process that supports sustainability.

### **Sustainability and Reflection**

The Sustainability Guide includes a Sustainability and Reflection tool that ensures policies and procedures are in place to sustain all AZPLS systems and the implementation of teaching and learning strategies with fidelity. All staff, including Building Leadership Team members and District Leadership Team members, complete the AZPLS Sustainability Review and Reflection annually.

It is leadership's responsibility to ensure everyone has a clear focus for collaboration and the work of Collaborative Teams. The Defining Your Collaborative Teams System for Sustainability tool (page 10) helps identify the goal for Collaborative Teams, ongoing professional learning to support Collaborative Teams, and key components needed to create a sustainable Collaborative Team system.



## Defining Your Collaborative Teams System for Sustainability

<b>Goal for Collaborative Teams:</b>	<b>Describe What Successful Collaboration Looks Like:</b>	<b>Describe What Collaboration Is Not:</b>
<b>Describe Ongoing Professional Learning for Collaborative Teams (new teachers, new Collaborative Teams, etc.):</b>		
<b>Describe the Following in Detail to Create a Sustainable Collaborative Teams System:</b>		
<b>Key Components of Collaboration</b>		
<b>Allocated Time for Collaboration</b>		
<b>Tools and Resources for Collaborative Teams</b>		
<b>Data Implementation/Analysis</b>		
<b>Coaching Supports for Collaborative Teams</b>		
<b>Leadership Supports for Collaborative Teams</b>		