

## August Message

As I prepare to open our doors to our students in the district, my anticipation is building. I spent the last year analyzing the needs of students, gathering input from our stakeholders, and combing research to create a learning plan that will move our district from a top district in Utah to the best district in the Nation. I began with critically analyzing the structures and systems to maximize our efficiencies in the classroom to yield the best instruction for student learning. It became evident through this analysis that our district had work to complete in the area of creating a collaborative culture focused on results to measure student learning. I was also acutely aware of the morale of the organization.

As a believer in intentional teaching and continual support, I knew that I needed to collect information from the staff on exactly what areas of the culture needed improvement. I also am a believer in the structure of professional learning communities (PLC). Thus, the work began. In November, we began sending teams from our schools to the PLC Institutes to learn about the framework, the commitments, and results that other districts have witnessed.

Throughout the winter and spring, principals attended various conferences through the nation with teams of teachers examining and learning the structure of the PLC model. At the end of April, it was collectively agreed upon that this structure would be the vehicle to drive our goal of becoming the best district in the Nation and to ensure that all students in our district are learning at high levels. It was also clear that we had to provide intentional instruction in all parts of the organization around healthy organizational culture; thus, we started by administering an extensive cultural health survey adopted from the business world. This survey yielded detailed data to address specific areas and departments in a supportive method so that all of our staff and students are mentally, emotionally, and socially healthy. The survey is a product of an entire system to address cultural health that provides not only the survey and the data, but also professional development to staff in the areas of need.

We knew that if we expected our staff to work in collaborative teams we needed to provide skills to be an effective team member. As we continue the journey of excellence, we have collective commitments that positive school culture and collaborative teams will create the structure, which allows us to meet the learning needs of all students.

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