2025 NEAS CONFERENCE

Aerial UTS Function Centre - Sydney

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Professional Learning Teams and EAL/D - Creating a Supportive Community with Mainstream Teachers of EAL/D Students

Megan Huber, St Laurence's College

Pathways to Belonging
Our Role in Building Communities

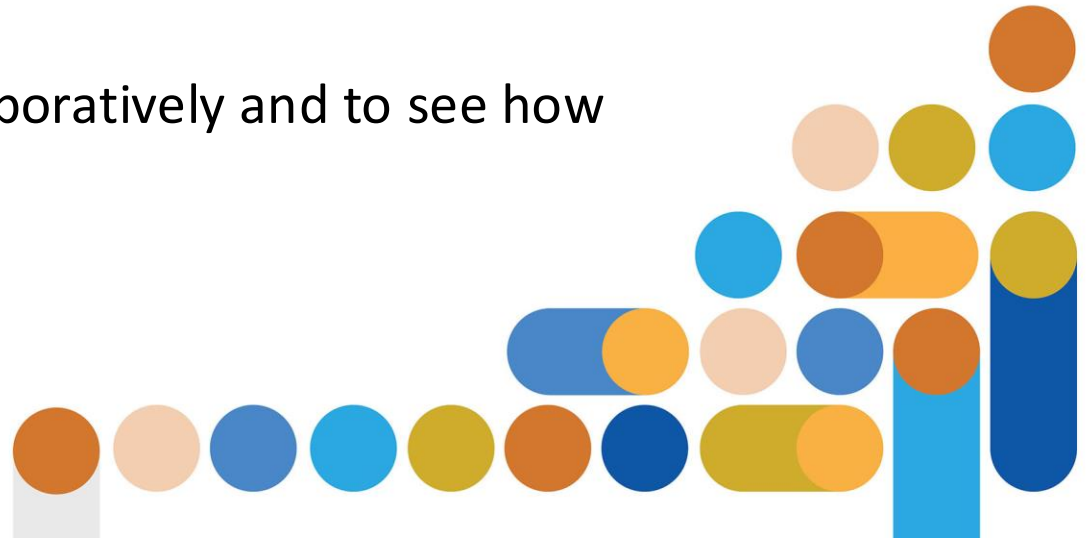22-23 MAY 2025

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Learning Intention

WHAT:

The importance of Professional Learning Teams in promoting and enhancing better quality differentiated practices for EAL/D secondary students.
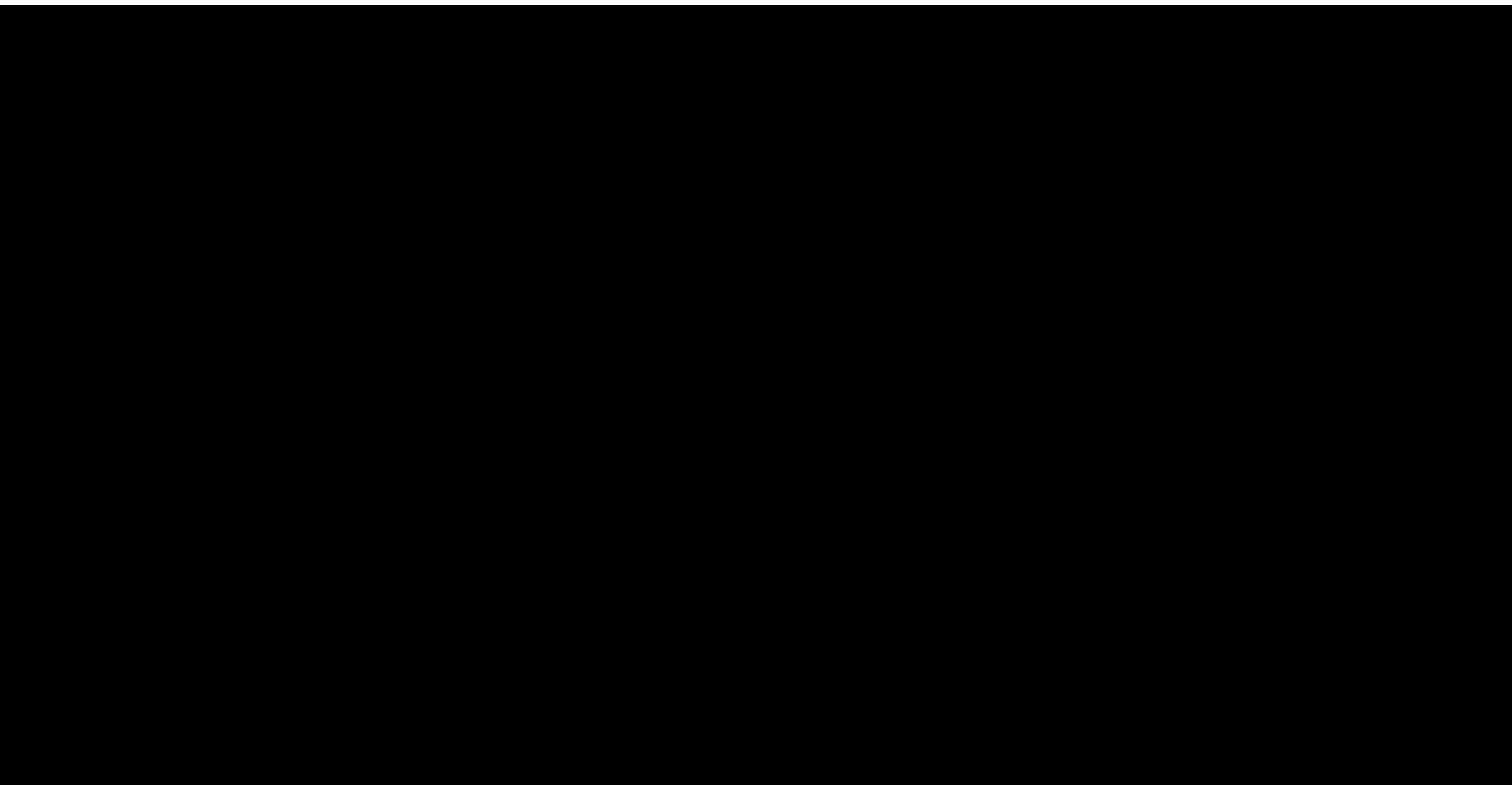
WHY:

