

The Professional Learning Community Continuum

Element of a PLC	Pre-Initiation Stage	Initiation Stage	Developing Stage	Sustaining Stage
Responding to Conflict in a PLC	<p>People react to conflict with classic flight or fight responses. Most staff members withdraw from interactions in order to avoid those they find disagreeable. Others are perpetually at war in acrimonious, unproductive arguments that never seem to get resolved. People seem more interested in winning arguments than in resolving differences. Groups tend to regard each other as adversaries.</p>	<p>School and district leaders take steps to resolve conflict as quickly as possible. Addressing conflict is viewed as an administrative responsibility. The primary objective of administrators in addressing disputes is to restore the peace.</p>	<p>Staff members have created norms or protocols to help them identify and address the underlying issues causing conflict. Members are encouraged to explore their positions and the fundamental assumptions that have led them to their positions. They attempt to use a few key, guiding principles to assist them in coming to closure.</p>	<p>Staff members view conflict as a source of creative energy and an opportunity for building shared knowledge. They create specific strategies for exploring one another's thinking, and they make a conscious effort to understand as well as to be understood. They seek ways to test competing assumptions through action research and are willing to re-think their position when research, data, and information contradict their suppositions. Because they have found common ground on their purpose and priorities, they are able to approach disagreements with high levels of trust and an assumption of good intentions on the part of all members.</p>

