

Community
Center for
Teaching
Excellence

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2014

Monroe Community College Grant #P116B100204

FIPSE Final
Performance
Narrative

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Community Center for Teaching Excellence
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One Paragraph Summary

The Community Center for Teaching Excellence (CCTE) is a K-20 network of educators formed as a professional learning community (PLC) to improve student success. They created a glossary of [key words and resources](#) and Faculty Fellows Program for two cohorts of educators from six partner K-12 districts and colleges. Fellows formed PLCs, tried new teaching strategies, and conducted action research; their reports are part of a regional knowledge base on the [CCTE website](#). CCTE also sponsored qualitative research and a symposium on college readiness. CCTE's cross-sector professional learning model is a significant outcome; evaluative data on college student course completion and grade improvement is promising.

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Program Reports and Products in Chronological Order:

The following program reports and products were prepared in collaboration with the CCTE Facilitation PLC, written by Ann Pennella, CCTE Program Director, and endorsed by the Facilitation PLC.

CCTE Key Terms and Related Resources. December 2011 (first edition). For online edition see <http://www.communitycenterforteachingexcellence.org/2320-2/>

CCTE Fellows Program: Vision and Plan Document. December 2011

Valuable Insights and Vital Feedback: Summary of Individual Interviews with CCTE Faculty Fellows. May 2012

Supporting Teacher Practice for Transformative Learning through Teacher Action Research. September 2012. Online at <http://www.communitycenterforteachingexcellence.org/supporting-teacher-practice-for-transformative-learning-through-teacher-action-research/>

CCTE Dialogue Facilitators Information Manual, fall 2012 (1st edition)

[Faculty Fellows Action Research Reports](#) from forty-eight CCTE Fellows across sixteen disciplines, published in fall 2012 and fall 2013.

College Readiness [Symposium Discussion Summaries](#) of cross-sector, discipline-specific and college transition discussions held on May 31, 2013.

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[Student Voices](#). Three brief videos featuring MCC students discussing differences between high school and college, giving advice to high school students, and thanking teachers. Produced for the College Readiness Symposium, May 2013.

Use of an Online Fellows Forum in a Cross-Sector Professional Learning Community, June 2013. An action research report by CCTE's Connected Educator team online at <http://www.communitycenterforteachingexcellence.org/about-us/connected-educator-team/>

[Faculty Fellows Reflections](#) video featuring 2013 Fellows discussing their experience with the CCTE Fellows Program.

[CCTE Blog Posts](#). Diverse teaching, learning, and action research topics presented on CCTE's 'perennial blog' from 2011-2014.

Research Brief: Summer Program Teacher Study. Currently in process with the CCTE Research Team; anticipated publication date is June 2014.

Program Research Reports in Chronological Order:

The following research reports were prepared and written by Dr. Mary Ann Matta DeMario, Research Specialist in the MCC Institutional Research Office. Dr. DeMario is an ex officio member of the CCTE Facilitation PLC.

Community Center for Teaching Excellence: Baseline Data Report. IR, 27 pp., July 2011

10-Year History of RCSD and RHSD Students, IR, 7 pp., August 2011

Students Who Took MTH150, 160, or 165 Because of Their Program, IR, 3 pp. November 2011

Performance of MCC Students Who Had Taken Dual Credit Courses vs. Those Who Hadn't. IR, 15 pp., November 2011

Follow-Up: Performance of Students Who Had Taken Dual Credit Courses vs. Those Who Hadn't. IR, 22 pp, November 2011

Success Outcomes of Transfers to Four-Year Colleges, IR, 9 pp., January 2012

Analysis of the Article by Roksa and Calcagno (2010), IR, 3 pp., January 2012
FT FT Fall 2011 Students Who Recently Graduated from RCSD or RHSD, IR, 2 pp., March 2012

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Demographics and Outcomes of MCC Students, IR, 7 pp., March 2012

Roksa and Calcagno Journal Article – Analyses of MCC Data - Revised, IR, 10 pp., April 2012

Analysis of the Book Chapter by Hanushek and Rivkin (2006), IR, 4 pp., September 2012

Cohort 1 Faculty Fellows' Comparison – Fall 2011 vs. Fall 2012, IR, 3 pp., February 2013

Transfers to Four-Year Colleges – For 5/31/13 Symposium, IR, 3 pp., April 2013

Faculty Fellows Cohort 2 Course Comparison Report, IR, 3 pp., March 2014

Cohort 1 Faculty Fellows' Comparison – Spring 2013 vs. Fall 2013, IR, 3 pp., April 2014

Faculty Fellows Cohort 1 Course Comparison Report, IR, 1p, April 2014

Faculty Fellows Cohort 2 Course Comparison Report, v2, IR, 3 pp., April 2014.