Sharing the knowledge and practice of a year - long process to hopefully see this translate into other schools and learning institutions.
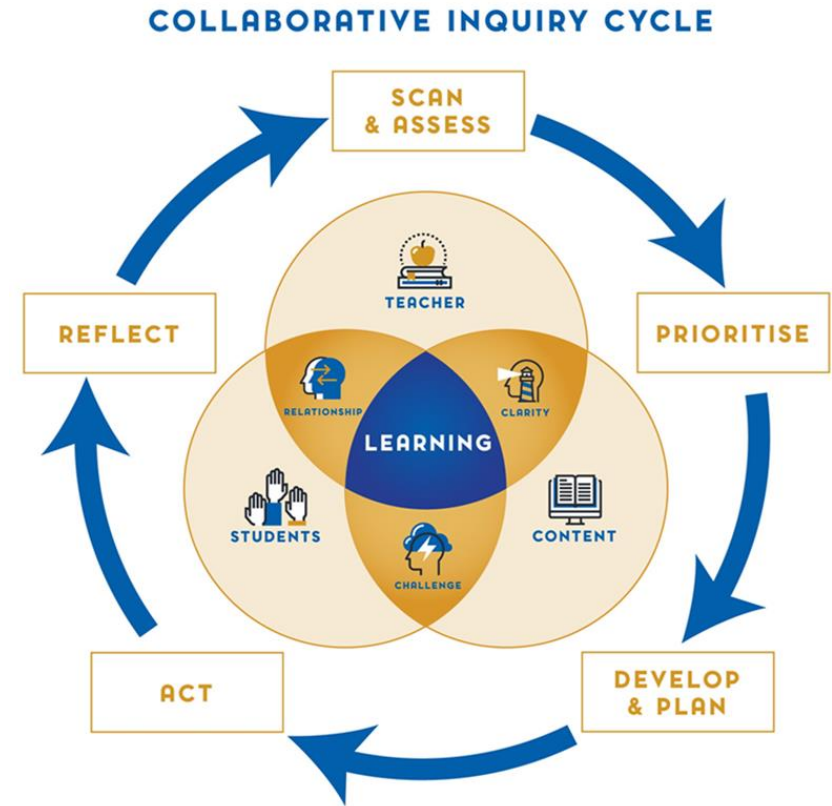
SUCCESS:

- Listening to the experience of the St Laurence's College EAL/D PLT
- Asking questions to provide helpful and critical reflection and comments on the processes
- Reflecting on your own experiences of working collaboratively and to see how PLTs can relate to your setting.

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Professional Learning Teams

'PLTs enable an ongoing process in which educators are **committed** to working **collaboratively** in **cycles** of collective **inquiry** to achieve better **results** for their students' (DuFour et al., 2010).

COLLABORATIVE INQUIRY CYCLE

SCAN & ASSESS

PRIORITISE

DEVELOP & PLAN

ACT

REFLECT

TEACHER

RELATIONSHIP

LEARNING

CLARITY

STUDENTS

CHALLENGE

CONTENT

Questions:
1. What do we expect our students to know?
2. How will we know they have learnt it? (Assessment)
3. How will we respond when they don't learn? (Intervention)
4. How will we respond if they already know it? (Extension).

How can PLTs Improve Teaching & Learning?

- More evidence-based decisions and teaching

- Site based, job-embedded PL = higher relevancy & joint accountability.

- Reflective professional inquiry intensifies awareness of teaching and consequences of decisions made

- Shared expertise, knowledge and resources enables skill development

- Sustains commitment to foci and eases isolation

- More student-centred practice

- More open teaching practice.
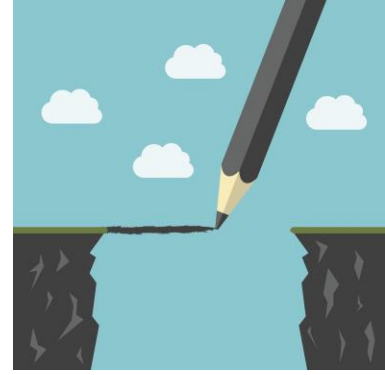
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Chief Enablers:

- Active support from and participation of school leaders, as well as alignment of resources/infrastructure

- Shared values and mission, with mutual trust, respect and support

- A developmental approach to student learning (high expectations) focused on what a student is ready to learn and how teachers can support all learners

- A shift in teacher's language from 'sharing' to 'respectful challenge', enabled through collaboration grounded in evidence & evaluation

- A sophisticated, shared understanding—and meticulous documentation of—the learner-centred problem, goals, responsibilities & agreed-upon teaching strategies (with a proven impact on student learning)

- Professional learning that is required for teachers to collect and analyse data and implement agreed upon strategies (action orientation).

Data Literacy - What counts as Data?

Anything students (or teachers): do, say, make or write.

