

IMPACT TEAMS



One District's Journey

Lyons Township
High School District 204, IL
Impact Team Case Study

About Impact Teams



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Impact Teams are teams of teachers and leaders who partner with students and with each other in learning.

The development and design of the Impact Team model is based on extensive research that identifies those practices that maximize student learning (Hattie, 2009). Impact Teams operationalize six influences that are proven to have the highest effect on student learning:

- Teacher-Student Relationships: .48 ES
- Meta-Cognitive Strategies: .55 ES
- Feedback: .66 ES
- Teacher Clarity: .75 ES
- Deliberate Practice: .79 ES
- Classroom Discussion: .82 ES
- Micro-Teaching: .88 ES
- Assessment Capable Learners: 1.33 ES
- Collective Efficacy: 1.39 ES

The Impact Team Model uses a simple but powerful 3-step protocol. The protocol is universal and can be used in the classroom and in teacher and leadership team meetings at all levels.

2: ANALYSIS



3: ACTION...

1: EVIDENCE

About Impact Teams

Step 1: EVIDENCE

| CLASSROOM | IMPACT TEAM |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students are using and identifying success criteria in exemplars and models of proficient work• Students are identifying success criteria in their own work and in each other's work• Students are applying the success criteria in authentic and relevant work aligned to the standard | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evidence is based on the success criteria (holistic rubric, analytical rubric, check-list)• Evidence is desegregated by performance level (Advanced, Proficient, Progressing, Novice)• Evidence is prepared for analysis prior to the Impact Team Meeting |

Step 2: ANALYSIS

| CLASSROOM | IMPACT TEAM |
|---|--|
| <p>Prior to Impact Team Meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students self / peer assess to determine where they are at in the learning• Students engage in reflective dialogue with teacher to determine root cause or why• Students determine strengths in relationship to the success criteria• Students determine next steps in relationship to the success criteria | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Team engages in collaborative analysis by performance level• Team uses all evidence (self & peer assessment, classroom discussion, student work) to determine strengths and needs of for each group of students• Team prioritizes a need /next step for each student group |

Step 3: ACTION

| CLASSROOM | IMPACT TEAM |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students create learning goals based on self, peer assessments and feedback• Students co-create a plan for increasing learning• Students revise their work based on reciprocal feedback• Students monitor their learning goals | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Team creates an action plan for "just right" instruction for each student group utilizing high impact strategies• Team creates an ambitious goal for increasing learning across all student performance groups• Team implements plan and re-assesses• Team reflects on plan to determine impact |

LYONS TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Katherine Smith, Coordinator of Testing and Research at Lyons Township High School, described how her school used the Model Team Approach to build capacity with the Impact Team Model. Read how this large comprehensive high school participated in this process.

4000+ Students

| |
|-------------------|
| 74% White |
| 18% Hispanic |
| 4% Black |
| 4% Other |
| 16% |
| Low income |
| 11% |
| Special Education |
| 3% |
| English Learners |
| 24.3 |
| Average ACT |

Lyons Township High School District 204

In 1888, Lyons Township High School District 204 (LTHS) was founded in the suburbs of LaGrange and Western Springs, Illinois, 16 miles southwest of downtown Chicago. Spanning across two campuses, the one high school district presently educates over 4,000 high school students from the communities of Brookfield, Burr Ridge, Countryside, Hodgkins, LaGrange, LaGrange Highlands, LaGrange Park, McCook, Western Springs, and Willow Springs. Dedicated to affirming the school's century-old motto, Vita Plena, the quest for the fulfilling life, Lyons Township High School is proud to offer its students over 300 courses and opportunities including (but not limited to) 26 Advanced Placement courses, 9 dual credit courses, 6 language programs, an automotive program, Cisco Networking Certification, Deep Diving Certification, and pilot licensure.

The Context

During the 2009–2010 school year, the staff of Lyons Township High School established professional learning communities (PLCs) in an effort to ensure all students were learning more. Following the work of Rick and Rebecca DuFour, PLCs attempt to answer the questions:

1. What should all students know and be able to do?
2. How will we know when all students have learned?
3. What will we do when a student hasn't learned?
4. What will we do when a student has learned or reached proficiency?

