



Listening. Learning. Leading.®

Virgin Islands
Department of Education



The Florida and the Islands Comprehensive Center at ETS

Moving Education Forward

**Welcome
USVI School Improvement
Task Force Members!**



Our Team

- Dr. Roderick Moorehead
- Dr. Alice Lindsay
 - Dr. Allison Crean
 - Karen Underwood
 - Dr. Donna Elam
 - Chris Crocco

Our Mission

- To increase the capacity of the USVI to support coherent school improvement planning at all levels of the system, resulting in improved student achievement.

Our Tasks for *this* Meeting

- Orient new Task Force members
- Review expectations, accomplishments, and feedback from September, 2010
- Discuss key orienting concepts & processes for the work
- Learn from the literature / evidence base
- Draft SIP process / Operational Manual
 - Determine team members
 - Review School Logic Model
 - Identify needs for support (Capacity, Opportunity, Incentive)
 - Identify SEA & District roles & responsibilities
 - Identify necessary technical assistance, tools, templates
- Identify next steps

Review: September Task Force Meeting

- Accomplishments
 - Reviewed and analyzed the findings of the *Report of the United States Virgin Islands School Improvement Planning Process*
 - Built a common vocabulary for the school improvement planning process
 - Learned about the Logic Model and how to apply it to the SIP process
 - Began work on the key outcome areas
 - Discussed how the process you learn and the plan you develop will lead to the Operational Manual
 - * Devised plan for Communication Bulletin

Evaluation data highlights: September Task Force Meeting

You told us: (Agree – Strongly Agree)

- You believe the Task Force meeting was:
 - Useful to the work of VIDE and to your own work.
 - Relevant to work of VIDE and to your work.
 - High quality.

Evaluation data highlights: September Task Force Meeting

You told us: (Agree – Strongly Agree)

- You are comfortable:
 - Participating on the School Improvement Task Force.
 - That the School Improvement Task Force will meet all expectations and will contribute to the mission...
 - Using the logic model for planning.

Evaluation data highlights: September Task Force Meeting

You told us: (Agree – Strongly Agree)

- You understand:
 - The mission and expectations for the School Improvement Task Force.
 - The need for retooling the school improvement planning process within USVI
 - The Logic Model tool and how it can be used to guide our school improvement planning, implementation, and evaluation process.

Evaluation data highlights: September Task Force Meeting

You commented:

- One thing you learned:
 - Logic model: relevance and how to use
- One thing you wanted more information about:
 - How to take logic model process and build the planning process around it
 - How to remove the hierarchical concept, work together, and not step on toes
- And these thoughts:
 - This was necessary and helpful
 - I feel empowered
 - Let's all commit to working together for the duration of the Task Force sessions
 - This was an effective process for getting stakeholders together, talking and working together around issues related to student achievement. Thank you to the Commissioner.

Key orienting concepts & processes for the work: Synthesis

Concepts:

- Plans based on student learning needs, not funding streams
- Alignment, Coordination, Evaluation & Monitoring, Plan Development, Professional Development
 - All benefit from, if not *require*, coming together & communicating
- Cross-cutting themes (LMs, “Why” statements)
 - Common ground, camaraderie, partnership within system
 - Seamlessness, efficiency
 - Focused, yet dynamic
 - Increased professionalism (accountability & capacity)

