

# Evidence of Excellence



After two years, ELA proficiency rose to

**80%**



CANISTEO-GREENWOOD CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT • CANISTEO, NEW YORK



# Teachers unite to drive student success across the district

## CHALLENGE

After years of intermittent PLC at Work® implementation and a turnover in superintendency, Canisteo-Greenwood School District faced inconsistent instructional practices and gaps in teacher collaboration. “There was never a straight path,” says Superintendent Thomas Crook. “I came in during turnover, and we needed consistency in conversation, training, and community buy-in.”

When Crook attended a PLC institute in St. Louis in June 2019, he returned with renewed focus, but COVID-19 slowed progress. During the pandemic, many planned initiatives were paused, and in-person collaboration became difficult. By 2021, however, Crook and his team began refocusing on the work, providing professional development for staff, and seeking out guidance from PLC experts to regain momentum.

## IMPLEMENTATION

The district prioritized professional development to ensure all faculty implemented the PLC process with integrity. Working closely with Solution Tree associates, including Mike Mattos, Maria Nielsen, Eric Twadell, and Janel Keating, staff engaged in training focused

on the four critical questions of a PLC at Work, as well as identifying and aligning essential standards. Crook explains, “It just makes so much sense. How could you not, as an educator, be asking these questions and taking in this information?”

Convincing staff that a scheduling change was the right move to make time for Monday collaborative team meetings was another hurdle. “Starting later on Mondays was a tough ask,” he notes, “but now the mindset is, this is who we are and what we do.”

- Superintendent attends PLC at Work Institute in St. Louis
- Canisteo-Greenwood Central joins the New York PLC at Work Cohort
- Staff attends multiple PLC at Work Institutes in Rochester and Syracuse
- Training begins with Solution Tree associates: Mike Mattos, Eric Twadell, Maria Nielsen, and Janel Keating
- Staff attends 15-Day Challenge Workshop in Syracuse

They also leveraged the New York PLC at Work Cohorts and workshops to guide new staff. Guiding coalition members attended multiple institutes and participated in Zoom sessions with PLC associate Eric Twadell on

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THOMAS CROOK / SUPERINTENDENT

effective grading practices, bringing strategies back to their teams. Board members also actively participated in collaborative meetings to observe and engage. “We continually touch base on how we link the work we are doing,” Crook emphasizes, noting the importance of alignment and intentionality.

Literacy was another focus area. Teams engaged in the 15-Day Challenge with Maria Nielsen, developing common formative assessments, unit plans, and intervention strategies.

## RESULTS

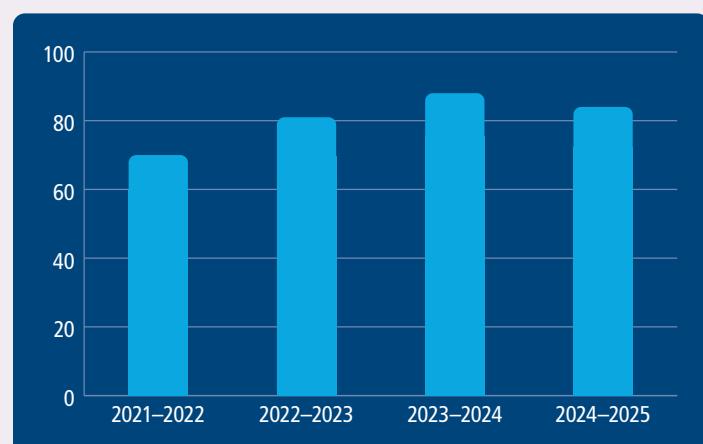
The district’s PLC implementation and literacy focus have made a positive impact on school culture and student outcomes. Canisteo-Greenwood Elementary earned Model PLC at Work status, reflecting integrity and consistent follow-through. Promising practices are evident at the high school as well. Crook shares, “The change in conversations about student learning has been the biggest impact. Team leaders are strong, and the culture is really good.”

Post-COVID intervention strategies increased districtwide ELA proficiency from 70% to a peak of 88%, and it currently stands at 84%—an upward trend

that has largely been sustained. Teacher collaboration strengthened, staff engagement increased, and the district is recognized regionally as a model for professional learning. Crook concludes, “It’s about kids growing and benefiting from the education they are receiving.”

Through strategic professional development, focused PLC work, and intentional literacy supports, Canisteo-Greenwood School District has created a thriving culture of collaboration, improved student learning, and sustainable instructional excellence.

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS PROFICIENCY 2021–2025



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