
Norm-Setting Protocol for Team Participation and Accountability

Team Tool 4.1 from *Leading for Literacy*

Norm setting can include making basic agreements about when, where, and for what number of minutes a team will meet. But often these agreements are already in place before a team sits down together to set their participation norms — how they will meet.

Affirming Your Team’s Purpose

Participants in a team share the understanding that the group’s purpose is to learn together through ongoing inquiry. Team members should expect to be interactive and collaborative; being explicit about what they value from one another supports that collaboration. The participation norms the group establishes together are those explicit expectations.

Individual Think-Write Warm-Up

Team members respond in writing for the next two minutes to these two prompts.

- **Fears:** If this team turns out to be one of your worst professional learning experiences ever, what might be some of its characteristics?
- **Hopes:** If this team turns out to be one of your best professional learning experiences ever, what might be some of its characteristics?

Chart Responses

Solicit fears and hopes from the team and have two team members record for all to see.

Facilitate a discussion about what agreements the team can make to decrease the likelihood of realizing team members’ fears and increase the likelihood of achieving team members’ hopes.

Have the recording team members edit the charts to reflect the agreements.

Check for consensus. These norms belong to the group and can be changed or added to at any time, by the group.

Make a final set of norms that can be reproduced for team members, on three-hole punched paper, for example.

Revisit Norms Any Time

It may be that a particular team experience is the catalyst for revisiting norms. Or the team may decide simply to revisit their norms after a few meetings because they have a better sense of how they want to work together. If any team member wants to revisit the team norms, try this simple writing prompt to set up a discussion: What norms would make this an optimal learning community for you?