

Part Five

Tips for Moving Forward: Building a Collaborative Culture Through High-Performing Teams

- 1** Ensure that teams are created on the basis of shared responsibility for pursuing the critical questions of teaching and learning with a particular group of students: for example, by course or by grade level.
- 2** Work with staff to find creative ways to provide more time for team collaboration, including ways of using existing time more effectively.
- 3** Disperse leadership more widely by identifying team leaders for any team with more than three people. Meet with team leaders on a regular basis to identify problematic areas of the process and develop strategies for resolving those problems.
- 4** Ask teams to build shared knowledge—to learn together—as they approach each new task in the collaborative process.
- 5** Provide teams with tools such as supporting research, templates, exemplars, worksheets, and timelines to assist them in each step of the process.
- 6** Monitor the work of each team through ongoing assessment of their products, regular meetings with team leaders, and formal self-evaluations. Respond immediately to a team that is having difficulty.
- 7** Building-level leadership teams should model everything being asked of the collaborative teams, including meeting on a regular basis, staying focused on issues with the greatest impact on student achievement, establishing and honoring norms, and working toward SMART goals.
- 8** Create procedures to ensure teams are able to learn from one another.
- 9** Look for ways to link teams with relevant resources inside and outside of your building (including other teams).
- 10** Make teams the focus of recognition and celebration (see chapter 2). Take every opportunity to acknowledge the efforts and accomplishments of teams.