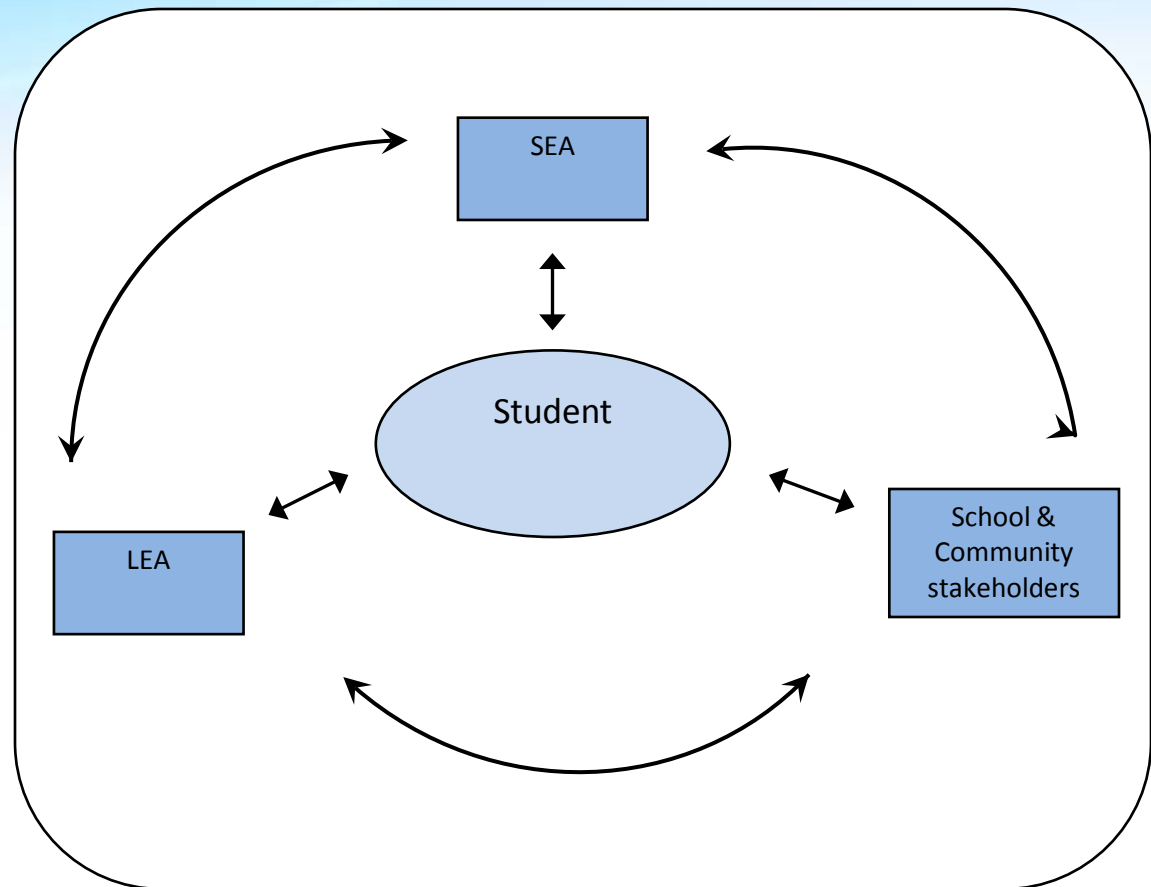
Key orienting concepts & processes for the work: Synthesis

Process

- Predictable (what/when...calendar; standardization)
- Continuous
- Driven by communication around the work and the results
- Supported by resources, tools and technical assistance

Systemic view

- Unique, yet equally significant influence
- In service of the student
- Reliant on collaboration & communication
- Non-hierarchical



Consider these terms:

- Professional Learning Community (PLC)
- *System* Improvement Plan (as opposed to *School...*)

What do these mean for the VIDE system?

- Professional Learning Community (PLC)
- *System* Improvement Plan (as opposed to *School...*)
 - *What do these mean for VIDE and its work?*
 - *How might these frame the attitudes, beliefs, and practices around improvement planning?*
 - *How might the School, SEA, and District each contribute to a System Improvement Plan?*
 - *How might a PLC drive the work? Which professionals would comprise these PLCs?*

The threads that tie the process together

- PLCs:

Collaborative, multidisciplinary, collegial teams designed to build capacity, maintain accountability, and spur continuous improvement.

- SIPs:

Improvement Plans that are aligned in focus and process that represent student needs and educator practices at the school level, as well as District and SEA efforts to build capacity, provide incentives for change, and create opportunities for improvement.

Drivers for Change: C, I, O

- PLCs:

Collaborative, multidisciplinary, collegial teams designed to build **capacity**, maintain **accountability**, and **support the process** of continuous improvement.

- SIPs:

Improvement Plans that are aligned in focus and process that represent student needs and educator practices at the school level, as well as District and SEA efforts to build **capacity**, provide **incentives** for change, and create **opportunities** for improvement.

