

Figure 1.1: Setting Middle School Teacher Team Collective Commitments Protocol

Setting Team Collective Commitments

Because we need our best from one another in working as a team, it is essential that we set collective commitments for our work cultures. Collective commitments are values and beliefs that will describe how we choose to treat each other and how we can expect to be treated.

As we set three to four collective commitments for ourselves, please note that establishing these does not mean that we are not already good people who work together productively. Having collective commitments simply reminds us to be highly conscious about our actions and what we can expect from each other as we engage in conversations about our challenging work.

Step one: Write three or four “We will” statements that you think will have the most positive influence on our group as we collaborate on significant issues about teaching and learning. Perhaps reflect on past actions or behaviors that have made teams less than productive. These are only a jumpstart for your thinking.

Step two: Partner with another colleague to talk about your choices and the reasons for your selection. Together decide on three or four commitments from your combined lists.

Step three: Move as a pair to partner with two to four other colleagues to talk about your choices and the reasons for your selection. Together decide on three or four commitments from your combined lists.

Step four: Make a group decision. Prepare to share your choices with the whole group.

Step five: Adopt collective commitments by consensus. Invite clarification and advocacy for particular commitments. Give all participants four votes for norm selection. It is wise not to have more than three or four.

Source: Adapted from P. Luidens, personal communication, January 27 and April 9, 2010.