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(PLC)

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Schools:

- Adlai Stevenson [suburban Chicago]
- Freeport Intermediate School [South of Houston]
- Boones Mill Elementary School [Franklin County, VA]
- Los Penasquitos Elementary School [Rancho Penasquitos, near San Diego, CA]

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NCLB – No Child Left Behind

- “... we are deeply disturbed by many of the specific provisions “
- “We do, however, acknowledge the need for schools to move beyond pious statements pledging learning for all and to begin a systematic effort to create procedures, policies and programs that are aligned with that purpose.”

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- **“We believe all kids can learn ...”** – four schools of thought:
 - **Charles Darwin School:** “We believe all kids can learn ... based on their ability.”
 - Within the limits of their relatively fixed ability and aptitude.
 - **Pontius Pilate¹ School:** “We believe all kids can learn ... if they take advantage of the opportunity we give them to learn.”
 - If they put forth the effort. Their decision, and we will hold them accountable for their actions.
 - **Chicago Cub Fan School:** “We believe all kids can learn ... something, and we will help all students experience academic growth in a warm and nurturing environment.”
 - At least some growth. Determined by student’s innate ability and effort.
 - **Henry Higgins School²:** “We believe all kids can learn ... and we will work to help all students achieve high standards of learning.”
 - We set high standards that all students are expected to achieve, and we continue to work with them until they have done so.

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Adlai Stevenson HS, Suburban Chicago area

- lower level classes only for Fresh, Soph
- Jr, Sr – all college prep or honors
- Pre-enrollment
 - Counselor Watch
 - Proactive Student Registration
 - Summer Study Skills Course – open to all
 - Good Friend Program – teacher “friend” for at-risk incoming students
 - Counselor Check-In Program – weekly meetings during first 6 weeks of semester
- Transition to HS
 - Freshman Orientation
 - Freshman Advisory
 - Freshman Mentoring Program (FMP) – 5 upperclassmen / 25 Freshmen

¹ Pontius Pilate (Latin: Pontius Pilatus) was the governor of the Roman Judaea Province from 26 until 36. In modern times he is best known as the man who, according to the canonical Christian Gospels, presided over the trial of Jesus and ordered his crucifixion, instigating the Passion. – Wikipedia.com.

² The fictional character (from Pygmalion or My Fair Lady), who tutored Eliza Dolittle.

- Participation in Co-Curricular Programs – (Extra-Curricular) – 1 Activity period per month during school day.
- Frequent Monitoring of Student Progress – three 6-week grading periods + midpoint progress report => every 3 weeks.

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Pyramid of Interventions

- Extra time and support for students experiencing difficulty
 - Student Support Team (SST) – Counselor, social worker, Dean of students. Weekly meeting. Track indicators
 - Conferencing and Optional Tutoring
 - Mandatory Tutoring Program
 - Guided Study Program – 10 or fewer students in special study hall
 - Mentor Program – 1:10 teacher:student, twice/day

67 Chapter 4 Overcoming Logistical Barriers at Adlai Stevenson [suburban Chicago]

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- Teacher Association
- A New Concept of Supervision
- Providing Staffing
- Revising the grading system
- Discipline
 - “Think positive, not punitive.”
 - Escalating privileges
 - Freshman intake – intensive, supportive
 - Working together to Find Solutions

79 Chapter 5 Providing Time and Support for Kids in Middle School: Freeport Intermediate School [South of Houston]

- 70% eligible for free or reduced prices lunches
- Middle School is a recent phenomenon
- 1970’s – grades 7-9 was norm
- 2000’s – grades 6-8 is norm
- 8 Step Improvement Process (Richardson, 2004)
 1. Disaggregate data, including test results.
 2. Develop an instructional calendar.
 3. Deliver the instructional focus, based on the calendar.
 4. Assess student mastery of the standard taught
 5. Provide additional instruction for students who did not master the assessment.
 6. Provide enrichment for students who did master the assessment.
 7. Provide ongoing maintenance of standards taught.
 8. Monitor the process.
- Team Time
- Spiraling Instruction
- Benchmark Testing

93 Chapter 6 A School-Wide System of Time and Support for Elementary Students: Boones Mill Elementary School [Franklin County, VA]