CCTE Website Evaluation, IR, 6pp. April 2014

Introductory Overview

Monroe Community College (MCC) proposed the creation of a Community Center for Teaching Excellence (CCTE) to move purposefully toward a collection of proven teaching methodologies that could be shared regionally to affect issues such as college readiness, college completion, student transfer, and career success.

MCC's innovative approach to this task was to establish dynamic partnerships with K-12 stakeholders and transfer institutions that would **focus on teaching** to (1) address issues of both college preparedness and completion, (2) recognize the urgent need to offer support for both engaged pedagogical practices and for course re-design principles, (3) better infuse and assess the use of technology, and (4) ensure that rigorous evaluation and scholarship be used to document and assess outcomes.¹

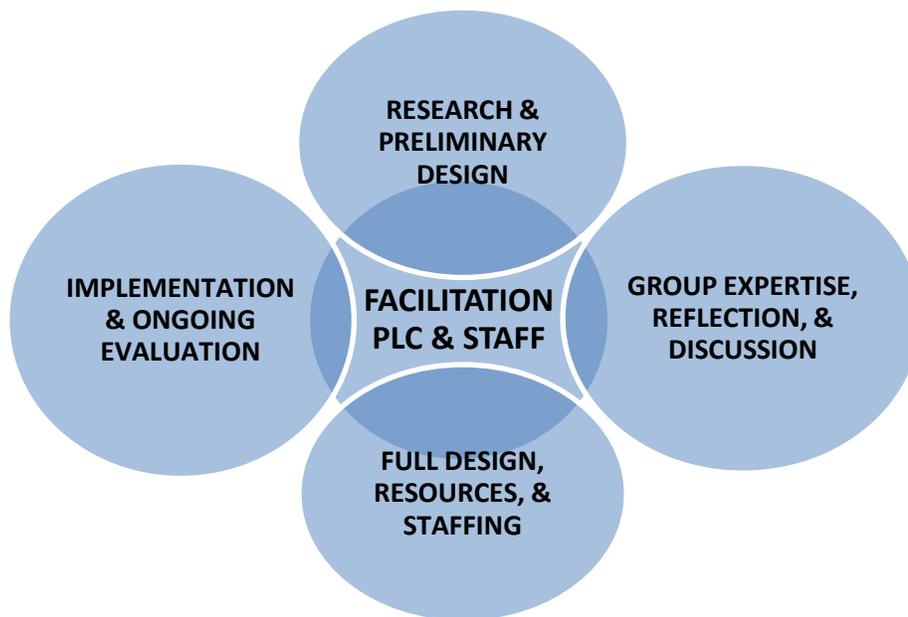
Central to the project design was an inclusive Facilitation Committee representing key stakeholders involved in educational delivery: teachers and administrators from K-12

¹ Monroe Community College. (2010) *FIPSE Comprehensive Grant Application*, page e8

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districts, the community college, and four-year colleges were project partners. MCC's vision was for CCTE to serve as the catalyst in creating a shared regional vision for cross-sector teaching excellence and student success.

In practice, educational leaders on the CCTE Facilitation Committee operated as a regional professional learning community² (PLC) focused on improving student success. The Facilitation PLC used a collaborative, iterative process (depicted below) to design and implement initiatives which were sensitive to the needs/priorities of participating partners, and viable across the K-20 continuum.



The Facilitation PLC's efforts resulted in significant programming involving 375 educators across the K-20 continuum (see the chart on page 6). Our primary initiative, the [K-20 Fellows Program](#), is a two-semester professional development program for K-12 teachers and college faculty designed to encourage reflective practice and use of

² Hord, Shirley M. (1997) *Professional Learning Communities: Communities of Continuous Inquiry and Improvement*. Austin: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL). Hord's discussion and review of the literature focuses on K-12 school-based professional learning communities which have been found to improve student achievement. Effective school-based professional learning communities have a shared vision of powerful, authentic learning that defines good teaching and classroom practice, and creates new knowledge and beliefs about teachers and learners.