However, when confronted with changing state standards and assessments, a deeply rooted system of course leveling, and a traditionally private teaching culture, collaboratively answering these questions proved to be problematic for LTHS's PLCs. The four PLC questions did not provide an efficient protocol or structure for scaling up collaborative inquiry across LTHS. In addition, it was important to the leadership at LTHS that we had a focus on developing assessment capable learners. We wanted our students to be independent learners, who could self-regulate.

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Curricular Work: An Easy Place to Get Stuck

For 4 years, teams worked diligently identifying their course level Enduring Understandings/Big Ideas and content-based Essential Outcomes/Learning Intentions, and designing common summative assessments aligned to course-level Essential Outcomes. Biweekly PLC meetings were consumed with curricular work. As membership on the PLCs changed annually with new teaching schedules, curricular work was often repeated to incorporate the voice of new PLC members. While staff was making every effort to answer Questions 1 and 2 (as listed above), conversations were predominantly focused on teaching as opposed to student learning.

"My PLC has struggled with balancing the work load of what the district is asking us to do vs. what PLCs are actually supposed to do. With my time working with the Bloomberg team, I have realized that we should be analyzing student learning, discussing success criteria, looking at where our students struggle and why, and using this information to inform our instruction."

–Bridget McGuire, Math Teacher

A New Plan

To effectively shift the conversation from teaching to learning, we needed to

- identify that with which all students must demonstrate proficiency, prior to completing a particular course (regardless of the level of the course);
- establish common formative assessments as opposed to summative assessments;
- conduct meaningful and focused conversations around student performance during the units of instruction;
- conclude PLC meetings with an instructional action plan to implement prior to the next team meeting; and
- facilitate structured follow-up conversations to determine where students were performing after the instructional action plans were implemented.

Getting Back on Track

Step 1: Identify the Common Denominator

To move forward, we identified the common denominator concerning student academic expectations. The Illinois State Standards (an adapted version of the Common Core State Standards [CCSS]) clearly articulate student English, math, and disciplinary literacy expectations at each grade level. Relying on state and national standards alleviates internal disputes and places the focus on the academic skills with which all students in a grade level are expected to demonstrate proficiency.

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| AUGUST 12, 13 | All 10 Teams | | | | |
|-----------------|--------------|------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| OCTOBER 20 | | OCTOBER 21 | | OCTOBER 22 | |
| Periods 1 & 2 | English II | Period 1 | Geometry | Periods 1 & 2 | World History |
| Periods 3 & 4/5 | English III | Period 2 & 3 | Health | Periods 3 & 4/5 | U.S. History |
| Periods 7/8 & 9 | Algebra | Period 4/5 & 6/7 | Biology | Periods 7/8 & 9 | Consumer Education |
| Period 10 | Geometry | Period 9 & 10 | Chemistry | Period 10 | Planning Period with Administrators |
| JANUARY 20 | | JANUARY 21 | | JANUARY 22 | |
| Periods 1 & 2 | English III | Period 1 | Health | Periods 1 & 2 | U.S. History |
| Periods 3 & 4/5 | Algebra | Period 2 & 3 | Biology | Periods 3 & 4/5 | Consumer Education |
| Periods 7/8 & 9 | Geometry | Period 4/5 & 6/7 | Chemistry | Periods 7/8 & 9 | English II |
| Period 10 | Health | Period 9 & 10 | World History | Period 10 | Planning Period with Administrators |
| MARCH 25 | | MARCH 26 | | MARCH 27 | |
| Periods 1 & 2 | Algebra | Period 1 | Biology | Periods 1 & 2 | Consumer Education |
| Periods 3 & 4/5 | Geometry | Period 2 & 3 | Chemistry | Periods 3 & 4/5 | English II |
| Periods 7/8 & 9 | Health | Period 4/5 & 6/7 | World History | Periods 7/8 & 9 | English III |
| Period 10 | Biology | Period 9 & 10 | U.S. History | Period 10 | Planning Period with Administrators |
| MAY 11 | | MAY 12 | | MAY 13 | |
| Periods 1 & 2 | Geometry | Period 1 | Chemistry | Periods 1 & 2 | English II |
| Periods 3 & 4/5 | Health | Period 2 & 3 | World History | Periods 3 & 4/5 | English III |
| Periods 7/8 & 9 | Biology | Period 4/5 & 6/7 | U.S. History | Periods 7/8 & 9 | Algebra |
| Period 10 | Chemistry | Period 9 & 10 | Consumer Education | Period 10 | Planning Period with Administrators |
| June 3, June 4 | All 10 Teams | | | | |