- Virginia – high stakes testing – K-12 Standards of Learning (SOLs)
- Team Learning Process – Steps:
 1. Identify the 16-20 most essential outcomes (knowledge and skills) that all students MUST learn in each content area at each grade level this school year.
 2. Develop at least four formative common assessments designed to assist each team in answering the question, “How will we know when each child has learned the essential outcomes?”
 3. Set a target score all students must achieve to demonstrate proficiency in each skill on each common assessment.
 4. Administer the common assessment and analyze results.
 5. Celebrate strengths and identify and implement improvement strategies.
- **“Floating tutor”** to assist each grade-level team.
 1. Each grade-level team had to make its students accessible to the tutor for a minimum of 30 minutes per day.
 2. The tutorial time identified had to be consistent and constant among all classrooms in the grade level. By making all the students of a grade level available at the same time, the tutor could work with six grade-level units rather than 20 independent classrooms.
 3. The designated time could not conflict with any direct instructional blocks (such as language arts, math, science, social studies, and specials classes).
 4. The tutorial time could not interfere with the student’s recess or other fun activities. The extra time and support should not be presented or perceived as punishment.

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Grade-Level Parent Workshops

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Peer Tutoring / Buddy / Mentoring Programs

- scheduled

Save One Student (SOS)

- Each adult in the building responsible for an at-risk student

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Connecting Special and Regular Education

- walls between sped and regular ed began to crumble

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Extended Coordination Among Classroom Teachers and Support Services Staff

- Weekly Feedback Sheets
- Weekly/Bi-Weekly Grade-Level Newsletters
- Monthly Vertical Team Meetings
- Monthly Faculty Meetings
- Monthly “Scoop Sheets”
- Forty-Five Minutes of Contract Time
- Intervention teams

117 Chapter 7 A School-Wide System of Time and Support for Elementary Students: Los Penasquitos Elementary School [Rancho Penasquitos, near San Diego, CA]

Teacher proclamation:

- Accept no limits on the learning potential of any child.
- Meet the individual learning needs of each child.
- Create serious classroom learning environments.
- Treat students, parents, and colleagues with courtesy and respect.
- Hold students, parents, and each other to the highest standards of performance.
- Collaborate regularly with colleagues to seek and implement more effective strategies for helping each child to achieve his or her academic potential.
- Do whatever it takes – go the extra mile – to ensure that every student achieves or exceeds grade-level academic expectations.

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Comprehensive Interventions

- Impact Teacher Groups – 4-6 students
- Math Booster Clubs
- After-School Tutoring Clubs
- Los Pen 6-to-6 Program
- Counseling
- Los Pen Parent University
- Mentoring
- Peer Tutoring
- Senior Citizen Support
- Community Partnerships
- SST Facilitator Support
- Classroom Teacher Support (teachers going the extra mile)
- Student Services Teacher (full-time teacher. Title I funding)
- Creative Grouping (across-grade group, as useful)
- Literacy Specialist Support
- Reading Recovery

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SST customizations

- “Divide-and-conquer” – spread out responsibilities
- only 2-3 hours/month per member

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Focused School-Wide Goals

- very specific and **measurable**
- e.g., “All students will improve on-demand writing scores by 2 rubric points or reach a score of 10 by the post assessment. The indicator will be writing prompts scored in January and March as well as the pre- and post-assessments. Our target time is June of 2004.”

133 Chapter 8 Common Threads**Schools highlighted in this book share:**

- **Clarity of purpose**
- **Collaborative culture**
- **Collective inquiry into best practice and current reality**

- **Action orientation** [with coherence]
- **Commitment to continuous improvement**
- **Focus on [learning] results**
 - Using common assessments
 - Timeliness
 - Systematic process of intervention
- **Strong principals who empower teachers**
 - “Leaders in schools with strong professional communities ... delegated authority, developed collaborative decision-making processes, and stepped back from being the central problem solver. Instead they turned to the professional communities for critical decisions.” Louise Kruse, & Marks, 1996, p. 193.
 - Distributed leadership
 - Guiding coalition (Stevenson):
 - principal, assistant principals, chairperson of each department
 - met every day of the school year
 - School Site Council (both elementary school leadership teams):
 - Teacher from each grade, parents
 - Also, each teacher serves on some committee(s)
- **Commitment to face adversity, conflict, and anxiety**
 - Instances of pushback by teachers
 - Insistence on participation in program
- **The same guiding phrase**
 - **“Whatever it takes.”**