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high impact pedagogies. Fellows implemented instructional change and conducted action research with the help of peer affinity groups and CCTE Dialogue Facilitators using a CCTE-designed [Supported Practice Model](#).

A [CCTE website](#) was developed as the virtual hub of CCTE, and an e-newsletter was used for regular communication to all stakeholders across districts and colleges. We sponsored a [Connected Educator Team](#) who worked with an online community of educators on 21st century technology in education, conducted action research on using an online forum in the Fellows Program, and brought a national leader³ to MCC for a day-long discussion on the use of technology for professional development and culture change in education. At MCC we sought to promote a culture of inquiry and evidence by supporting the work of the MCC Teaching and Creativity Center, and co-sponsoring a regional College Readiness Symposium with the Division of Academic Foundations.

CCTE sponsored a qualitative research study on the dynamics of effective teaching in a summer academic enrichment program, and its relationship to teaching during the school year. We also sponsored a year-long 12th grade math instructional pilot intended to help students upgrade their math skills and be better prepared for credit-bearing math courses upon college entry.

The following chart depicts partner participation across CCTE initiatives.

³ Sheryl Nussbaum-Beach is the co-founder and CEO of [Powerful Learning Practice](#), where she works with schools and districts from across the US, Canada, Australia, Brazil, United Kingdom, Israel, Norway, and China to re-envision their learning cultures and communities. She is co-author of [The Connected Educator: Learning and Leading in a Digital Age](#) (Solution Tree, 2012). Sheryl is an advisor to the U.S. Department of Education's [Connected Educators initiative](#) and was a leader in the development of USDOE's first Connected Educators Month in August 2012. She also served on the New Media Consortium's [2012 Horizon.K12 Report](#) Advisory Board and their [2013 Horizon Higher Education Report](#) Advisory Board.

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CCTE Participation by Initiative and Partner