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Step 2: Establish a Job-Embedded Professional Learning Plan with Articulated Outcomes

When developing a professional learning plan, LTHS consulted studies on adult learning. Studies conducted by Learning Forward (2011), Jim Knight and Jake Cornett (n.d.), and Doug Reeves (2010) concluded high quality professional learning is aligned to state standards and local goals, facilitated frequently in teams as part of an ongoing learning cycle, and involves goal-setting, action planning, and the application of research-based instructional strategies.

As a result of the research, LTHS developed a professional learning plan that allowed 10 teams and an administrative team to meet with an external consultant six times throughout the course of the school year. While the work, during the first year, continued to be curricular, it was aligned to the CCSS, skill-based, formative, and common for all levels of the course. By the end of the first year, all involved teams

- aligned their course curriculum (map) and Essential Outcomes/Learning Intentions to the CCSS;
- developed common formative assessments concerning transferrable skills aligned to specific CCSS;
- developed a common summative assessment aligned to specific CCSS; and
- selected and implemented research-based instructional literacy strategies to use when teaching course Essential Outcomes and the literacy-based CCS.

| 2014–2015: Targeted Teams | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Department | Team |
| Language Arts | English II English III |
| Math | Algebra Geometry |

Step 3: Target Teams and Invite Participants

To provide teams appropriate levels of support, LTHS had to focus the professional learning efforts on a limited number of teams. The 10 courses that establish foundational skills and impact the greatest number of students early on in their high school career were targeted to be the first teams that would receive support. A staff member from each level of the course (prep, accel, honors) was asked to participate on the team, as well as the

special education cross-categorical teacher and a literacy team member. This structure allowed for a smaller-subset of the course teachers to set equitable expectations for students in the course.

Step 4: Locate the Right Help

The work that LTHS needed to do involved literacy, common core alignment, and assessment development and would eventually involve team structure and dynamics. To find a well-rounded consultant, we contacted Corwin and were put in touch with Dr. Paul Bloomberg. To ensure Dr. Bloomberg had the appropriate expertise and an ability to establish and expand relational trust personality across our school, we invited him to facilitate a workshop before signing a year-long contract. It was important to LTHS that we found a consultant who could maintain a focus on the formative assessment process, which we had begun to study in 2012. We wanted to continue this process through the lens of CCSS implementation because of its impact on student learning.

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Step 5: Ask for Feedback and Invite Continued Participation

After 1 year of work with Dr. Bloomberg, all 10 teams achieved the curricular outcomes. These curricular outcomes had to be met before the conversation could shift to what students were learning. Before embarking on a second year of targeted professional learning, all 10 teams were consulted about the next steps and all team members were asked to continue. For LTHS, 96% of the staff volunteered to continue. The two staff members opting not to continue were replaced with two of their coworkers.

IMPACT Teams: A Simple Structure to Refocus PLCs

To develop assessment capable learners, paradigm shift had to occur at LTHS; we had to refocus our existing PLC structure. Educators had to abandon their traditional teacher talk concerning what they were teaching and had to begin to discuss what was being learned and how it was being learned by their students. The leadership at LTHS desired traditionally private teachers to publically share their craft and meaningfully discuss their students' performance; they had to be provided continual support and be provided an efficient structure to learn together resulting in the development of professional capital. LTHS discovered this support and structure in the IMPACT Team Model.

IMPACT Teams are teams of educators that collaborate on behalf of students. For LTHS, the 10 targeted teams that worked with Dr. Bloomberg in 2014–2015 to develop rigorous formative assessments aligned to the Common Core transitioned to IMPACT Teams in 2015–2016. Together, the educators on these teams are building their professional capacity by scaling up their expertise. Through the use of seven protocols, they are operationalizing the formative practices that yield the highest rates of learning.