The relationship

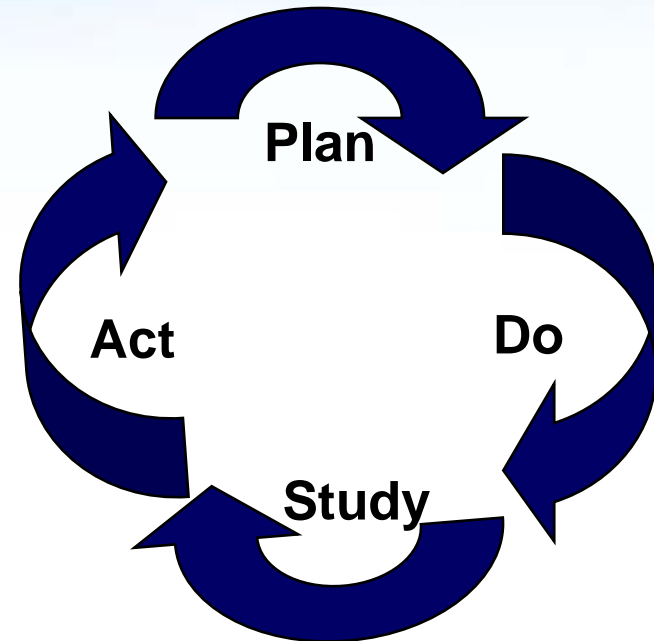
- PLCs collaborate around change.
- SIPs are developed, reviewed, reflected upon regularly via the PLC convenings.
- Hence regularly convening PLCs are the key to improvement throughout the VIDE system.

Putting the ideas together

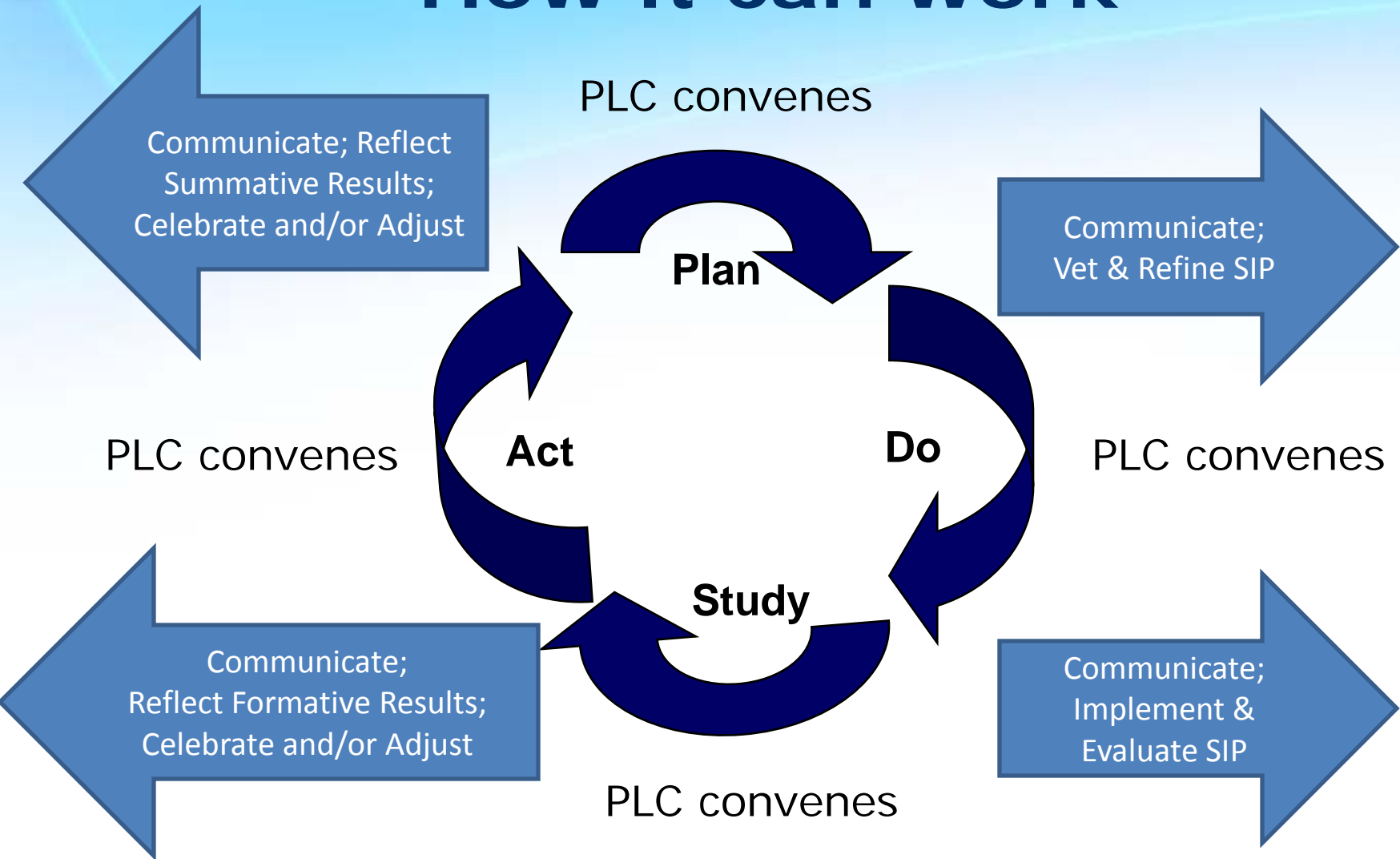
The Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) convene, minimally, on a quarterly basis. They operate according to a standardized process around the SIPs with the intent of having an impact on all state priorities (the primary one being improved student achievement).