149 Chapter 9 The Philosophical Challenges to Systematic Interventions for Students results:

- Adlai Stevenson – AP exams:
 - 1985: < 10% of students, 83% made honor grades
 - 2003: >60% of students, 87% made honor grades
 - Largest number in North America
- Boones Elem:
 - enrichment opportunities for better students
 - Center-based instruction, individual and cooperative group research projects, computer-based tutorials or exploration, Junior Great Books reading circles, integrated curriculum projects and presentations.
- Freeport:
 - Better performance at both below 25th and above 75th percentile

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Special ed

- Boones Mill:
 - from first to lowest ranking for number of students referred to SPED testing
- Freeport – mainstreaming

171 Chapter 10 Creating a Stretch Culture: A Process, Not a Program

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From Punitive to Positive

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Pygmalion quote

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“It is not national legislation ... that will transform schools. In fact, in many schools the effort to raise standards and have tougher high-stakes assessments will ... instead contribute to a culture of learned hopelessness for students and staff alike.”

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Assessment **for** learning when teachers:

- Understand and articulate *in advance of teaching* the achievement targets that their students are to hit. (Answer the question, “What is it we want our students to know and be able to do as a result of this course, grade level, or unit?”)
- Inform their students about those learning goals *in terms that students understand*, for the very beginning of the teaching and learning process.
- Develop assessment exercises and scoring procedures that *accurately reflect student achievement*. (Answer the question, “How will we know if each student has learned?”)
- Use classroom assessments to *build students’ confidence* in themselves as learners and help them take responsibility for their own learning, so as to lay a foundation for lifelong learning.
- Translate classroom assessment results into frequent *descriptive feedback* (versus judgmental feedback) for students that provides them with specific insights as to how to improve (such as helping students understand the criteria that will be used to judge the quality of their work).
- Continuously *adjust instruction* based on the results of classroom assessments. (Use formative assessment as the impetus for discussing, “How will we respond when our students experience difficulty in learning?”)
- Engage students in *regular self-assessment* with standards held constant so that students can watch themselves grow over time and thus feel in charge of their own success (for example, train students to apply the criteria by which their work will be judged).
- Actively involve students in *communicating* with their teacher and their families about their achievement status and improvement.

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Two essential strategies for a powerful synergy:

- Building a collaborative culture that focuses on student learning, and
- Creating a system of timely interventions for students.

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Building Momentum Through Short-Term Wins

- Importance of principals articulating the conceptual framework and the key guiding ideas for their schools.

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Why Not Now? - Avoid analysis paralysis.