Data: Any evidence that can help inform improvement of learning and teaching. Sometimes data is quantitative, such as test scores and attendance rates. But data can also be qualitative, such as student work, notes from focus groups with students, and observations of teachers' instruction.
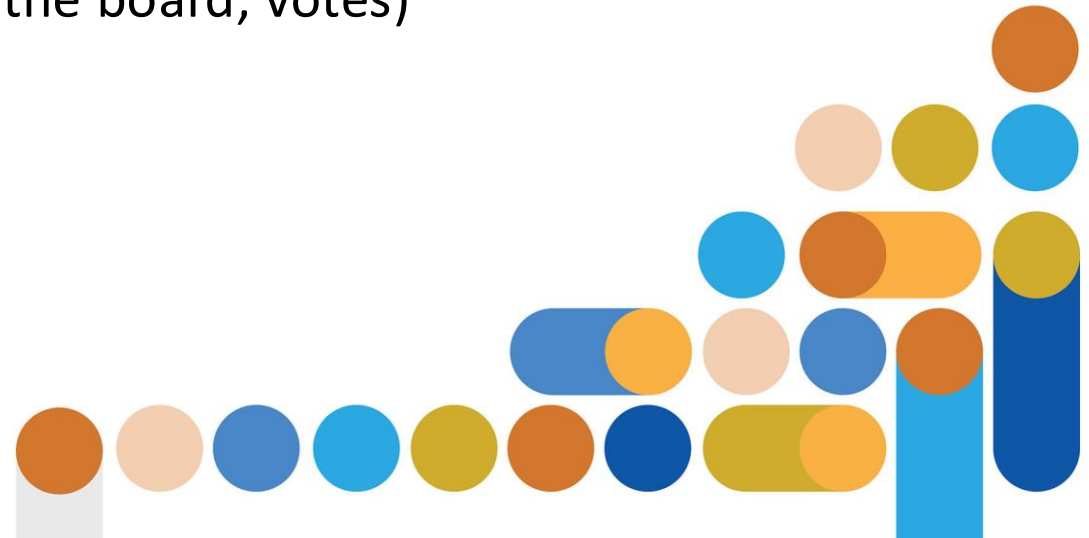
Examples:
- Standardised/diagnostic testing - NAPLAN, PAT
- Formal assessment tasks - exams, essays, performances, work samples
- Informal assessment tasks - formative assessment, exit tickets, writing prompts
- Any class task (book work, posters, student writing on the board, votes)
- Any homework task
- Surveys
- Conference or conversation recordings or notes
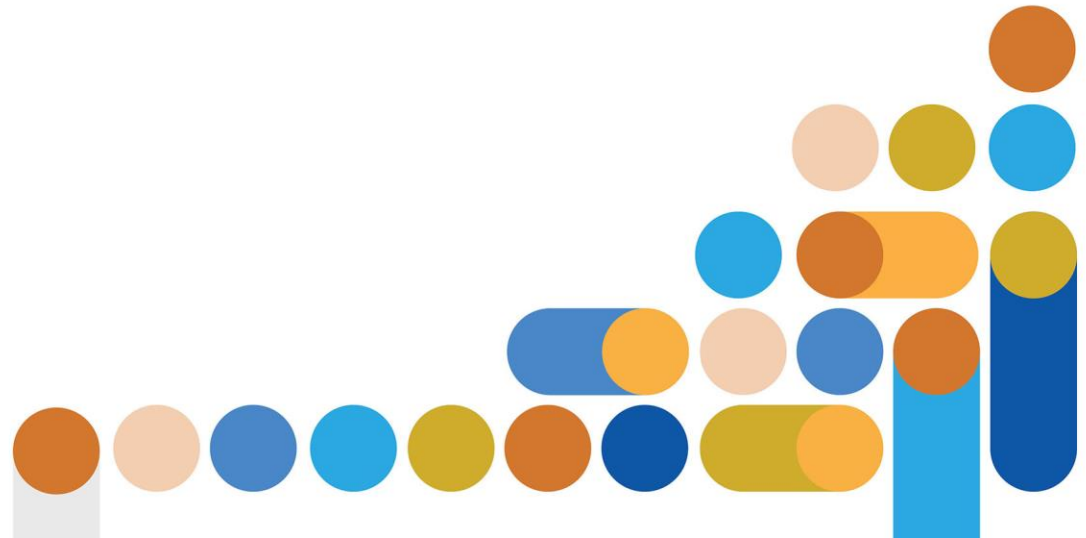
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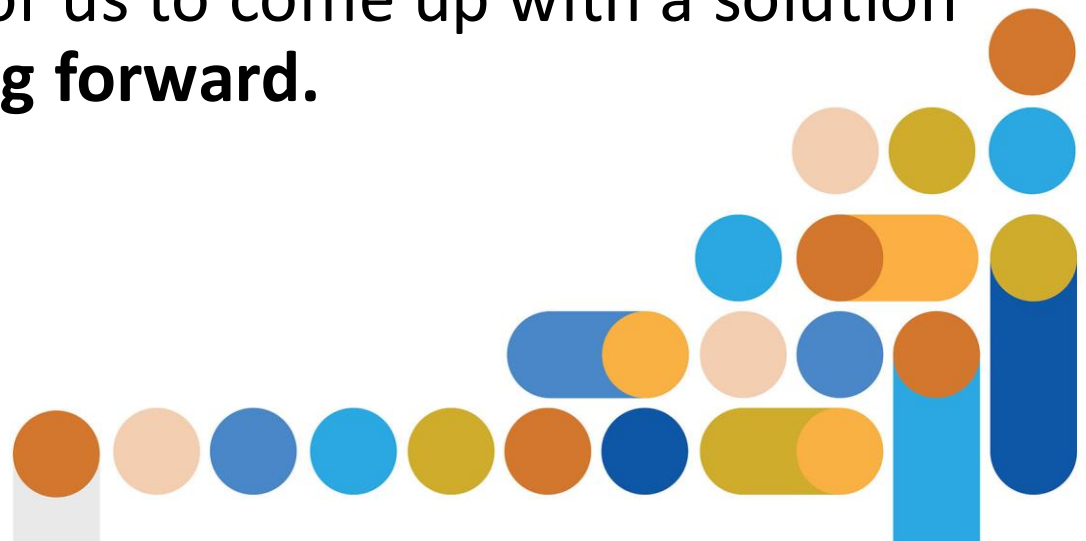IN EDUCATION AND
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Setting Norms & Expectations

- Meeting time needs to be used well – it must be made clear to teachers how hours spent in meetings will make their jobs better.