How it can work

Recall:
The Continuous
Improvement
Process



How it can work



LUNCH



Learn from the literature/ evidence base

- Elmore on Leadership
 - Throughout the System
- CII on evidence base for school improvement
 - Drivers:
 - Capacity
 - Opportunity
 - Incentive

The research says...

- Elmore, R. (2000). *Building a new structure for school leadership*. The Albert Shanker Institute.
 - Focus leadership on instructional improvement
 - Create conditions for continuous learning, both individually and collectively
 - Model values and behaviors seeking in others
 - Make use of differences in expertise
 - Match accountability with capacity

Create conditions for continuous learning, both individually and collectively

- Feedback and collective problem-solving are essential
 - Use data to reflect on progress
 - Reflect and problem-solve in the context of common expectations
 - Create frequent opportunities to gather feedback, make sense of the information, and collectively make decisions for moving forward
- Privacy of practice produces isolation; Isolation is the enemy of improvement

Model values and behaviors seeking in others

- Leaders must be willing to do that which they are asking others to do
- Leaders must be seen doing that which they expect others to do
- No one in the system is beyond scrutiny
 - Leaders must be open to feedback, both positive and negative, just as they would expect this of others

Make use of differences in expertise

- Learning grows from differences in expertise, not from formal dictates of authority.
- Together, we know more.



SEA leaders

District
leaders

Coordinators
(e.g., Content, PD)

External
Partners

School
leaders

Match accountability with capacity

- Ensure your team has the capacity to do what you are asking
 - Clarify expectations, processes, & resources
 - Create opportunities to build skills and knowledge
 - Improvement is not open to volunteers; participation in the process is a condition to being part of the system
- Buffer your team from extraneous/distracting non-instructional tasks & issues

CII has:

Collected,
Analyzed, and
Organized the Research
So that Your Time Can Be Spent...
Applying It

CII:

Center on Innovation and Improvement

- A national content center supported by the US DoE
 - Distilled decades of research on school improvement
 - What practices really have the greatest impact on student learning?
 - Proximal indicators
 - System, District, Continuous, Rapid, Leadership

The Resulting Framework is built around:

- Building Capacity
 - Providing Incentives
 - Creating Opportunity
- ...to drive the change process.
- *And:* Continuous evaluation of the Process and Results

Why Incentives?

- Definition: Incentives are inducements designed to motivate personnel to change or improve behavior that influences education outcomes.
- Incentives are an important part of the process because without strong motivation to take on the hard work that change entails, no amount of capacity or opportunity can make change happen (Hanushek, 1994).

Why Capacity?

- Definition: Capacity entails the district or school's ability to respond to incentives in ways that improve outcomes and includes investment in new ideas, instructional methods, and human capacity.
- Building district and school capacity—supported by incentives and opportunities—is the core of efforts to help schools improve (Massel, 1998; Mazzeo & Berman, 2006).

Why Opportunity?

- Definition: Opportunity represents the environment in which schools operate, particularly policies that enable schools to operate successfully absent “rules that limit and routinize instruction” and limit allocation of staff and money (Hill & Celio, 1998, p. 75).
- Organizations need to have the flexibility to change (e.g., Smith and O’Day, 1991; National Governors Association, 1986) and educators need the flexibility to implement significant changes (Berends, Bodilly, & Nataraj Kirby, 2002; Gill et al., 2005).

Activity

(begin afternoon, complete Day 2)

- Draft SIP process / Operational Manual
 - Determine PLC members
 - Consider context (WHY) for each convening (e.g., PDSA cycle); revise if necessary
 - Determine timeline for SIP development and relate back to PLC convenings; consider venue & logistics
 - For each PLC convening, develop Logic Model
 - Begin with the WHY developed
 - Develop Outcomes of the meeting (think: person, head to toe)
 - Identify Outputs and Activities
 - Define Resources needed (including tools, references, training, data, etc.)