LTHS's 10 teams are currently focusing on implementing the EAA protocol with fidelity. This is a three-phase protocol that has provided a framework to our teams to have a meaningful discussion centered on student learning demonstrated through a formative task. The protocol begins with team members sorting student work into the quality levels identified by the rubric, which is associated with their performance task. For each level of work, the team

- examines the evidence by asking: What success criteria were the students able to achieve? What criteria do they still need to demonstrate to achieve the next level of proficiency?;
- analyzes the evidence by determining what skills and abilities allowed the students to demonstrate proficiency, and what skills and proficiencies potentially prohibited the students from reaching the next quality level; and
- creates an action plan (relevant to the needs of each quality level) to implement by their next meeting.

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"This Evidence • Analysis • Action Protocol gives us a process to look at student work, analyze and take action on how we will go about helping our students achieve the skill or target of our focus. So often our PLCs are given a directive for what to accomplish and the ultimate goal has always been to get to analyzing student work but the HOW we do that has been missing. The Evidence • Analysis • Action Protocol provides that plan and structure so that real progress and teaching can take place."

–Virginia Condon,
English Teacher

When implementing this protocol, team members leave their meeting with a plan that is instructionally differentiated. The next time they meet, they engage in the Check-In Protocol to ensure student growth is being achieved or they engage in the Microteaching Protocol as a means of learning an instructional practice focused on the formative assessment process and implemented by one of their team members.

Building Capacity: The Model Teams Approach

At LTHS, we wanted IMPACT Teams to consistently focus conversations on student learning. To guarantee this end, our team members are participating in a gradual release model (The Model Teams Approach) with our consultant, Dr. Bloomberg.

During the first academic quarter, Dr. Bloomberg facilitated the EAA Protocol with each IMPACT Team. During the second quarter, the Principal or a Division

Chair facilitated this protocol with each IMPACT Team.

Dr. Bloomberg provided on-the-spot coaching to our administrative facilitators. By providing effective feedback and job coaching, the expertise of the consultant was scaled out to LTHS administrators. During the third quarter, a teacher from the IMPACT Team facilitated the protocol with coaching from the consultant. During the fourth quarter, a second teacher from the IMPACT Team facilitated the protocol with coaching from the Division Chair or principal, who was receiving feedback on coaching from the consultant.

By providing education, opportunity for practice, effective feedback, and additional opportunity to apply the feedback to their practice, the ten teams have been thoroughly supported in implementing this protocol. They not only understand the purpose of their IMPACT Team meetings, but also have demonstrated that they can collectively carry these meetings out on behalf of students.

**TIMELINE FOR BUILDING
PROFESSIONAL CAPACITY: Evidence-Analysis-
Action Protocol**

| Quarter | Facilitator | Coach (Providing Feedback to the Facilitator) |
|---------|-------------------------------|---|
| Qtr. 1 | Consultant | NA |
| Qtr. 2 | Principal or Department Chair | Consultant |
| Qtr. 3 | Teacher 1 | Consultant |
| Qtr. 4 | Teacher 2 | Principal or Department Chair |

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Next Steps

After intense practice with the EAA Protocol, the team members, who have worked with the consultant for the last 2 years, will collaborate with an assigned administrator to teach their larger course team the protocol. They will apply this protocol quarterly throughout the 2016–2017 school year, thereby facilitating a structured conversation around student learning that results in a differentiated instructional action plan.

During the 2016–2017 school year, LTHS will begin the process again with eight new targeted teams. During their initial year of work with the consultant, they will align their curriculum to the Common Core, develop aligned and appropriately rigorous formative and summative assessments, and select and implement research-based instructional practices.

Finally, LTHS will support continued work with two current IMPACT Teams. These teams will spend the year learning and applying four additional protocols with Dr. Bloomberg: Calibration/Collaborative Scoring, Lesson Study, and Evidence Walks, and Microteaching. The two Model Teams will then serve as internal experts, who will be able to teach these remaining protocols to all teams in the future.

| 2016–2017: New Teams | |
|--|-------------------------|
| Department | Team |
| Fine Arts | Spanish I Spanish II |
| Language Arts | English I IPC |
| Math | Algebra II |
| Science | Physics |
| Social Studies | Psychology |
| Special Education | PSD |
| IMPACT Team Focusing on New Protocols | |
| Science | Chemistry |
| Social Science | World History |