- It's important to be explicit about ground rules for how people agree to work together.

- Not only must you choose norms at the outset but also agree how you will hold one another to account (and follow through). This way, norms become more than words on a page.

- Have a norms monitor.

Choosing an Inquiry Focus

- Your aim is to dig into the data to identify a learner-centred problem.

- Let's say you choose to focus on writing and after looking at a number of data sources you see several patterns. Many teachers feel stuck at this point because they want to fix everything at once.

- Crucial: when phrasing the learner centred problem, we have to be very careful to make sure it's specific enough for us to come up with a solution **because it's the anchor of all work moving forward.**

St Laurence's College Context – Why PLTs?

- Traditionally, teaching has been an autonomous profession

- Teachers can work well independently

- Collaborative work can be seen to undermine teacher autonomy

- Some cost in working collaboratively – reshaping of professional identity

However…

- AITSL Charter - all Australian schools to prioritise the development of a high-quality professional learning culture.

- SLC strategic plan imperatives & teacher feedback

- Teachers working collaboratively can achieve more than they can alone

St Laurence's College Context – Why an EAL/D PLT?

- Over 150 students identify as EAL/D
- International Visa 500 Students
- 3 Classes of 'English for EAL Learners' – 10,11 and 12
- Diverse range of languages and cultures at the college
- Teachers of various levels of experience
- A survey indicated mainstream teachers are concerned about levels of support given to EAL/D students in classrooms
- Teachers are time poor and do not always have opportunities to attend professional development about EAL/D learners.

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THE EAL/D PLT

Who?

- Megan Huber –AHOF – EAL/D, Head of International Students and EAL/D English teacher 10,11,12
- EAL/D support teachers x 2
- Learning support teacher
- Mainstream Mathematics teacher
- Mainstream English Teachers x 2
- Head of House (Pastoral Care) (Mathematics and HPE teacher) x 1
- Pre-service teacher with an interest in EAL/D students – one term.

Inquiry Focus: Macroskill Development in Faculties: What does reading, writing, speaking and listening look like in my subject for EAL/D students?

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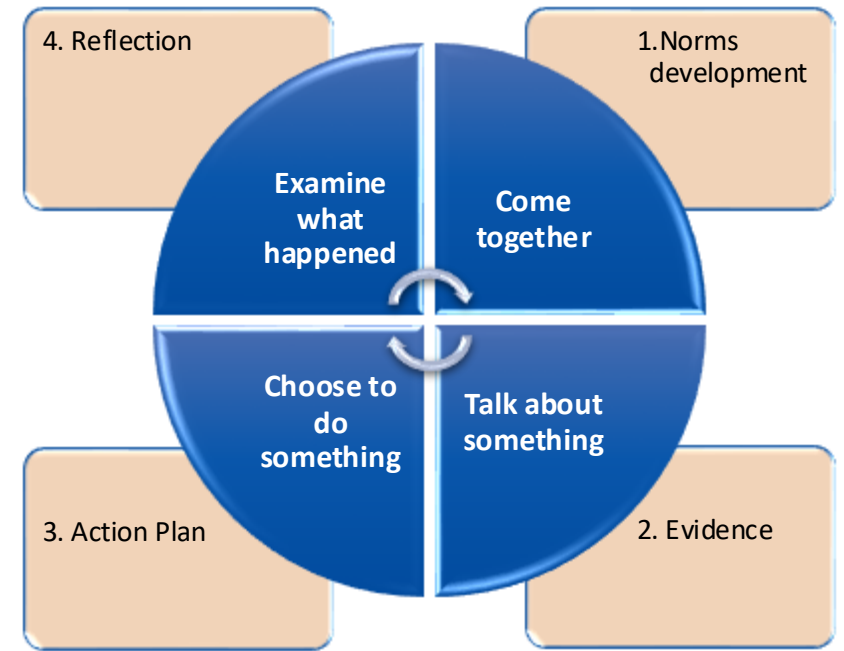IN EDUCATION AND
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Macroskill Development in Faculties: What does Read, Writing, Speaking and Listening Look like in my Subject for EAL/D Students?
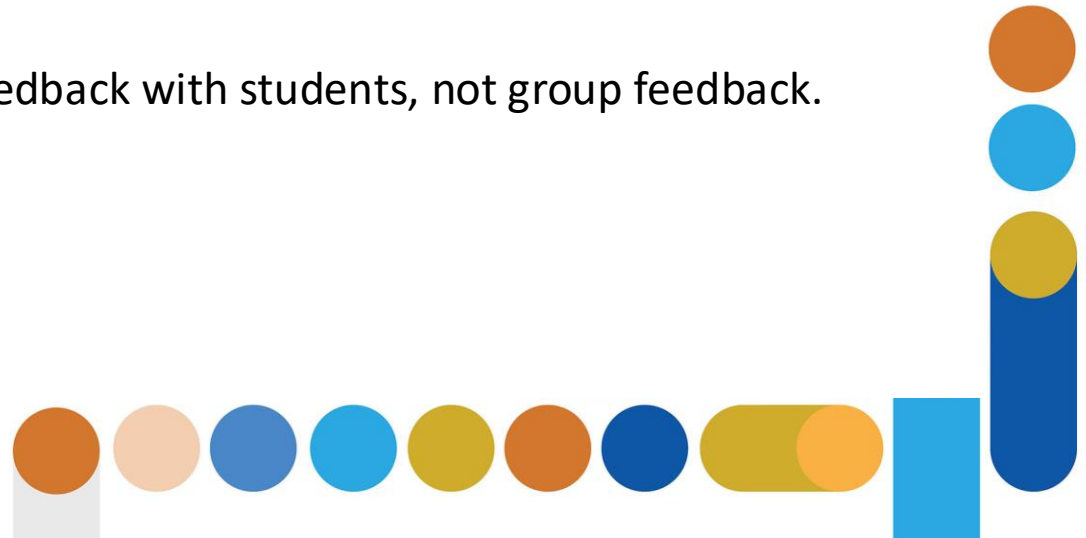
Consulted the evidence available to us at the College to make decisions about our work:

- Number of EAL/D students at the school. Tabulating domestic and international enrolment

- Reviewing Bandscale/English Language proficiency data for each student

- Consulting literature around supporting EAL/D students in the mainstream classroom

- Reviewing survey data (student and teacher) perspectives on learning.

4. Reflection

1. Norms development

Examine what happened

Come together

Choose to do something

Talk about something

3. Action Plan

2. Evidence

Macroskill Development in Faculties: What does reading, writing, speaking and listening look like in my subject for EAL/D students?
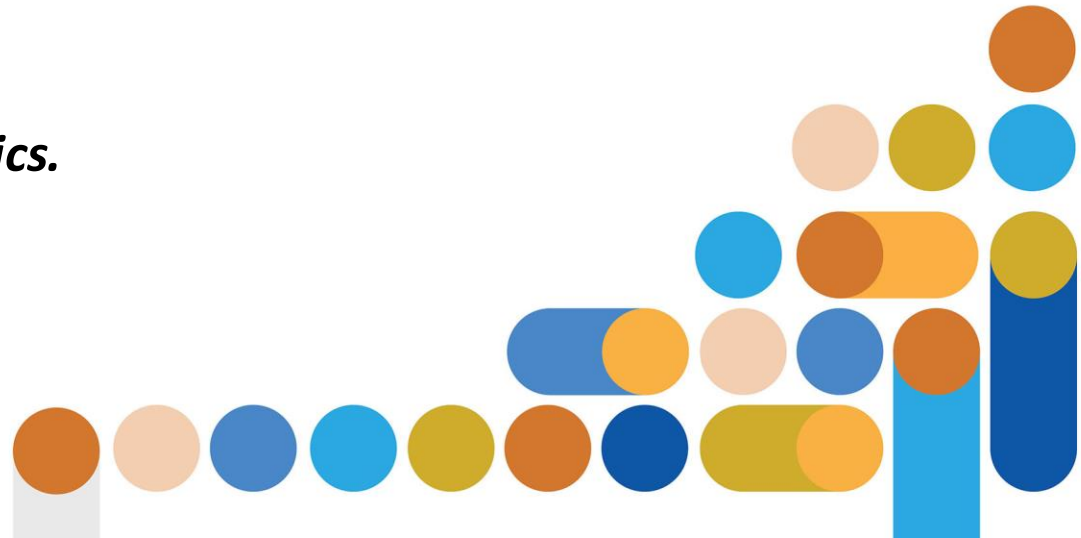
- Action plan development – deciding on the first round of evidence gathering and trialling practical steps in the macroskill development across three faculties. **Skills in Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening**

- Focus areas for trial: Maths, Religion, Mainstream English middle school

- First round of evidence - gathering, physical, tangible, practical PLT created

- MATHS – students at the core, breaking down direct support as a teacher, influence students to self-regulate outside the class. Definitions – cross over with language, translation into 1st language. Students using vocab journal

- Unit outline for connections so students can stay ahead of the language needed for each lesson. Then will see problems early, stay ahead of the rest. A planning column for EAL/D. Their homework is vocabulary & preparing for next lesson

- Teachers understanding the importance of one – on - one verbal feedback with students, not group feedback.

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Macroskill Development in Faculties: What does reading, writing, speaking and listening look like in my subject for EAL/D students?

Plan in action:

✓ Trial to begin over the course of 2 weeks

✓ Tangible evidence - document our case studies (lesson plans, observations, resources etc…)

✓ Creating Glossary and Vocabulary resources – OneNote and SharePoint

✓ Pair up as mini teams in faculties to test and explore different macroskills in the subject

- *B and K will focus on writing (Middle School English)*

- *R and D will focus on listening (Middle School Religion)*

- *A and R will focus on reading and speaking in Mathematics.*

OneNote – Sharing and Storing Resources and Findings

READING — OneNote

Megan Huber

Calibri Light   20

Heading 1
Heading 2

To Do (Ctrl+1)
Important (Ctrl+2)
Question (Ctrl+3)

To Do Tag   Find Tags   Outlook Tasks   Email Page   Meeting Details

Clipboard   Basic Text   Styles   Tags   Email   Meetings

PLT 2021
Semester 2

Meeting Expectations   Norms   Action Plan   **SharePoint Folders**   12 July   2 August   16 August   23 August   30 August

Search (Ctrl+E)