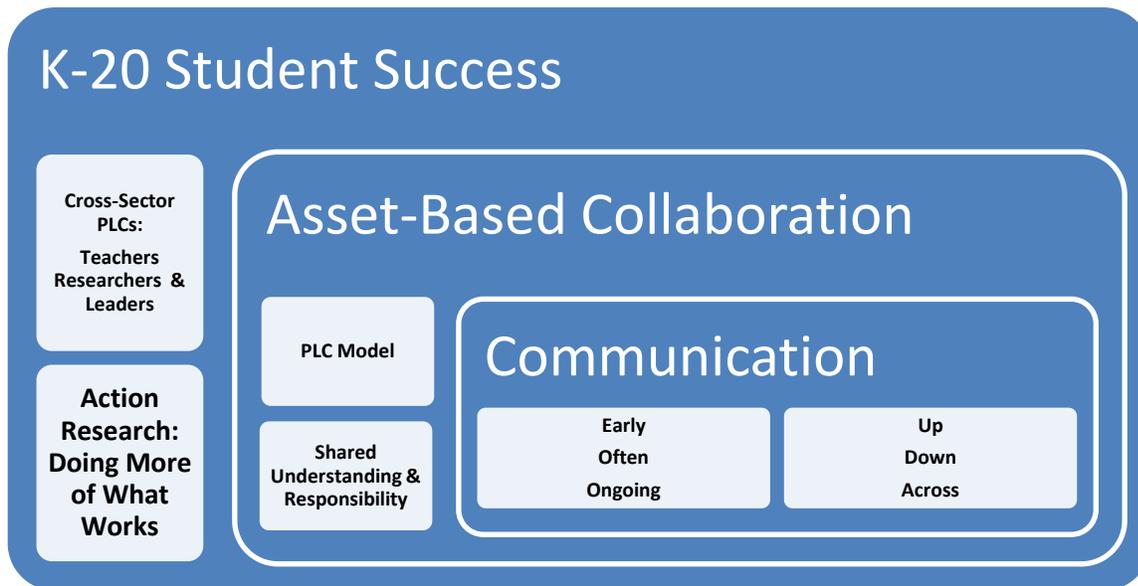
Facilitation PLC	Fellows Program	College Readiness	Math Pilot	Research Studies	CCTE Website	TOTAL Educators
Monroe Community College 4 admin 1 faculty 1 CCTE	3 faculty (2013) 7 faculty (2012) 3 Facilitators & Coaches	84 participants, 14 planning committee, 8 discussion leaders, 5 scribes	2 faculty, 1 assessment leader, 2 program/unit leaders	2 co-PIs 3 Fellows	1 CCTE 1 MCC/ETS tech support	142
Rochester City S.D. 4 admin 1 teacher	5 teachers (2013) 6 teachers (2012) 1 Facilitator	24 participants, 1 panelist, 3 discussion leaders, 1 tech lead	n/a	1 co-PI 5 Fellows	1 teacher tech leader	53
Rush-Henrietta C.S.D. 2 admin	3 teachers (2013) 8 teachers (2012) 1 Coach	17 participants, 2 panelists, 2 discussion leaders, 1 scribe	1 instructional lead, 1 teacher 2013/14 pilot-college prep math	5 Fellows	n/a	43
St. John Fisher College 2 faculty	5 faculty (2013) 1 Coach	3 participants 1 panelist, 1 scribe	n/a	5 Fellows	n/a	18
SUNY Geneseo 1 admin 1 faculty	7 faculty (2013) 1 Facilitator & Coach	1 participant, 1 planning committee & moderator	n/a	3 co-PIs 7 Fellows	1 admin (Taskstream spaces for Fellows)	23
The College at Brockport 1 admin 1 faculty	4 faculty (2013) 1 Facilitator, 2 Coaches	6 participants, 1 discussion leader	n/a	2 co-PIs 4 Fellows	n/a	22
Other 1 intern		74 dual enrollment			300 site visitors/month ⁴	75
TOTAL 20 Educators	58⁵	250	7	37	4	376 educators
TOTAL Students	1,200	unknown	25	See footnote 5	unknown	1,225 students

⁴ Website analytics indicate 823 new visitors to the site from 6/1/13 through 9/15/13, 827 new visitors from 10/18/13 through 12/31/13, and 905 new visitors from 1/1 through 3/16/14.

⁵ Total students are estimated for the action research semester only, and based on an average of 25/class for 48 Fellows who completed the Fellows Program. This is a conservative estimate. For example, some Fellows who teach in college have a “lecture class” of 100+ students coupled with labs in the sciences. Also, in most cases, instructional changes extended beyond one semester.

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There were numerous positive outcomes across all CCTE initiatives. A high level of focused engagement was typical at PLC meetings, planning meetings, symposia, and affinity group meetings. Regarding the Facilitation PLC, we sought to (1) optimize member strengths and contributions by operating collegially (2) support collegial relationships across K-20, (3) create a shared vision and sense of collective responsibility for students' success, and (4) share information, data, promising practices, and classroom challenges that impact our ability to improve student success through teaching excellence. With respect to the Fellows Program, we sought to: (1) increase understanding of research and practice-based high-impact pedagogies, (2) create professional learning and support structures necessary for quality implementation across K-20, and (3) research, develop, implement and evaluate inquiry-based action research pilots across K-20. From a leadership perspective, CCTE has accomplished a significant amount of important work and achieved promising results in its initial three years of operation. A servant-leadership paradigm and collaborative approach⁶ provided a broad and deep space for the CCTE network to develop. Key elements of the CCTE model are depicted below.



⁶ Wallace, Jon R. (2012, August 4). *Transformational Servant Leadership Innovation* retrieved on May 10, 2014 from <http://jonrwallace.blogspot.com/2012/08/transformational-innovation-servant.html>

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Problem

As stated in MCC's FIPSE application, CCTE was established *"to address three broad and pressing needs: the inadequate academic preparation of our area high school students; the need to promote on-campus pedagogies that prepare twenty-first century learners; and the successful transition of graduates into careers or transfer institutions."*

With this broad, multi-dimensional mandate, the CCTE Director worked with the Facilitation PLC during twice monthly meetings over the fall 2011 semester. The focus at this time was to build a regional team; create a shared sense of vision, mission, goals; and develop a strategic action plan. The group was able to effectively (a) clarify and come to consensus on CCTE's vision, mission, goals, and intended outcomes for the three-year FIPSE grant (b) clarify and define its own operating framework and guidelines as a regional, cross-sector PLC network (c) publish a co-created glossary of key pedagogical terms for use in cross-sector professional development and (d) create a shared vision and framework for the Faculty Fellows Program, and establish a program planning committee to further develop the initiative.