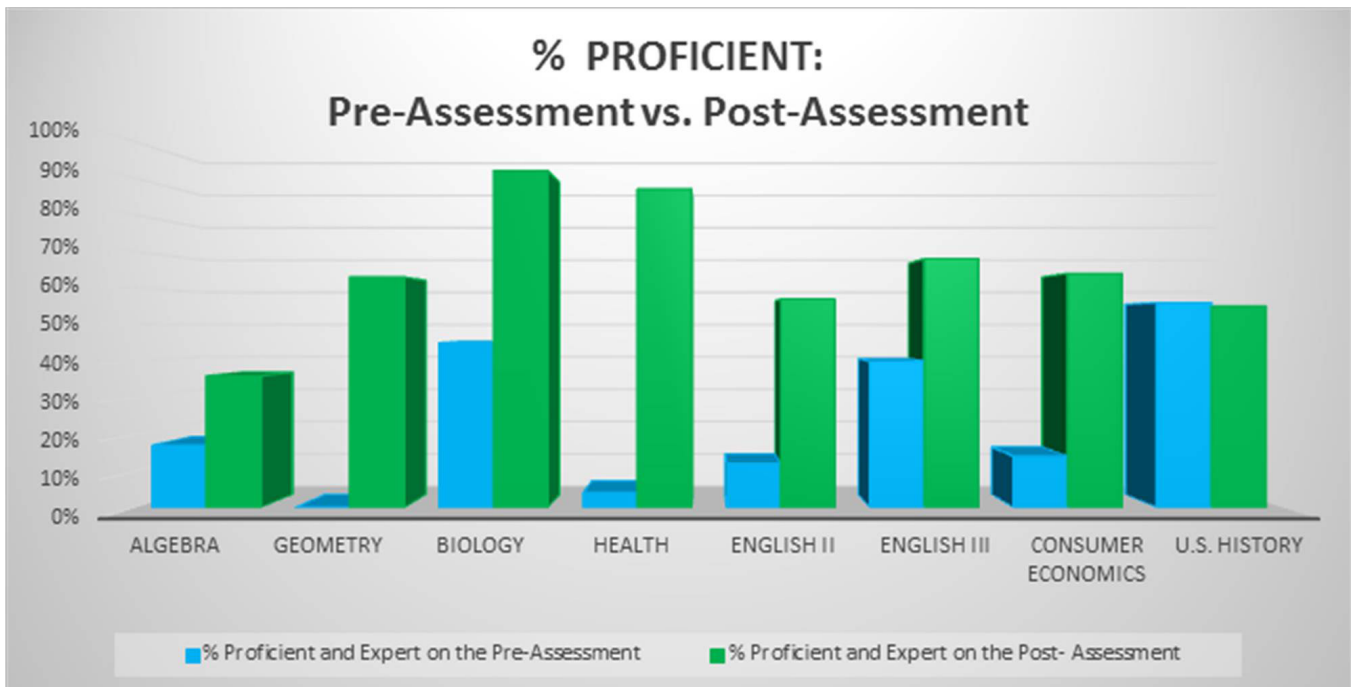
Outcomes

During the first semester of the 2016-2017 school year the eight Model Impact Teams that previously worked with the consultant, administered a common pre, midterm, and post district assessment. After the pre-assessment was administered, each Model Impact Team sorted student work into various quality levels (as identified by a rubric).

The teams then met to apply the Evidence-Analysis-Action Protocol. After examining the evidence and articulating potential reasons for student performance, each team selected high-leverage instructional practices to address the gaps present in the evidence. All teams repeated the Evidence-Analysis-Action Protocol after administering a midpoint assessment. Again, teams collaborated to determine instructional practices that would address the needs of students performing in each quality level.

Finally, a post-assessment was administered prior to the conclusion of the semester. The chart below indicates that seven of the eight teams who are independently applying the E-A-A protocol, experienced substantial growth between the pre and post assessment.

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"Every successful initiative that I have been a part of during my 13 years as a school leader has involved a methodical and gradual approach to implementation. In approximately six months, we have evolved from the beginning stages of learning the Impact Team model (and associated protocols) with Dr. Bloomberg, to now having 15 LTHS faculty members from a variety of content areas who can effectively facilitate the Evidence-Analysis-Action protocol. Utilizing a gradual release approach, we will be able to have 8 self-sustaining Impact Teams during the 2016–17 school year, which will continue to build capacity with the model and protocols as we move forward at LTHS."

–Dr. Brian Waterman, Principal



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