+ Add Page

NAVIGATING THE EAL/D Resource Site
ANALYTICAL SKILLS
GENERAL RESOURCES FOR EALD TEACHING
PROFESSIONAL READING
TRANSLANGUAGING
VOCABULARY
Key Word Recall (example # 1)
READING
WRITING
SPEAKING
LISTENING

READING

Tuesday, 18 May 2021   9:53 AM

Theme of mathematics reading strategies
"building confidence using process in context"

File   Home   Insert   Draw   History   Review   View

Senior Maths Methods
Unit 2

Unit Outline   Graphs of Exponential Functions   Trigonometric Functions   Glossary   Homework

Key Words

Thursday, 3 June 2021   7:29 PM

Objectives

▶ To use **radians** and **degrees** for the measurement of angle.
▶ To convert radians to degrees, and vice versa.
▶ To define the trigonometric functions **sine**, **cosine** and **tangent**.
▶ To explore the **symmetry properties** of trigonometric functions.
▶ To find standard **exact values** of trigonometric functions.
▶ To understand and sketch the **graphs of trigonometric functions**.
▶ To find the **length of an arc** and the **length of a chord** of a circle.

SharePoint | Search

EA English as an Additional Language/Dialect

Home   Documents   Pages   Site contents   Edit

☆ Not following   ↗ Share

+ New ▾   ⚙ Page details   📊 Analytics

Published 11/8/2021   ✎ Edit ↗

Introducing Practical Steps for Teachers to support EAL/D Students

Start here!

Macro Skills are the key - find out more here

Learn more →

Understanding your student profile is critical

Link to student data

Cultural awareness creates common ground

Button

1 of 3

EAL/D Resources

📖 Professional Reading

📊 Analytical Skills

🔊 Listening

✎ Writing

📖 Reading

💬 Speaking

🌐 Translanguaging - Using Home Language in Lessons

🗃 Vocabulary

👥 General Resources

MH Megan Huber
Staff on leave

Andrew Plowman
Secondary Teacher - Treacy 1

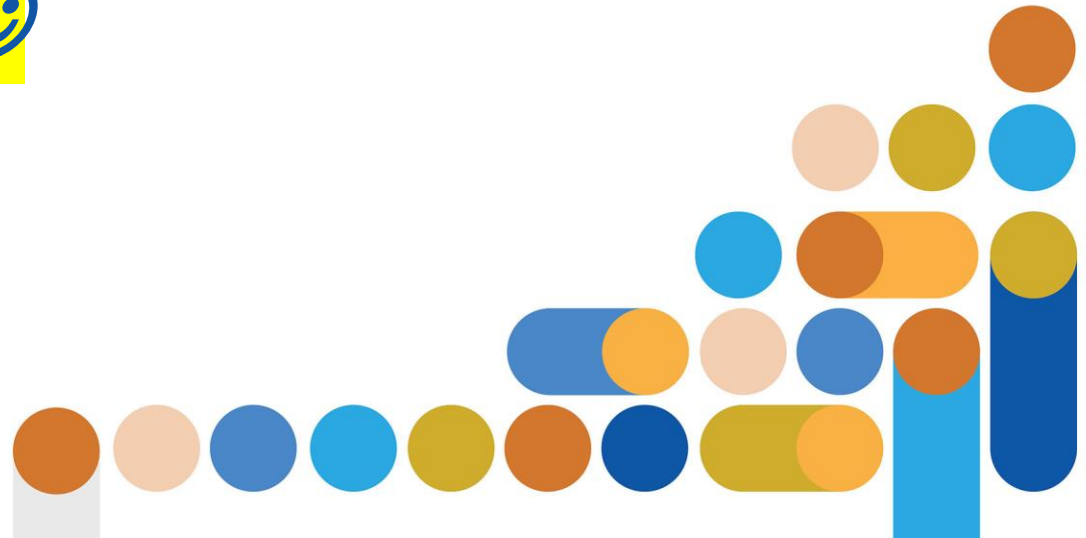**The successful outcome of the trial in Mathematics: Reading and Speaking**

The following slides are the work created in collaboration with "your everyday passionate Maths teacher -
Mr P". ☺

