# PDSA Sample A

**The problem**: Euphoria Public Schools is in the early stages of launching improvement work on the quality of Professional Learning Communities in their schools.  The district had implemented PLCs district-wide three years ago as a key strategy for supporting instructional improvement. However, they were seeing quite a bit of variation in how these PLCs were playing out. After digging into understanding what was happening in their current PLCs, they had decided to focus on improving the quality of PLC support in 5 schools and had created a very provisional aim statement:

> By July 2015, we will have 5 schools that effectively support the development of high-functioning teams of teachers*

*definition and measurement in progress*

**The team:** The district put together a team of 4 people to lead this improvement project. The team was made up of a union lead, 2 district office personnel and 1 teacher leader. The team had never worked together before and members are new to improvement science. You were assigned to them as a coach at a recent two-day improvement science workshop. Coaching them during that workshop had been a bit of a struggle. The conversation tended to veer towards discussing the politics of the district and worrying about all the things they couldn't do because of how other people (that were not on the team) would react. Getting to an aim statement and identifying a change idea to test had been a big win for the team, moving them out of discussion into action. You are now following up with them to hear about what they learned from their PDSA and plan the next steps.

| Test Title: | Protocols for PDSAs | | | Date: | June 10, 2015 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tester: | Euphoria Public Schools | | Cycle#: 1 | Driver: | |
| What change idea is being tested? | Protocol for a PLC Conversation | | | | |
| What is the overall GOAL of the test?* | Determine effective protocols for PLCs that will result in instructional shifts | | | | |

## 1) PLAN

| Questions: Questions you have about what will happen. What do you want to learn? | Predictions: Make a prediction for each question. Not optional. | Data: Data you'll collect to test predictions |
|---|---|---|
| Will the teachers use the protocols? What percent of the time will they follow it? | Yes they will use it if it is easy to understand and simple to use | Opinions of the curriculum specialists |
| How long will the protocol take? | 45 minutes | Opinions of the curriculum specialists |
| Will the protocol result in a instructional shifts? | | Opinions of the curriculum specialists |

**Details**: Describe the who/what/when/where of the test. Include your data collection plan.

- ➢ Bring 3 protocols (1 simpler and 2 complicated) that are often used to an upcoming meeting of curriculum specialists (who provide PLC support),
- ➢ Divide the people into 4 small groups, ask their opinions and record their answers.

## 3) STUDY

**What were the results?** Comment on your predictions in the rows below. Were the correct? Record any data summaries as well.

➜ 4/4 of the small groups believed that teachers would be able to use the simplest protocol without support, but not the 2 more complicated protocols.

➜ Depends on which protocol and whether the team has a facilitator.

➜ Either of the protocols could support the kinds of conversations that lead to instructional shifts if they were supported by a skilled facilitator that could integrate content knowledge.

**What did you learn?**

The curriculum specialists believe that the easier protocol could be used with the least training and without a designated facilitator but would likely not lead to deep conversations.
A trained facilitator that can integrate content knowledge is key for any of the protocols.

## 2) DO (Briefly describe what happened during the test, surprises, difficulty getting data, obstacles, successes, etc.)

- ➢ The teams were really engaged and answered the questions with enthusiasm
- ➢ They ruled out one of the complicated protocols because it did not fit the context that most of the schools were working in. They believed the other complicated protocol would be difficult to use in the time provided for PLCs.
- ➢ The protocol did not end up being the focus on the conversations. The team agreed that how simple or difficult the protocol was did not matter as much as having a trained facilitator.

## 4) ACT (Describe modifications and/or decisions for the next cycle; what will you do next?)

- ➢ Find another group to test the protocols (perhaps add other protocols)
- ➢ Rather than reviewing them and providing feedback, have the curriculum specialists test the protocols by using them with real student data
- ➢ Provide professional development to facilitators.