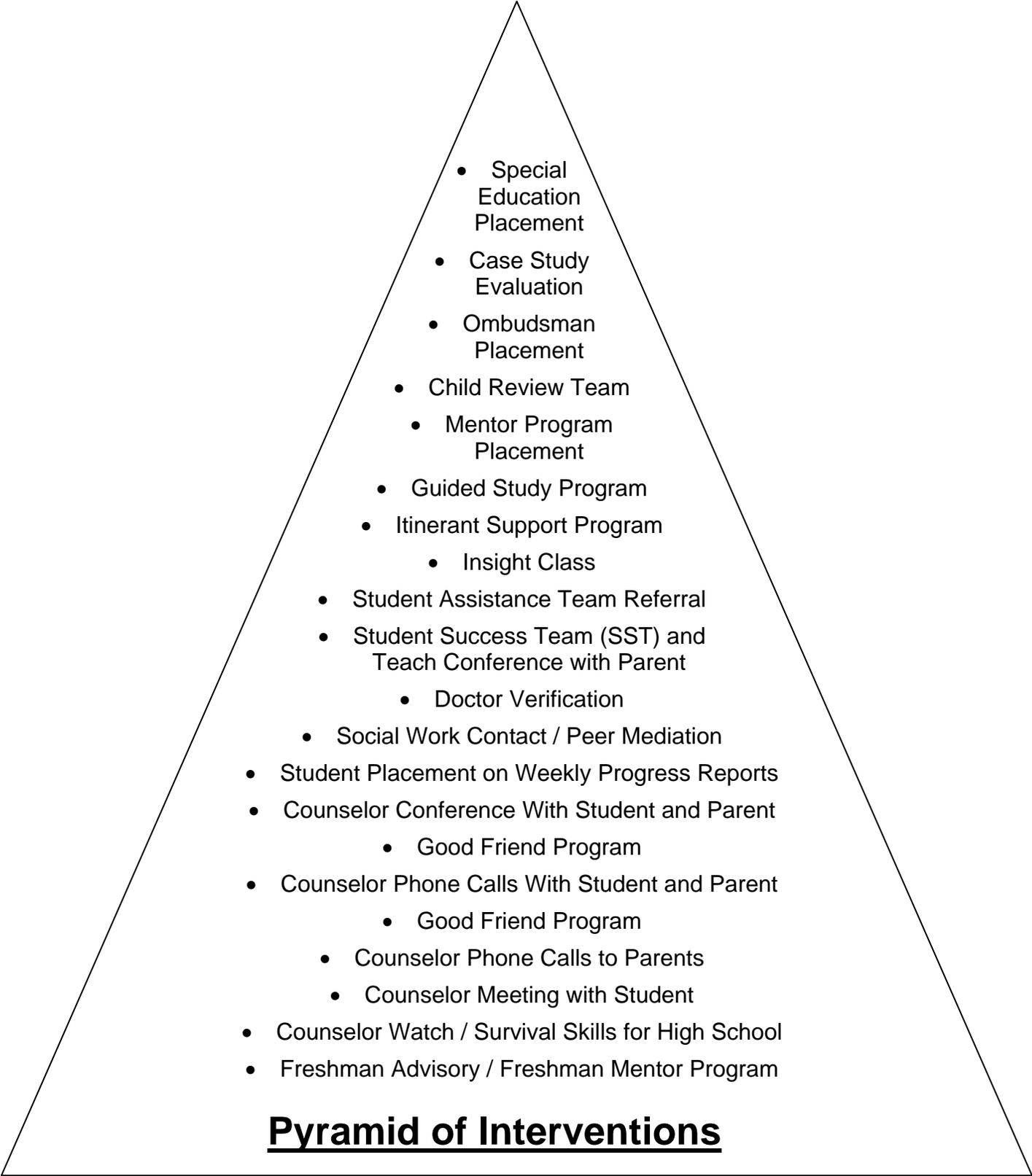
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A Final Analogy - Apollo 13

Appendix: The Professional Learning Community Continuum

Element of a PLC	Pre-Initiation Stage	Initiation Stage	Developing Stage	Sustaining Stage
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- Elements
 - Overall PLC Development
 - Mission: Is it evident that learning for all is our core purpose?
 - Shared Vision: Do we know what we are trying to create?
 - Shared Values: How must we behave to advance our vision?
 - Goals: What are our priorities?
 - Collaborative Culture: Teachers Working Together
 - Collaborative Culture: Administrator/Teacher Relations
 - Parent Partnerships
 - Action Research
 - Continuous Improvement
 - Focus on Results
 -

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- Special Education Placement
 - Case Study Evaluation
 - Ombudsman Placement
 - Child Review Team
 - Mentor Program Placement
 - Guided Study Program
 - Itinerant Support Program
 - Insight Class
 - Student Assistance Team Referral
 - Student Success Team (SST) and Teach Conference with Parent
 - Doctor Verification
 - Social Work Contact / Peer Mediation
 - Student Placement on Weekly Progress Reports
 - Counselor Conference With Student and Parent
 - Good Friend Program
 - Counselor Phone Calls With Student and Parent
 - Good Friend Program
 - Counselor Phone Calls to Parents
 - Counselor Meeting with Student
 - Counselor Watch / Survival Skills for High School
 - Freshman Advisory / Freshman Mentor Program

Pyramid of Interventions

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