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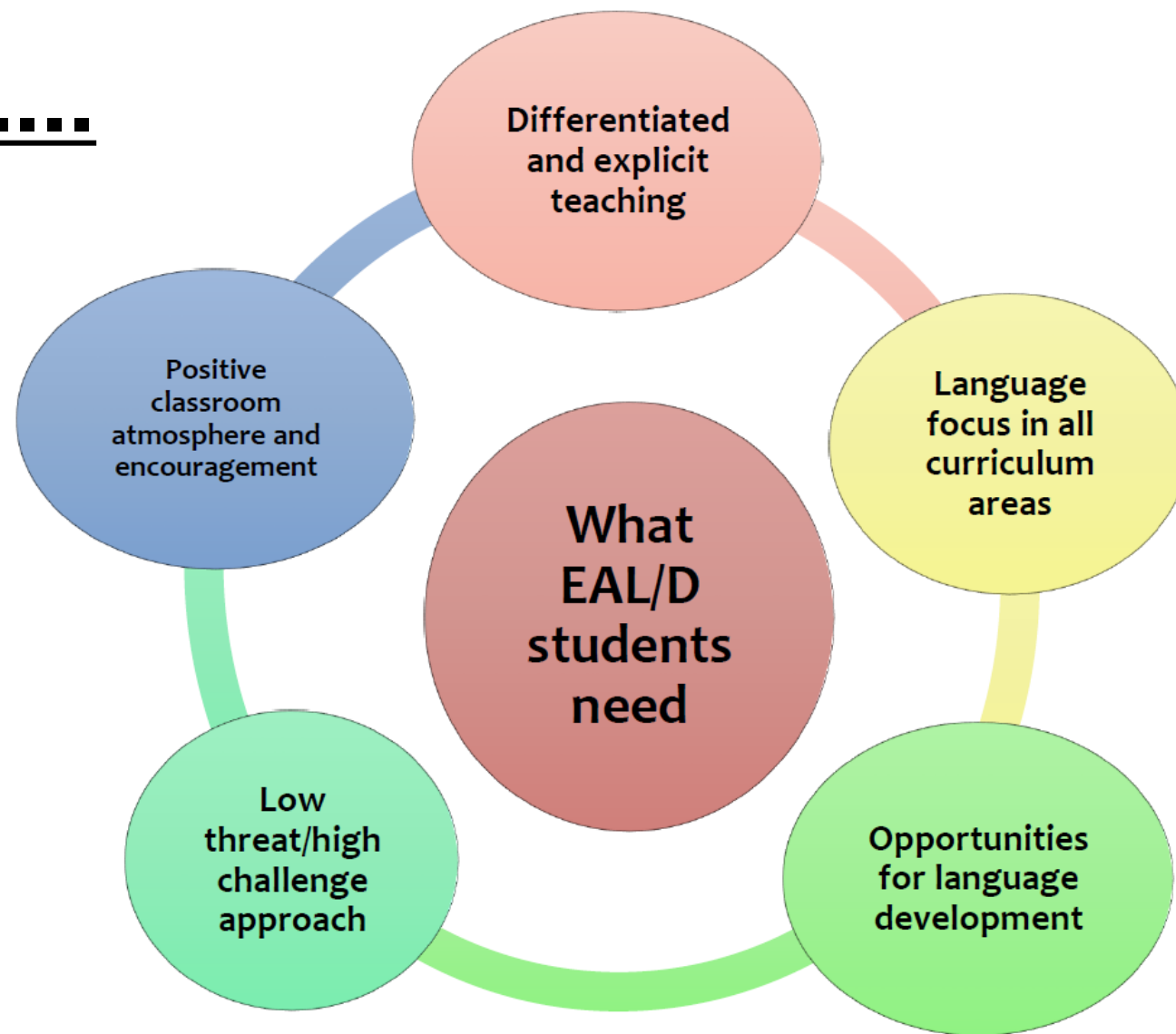IN EDUCATION AND
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Making the case....

IMPETUS

Approximately one in four students in Australia has English as a second or additional language/ dialect

Source: ACARA website

IMPETUS

Research tells us.....

EXAMPLES

Answer the following:

There were 40,000 fans at the Bronco's game. At half time, 2,473 departed. How many stayed to watch the second half?

EXAMPLES

English (detected) ⌄

There were 40,000 fans at the Broncos game. At half time, 2,473 departed. How many stayed to watch the second half?

⇄

×

French ⌄

Il y avait 40 000 fans au match des Broncos. A la mi-temps, 2 473 sont partis. Combien sont restés pour regarder la seconde mi-temps ?

Translation: www.deepl.com

EAL/D strategy & action when teaching maths

EXAMPLES

My Planning
- ❏ Analyse EAL/D student data & background
- ❏ Reach out to student support for detail
- ❏ Access EAL/D resources for guidance & tools

What is this?

To ask what?

Where is this?

My Classroom Environment
- ❏ Communicate expectations in writing
- ❏ Practice consistent routines
- ❏ Cultivate positive personal relationships (vulnerability is not weakness)

PLT AIM: Modelling, exemplars and templates across subject areas available from EAL/D sharepoint site

EXAMPLES

My Teaching
- ❑ Key words – define, write, speak, connect with symbols
- ❑ Respect silence, but praise _authentic_ interaction
- ❑ Support student translanguage methods
- ❑ Show vulnerability; model overcoming challenges

STUDENTS LEARN TO TAKE OWNERSHIP AND OVERCOME OBSTACLES

My Evidence of learning
- ❑ Key words – written and verbal testing (low stakes)
- ❑ Review homework   STUDENTS TAKE OWNERSHIP OF THE OUTCOME
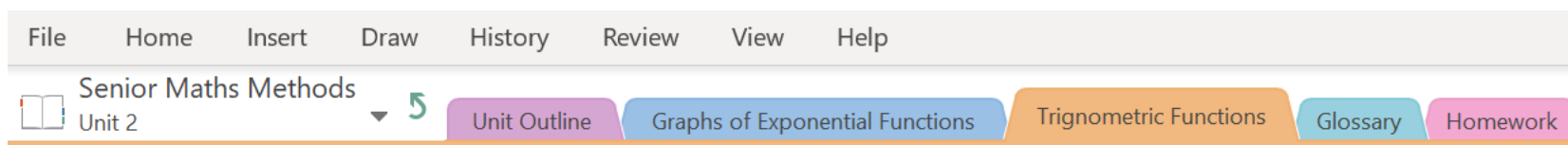- ❑ Analyse with the student in the context of student goals

EXAMPES

Chapter 13 – Index Laws – Important Terms

Name_____

Important Term	Short Definition	Example	How well do you understand each Important Term?		
			Very Well. I could explain this term to another student using English.	Not So Well. I understand some of the words but am not confident.	I have no understanding of the words or how they are used in maths.
Exponential function	An expression using exponents (powers and indices)	a^3b^4			
Power	An expression that looks like a^n using a number n that is an integer.	a^5			
Positive integer	A whole number that is greater than zero.	$1, 3, 5$ are all positive integers.			
Negative integer	A whole number that is less than zero.	$-3, -5, -9$ are all negative integers.			
Index (also called the Exponent)	This is the smaller size number left and slightly above the constant (main number). Indices is more than one index.	In the power a^5 the index is 5.			
Base	The bigger size number in the Power.	In the power a^5 the Base is a which is a non-zero value.			

