**ECET2 Colleague Circles**

Colleague circles are groups of teachers that meet as small support communities throughout the convening to share and address common challenges. These circles can serve as a central hub for teachers and can quickly build intense professional, social, and emotional bonds.

**Purpose**

These circles allow for teachers to meet new people and build strong and confidential relationships over common issues or problems of practice.

These groups embrace positive solutions and creative thinking, providing outlets and solutions that can be carried back to their respective districts and TBTs.

**Colleague Circle Facilitation**

Selecting a Colleague Circle facilitator:

* Select a person in a leadership position (ECET2 attendee, member of DLT/BLT, or department head).
* Review copy of protocol with at least one week notice. This advance notice is for the purpose of fielding any questions or to prep with any materials or potential issues.
* After groups are seated the organizer can show an opening powerpoint to explain the purpose, goals, expectations, and protocol of the colleague circle activity.
* Review norms and expectations with the group. Review the protocols with the entire group before beginning.
  + Note: please feel free to modify the protocol to best suit your district plans or professional development day. We advise that the time limit remain as close to an hour as possible.
* After the conclusion of the colleague circle teachers should reflect and attempt to implement some of the suggestions into their everyday practice.
* Further reflection and share outs should occur during regular TBT meetings, and also allow for further refinement or suggestions if needed.
* Should there be further colleague circle meetings, then the original topic of choice should be briefly revisited. The table should reflect on what worked and what didn’t.
* Should the original topic warrant further discussion, allow for ten extra minutes of reflection or discussion before a new colleague circle session concerning a new topic.

**Expectations and Norms**

* Be respectful
* Embrace solutions and stay positive
* You are in the right place
* Stick to the time limits
* Be detailed
* Remain confidential
* Anything else for the group?

**Grouping Attendees**

* It is advised that grouping is random and mixed between grade and content levels. This will preserve the integrity of the circle by allowing for new voices to interact with each other and allow for new forms of collaboration and bonds to be built.
* After receiving the list of attendees input the names on random.org to make quick and efficient groups.
* It will be the organizer’s discretion on how to pass on the seating assignments to the participants (mass e-mail, large easel with names, or registration table).
* After organizing groups there will be a master seating list and each table will have a centerpiece for table numbers. Participants are not allowed to move seats or rearrange their slotted table arrangement.

**Logistics**

* Circles should be held in an open space with tables of 8-10 and all participants making eye contact with each other.
* These colleague circle environments can be held in an open auditorium, cafeteria, commons area, or off-campus.
* Spacing should be ample so other groups’ discussion is not interfering with any other group. We need to respect confidentiality amongst each table unit.

**Supplies**

Teachers should be provided with the following:

* Three index cards per participant
* Writing utensil
* One individual to use a timing device (cell phone is acceptable)
* Notebook paper for excess journaling, reflection or note taking
* Suggested: candies or mints at the center of the table