Beginning with this first semester of work and throughout the life of the project, the group's understanding of the problem was explored from each stakeholder's vantage point. A broad understanding of the differences between K-12 and college cultures shifted to a more nuanced understanding each time the group explored specific issues. Over time, the Facilitation PLC began to realize a 'big picture' view and create a more tolerant context for regional cross-sector work by understanding that diverse, often conflicting mandates regarding district and institutional boundaries result in practices which make sense within each system but not across systems. For example, in the K-12 system, the *in loco parentis* role involves close communication with parents, whereas colleges may not communicate about students' academic performance without their permission. The collection and reporting of student academic outcome data is governed by different rules and norms in K-12 and college settings. Similarly, K-12 and college curricular and teaching expectations are governed by two state entities (i.e. the New York State Education Department and the State University of New York) with their

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particular cultures, mandates, and historical issues. Furthermore, the practical application of these norms and rules is variable by district and institution.

With respect to the context of our work, the shifting educational landscape was playing out differently for each sector. The K-12 community was effectively engulfed in New York State's implementation of the Common Core State Standards and its related teacher evaluation system, the Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR). Colleges were seeking to respond to the call for accelerated degree completion, issues of disruptive innovation and technology in education, and the call to contain tuition costs. For teacher preparation programs in the colleges, there were other pressing issues: the re-vamping of national accreditation systems, and changes in teacher certification in New York including the State Education Department's implementation of the new national assessment program to be used with teacher candidates seeking certification, the edTPA (educative teacher performance assessment).

Given the complexity of the educational landscape, CCTE's monthly discussion about issues in each sector and the often inherent conflicts between them enabled group members to compare notes, begin untangling discrepancies, work more effectively in their own domain, and reach a broader understanding of the big picture—all benefits one would hope might be gained from an effective network. Simultaneously, as the group developed its Fellows Program initiative, they coalesced around a shared agenda: creating regional cross-sector professional development focused on teaching and learning—viewed as the fundamental relationship crucial to student success.

With respect to student success, the Facilitation PLC looked at longitudinal student outcome data across participating districts and colleges. To our knowledge, this was the first time that a collegial cross-sector group of key educators in the region looked at student outcome data together. A 10-year history of Rochester City School District ("RCSD") and Rush-Henrietta Central School District ("R-HCSD") graduates who were first-time, full-time students enrolled at MCC from 2000-2004 (aggregated) revealed an

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on-time graduation rate of 18.4% and 35.1% respectively.⁷ The same report reveals that 7.4% of first-time, full-time matriculated MCC students from RCSD and 11.8% from R-HCSD successfully transferred to a four-year college before graduating from MCC. For those first-time, full-time matriculated students who graduated from MCC and transferred to a four-year college, the overall on-time graduation rate from the four-year institution was 2.6% for RCSD and 8.8% for R-HCSD. The longitudinal data revealed in no uncertain terms that our educational 'pipeline' was leaking badly; sharing the data helped the group develop a sense of collective responsibility for students across the educational continuum.

Throughout the life of the project, we analyzed data to inform and refine our understanding of various dimensions of the problem. For example, in April 2012 we used the research of Roksa and Calcagno,⁸ as a model to investigate deeper research questions at MCC. A file of 4,019 first-time matriculated MCC students from fall 2006 was followed for five years to fall 2011. The study revealed that (a) 51.3% of those students wanted to transfer to a four-year college, (b) there is a strong correlation between the number of credits earned at MCC and students' attainment of a bachelor's degree, and (c) passing MCC gatekeeper courses was correlated with later graduating from MCC. Academically unprepared community college students were less likely to pass first college-level math or writing gateway courses, reach a threshold of 36 or 48 credits, or complete an associate's degree within five years.⁹ MCC's decision to recruit Faculty Fellows who teach English and math gateway courses was affirmed by this research, as was a subsequent decision to make course completion an evaluative measure with respect to student outcomes.