Year 11 Maths Methods

EAL/D strategy & action when teaching maths

File   Home   Insert   Draw   History   Review   View   Help

Senior Maths Methods
Unit 2

| Unit Outline | Graphs of Exponential Functions | Trignometric Functions | Glossary | Homework |

Key Words

Thursday, 3 June 2021   7:29 PM

Objectives

► To use **radians** and **degrees** for the measurement of angle.
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► To explore the **symmetry properties** of trigonometric functions.
► To find standard **exact values** of trigonometric functions.
► To understand and sketch the **graphs of trigonometric functions**.
► To find the **length of an arc** and the **length of a chord** of a circle.
► To find the **area of a sector** and the **area of a segment** of a circle.

radians	convert	degrees	
degrees	convert	radians	
angle	measurement		
trigonometric function	properties	sketch	graph
sine			
cosine		periodic	
tangent			
symmetry			
circle	arc	chord	length
	segment	area	
	sector	area	
unit circle			

Year 11 Maths Methods

EAL/D strategy & action when teaching maths

EXAMPLES

FILE: key word recall

Key Word Recall

		Student name	
Topic	11 Maths Methods - Unit 2 - Trigonometric Functions	Date	

Self Assessment

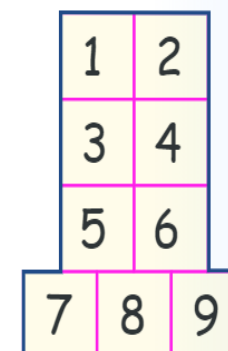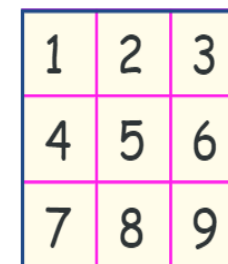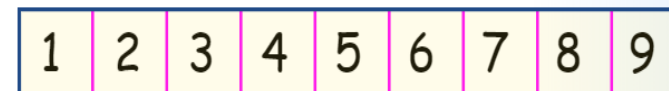| Key Word	Define this word in a se...					Teacher Assessment
angle						
arc						
area						
chord						

Definition of

Area

more ...

The size of a surface.

The amount of space inside the boundary of a flat (2-dimensional) object such as a triangle or circle, or surface of a solid (3-dimensional) object.
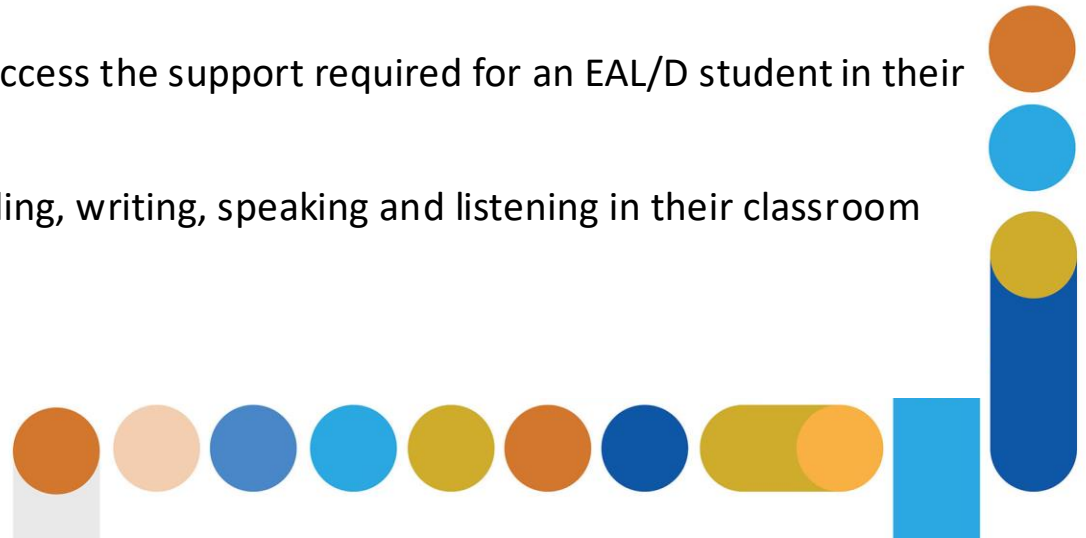
These shapes all have the same area of 9:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9

1	2
3	4
5	6

7	8	9

The PLT resulted in:

- A visible resource database through SharePoint that all teachers can access with ease

- Empowered teachers who now feel confident to engage with EAL/D students by themselves without the constant intervention of an EAL/D support teacher

- An insightful experience into language acquisition that enhanced teacher and student relationships. "It is not just Mrs Huber who understands us". Increased rapport with students

- Engaging the student voice and allowing them to voice what they feel occurs for them in the classroom as EAL/D learners – what speaking, listening, reading and writing looks like for them!

- Valuable professional development that had visible outcomes and success for staff who gave up their afternoons

- Scope and sequence to work autonomously and collaboratively to suit teachers' individual timetables and availability

- Providing St Laurence's staff with the clarity they needed to appropriately access the support required for an EAL/D student in their classroom

- The video project – interviewing students to gain their perspectives on reading, writing, speaking and listening in their classroom and strategies they need to succeed.

What have you learnt today?

WHAT:

The importance of Professional Learning Teams in promoting and enhancing better quality differentiated practices for EAL/D secondary students.

WHY:

Sharing the knowledge and practice of a year - long process to hopefully see this translate into other schools and learning institutions.

SUCCESS:

- Listened to the experience of the St Laurence's College EAL/D PLT
- Asked questions to provide helpful and critical reflection and comments on the processes
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