⁷ Matta, M.A. (August 2011) *10-Year History of RCSD and RHSD Students*, IR, page 3.

⁸ Roksa, J. and Calcagno, J. *Catching Up in Community Colleges: Academic Preparation and Transfer to Four-Year Institutions*. *Teachers College Record*, 112,(1) 260-288. New York: Columbia University Teachers College.

⁹ DeMario, M.M. (April 2012) *Roksa and Calcagno Journal Article-Analysis of MCC Data-Revised*, IR, 10pp.

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Background and Origins

In developing the CCTE initiative, MCC sought to focus on teaching excellence to address the interrelated issues of college readiness, partnerships with K-12 districts and transfer institutions, and faculty professional development.¹⁰ MCC's central position on the educational continuum was viewed as a key that would enable it to function as an integrator, reaching both K-12 and four-year partners.

MCC invited two K-12 districts, one urban and one suburban, to participate in the project, along with a private college and two SUNY colleges. Each of the colleges involved receive transfer students from MCC in a range of academic programs. The four-year colleges also have undergraduate and graduate teacher preparation programs which receive transfer students from MCC's education program. Each of the K-12 districts has graduates who attend MCC. RCSD has the highest number of students attending MCC while R-HCSD has the third highest.¹¹ Both K-12 districts are geographically closest to MCC's city and suburban campuses.

The issue of poverty in the metropolitan Rochester region is extremely significant to the context of our work. Rochester area educational systems—both K-12 and higher education—are woven into the fabric of the region, and must, both ethically and of necessity, be part of creating solutions to address the impact of poverty on student academic success. Rochester's overall poverty rate of 31% makes it the fifth poorest city in the U.S. among the 75 largest metro areas, and the second poorest in the U.S. among comparably sized cities.¹² There is an extreme concentration of poverty in 27 areas of the city.¹³

¹⁰ Monroe Community College. (2010) *FIPSE Comprehensive Grant Application*, pages e2-e3

¹¹ Monroe Community College. *Facts 2013-14* reveals that 4,328 students from Rochester and 930 from Rush-Henrietta enrolled in Fall 2013.

¹² Doherty, Edward. (2013, December). *Poverty and the Concentration of Poverty in the Nine-County Greater Rochester Area*. Rochester NY: Rochester Area Community Foundation.

¹³ *Ibid*, page 21 Extreme poverty is defined as census tracts with a poverty rate of 40% or higher.

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Although the overall city poverty rate is 31%, among RCSD students, poverty is documented at 88% based on student eligibility for free or reduced price meals.¹⁴ In R-HCSD, 37% of students receive free or reduced price meals; the overall poverty rate is 11.4% in Henrietta and 1.7% in Rush.¹⁵ RCSD is the poorest large urban district in New York State, and student academic performance is the poorest of any large urban district in the state.¹⁶

The range of perspectives on the relationship between poverty and academic achievement is part of the regional context. Over the years there have been numerous attempts to rectify the achievement gap crisis in Rochester. The most recent of these, ROC the Future,¹⁷ was initiated concurrently with the CCTE initiative. Based on the Strive Together collective impact framework¹⁸, ROC the Future seeks to build a strong civic infrastructure that supports children from cradle to career. MCC's President is Chair of this initiative which is endorsed by the current SUNY Chancellor.

RCSD has been an active partner in the CCTE network, and continues to work against the odds described herein. The troubled RCSD has the highest number of persistently low-performing schools in New York according to the State Education Department (SED). Over the three years of the CCTE project, RCSD has moved from having more than 40 schools¹⁹ on the SED's list of schools in need of academic improvement, to having 56 out of 60 schools²⁰ on the list, to having a venerated high school threatened with closure or reconstitution.²¹ Classroom teachers and many dedicated administrators soldier on in the midst of this deepening crisis.

¹⁴ Ibid, page 36

¹⁵ Ibid, page 43

¹⁶ Ibid page 36

¹⁷ ROC the Future, see <http://rocthefuture.org/>

¹⁸ STRIVE see <http://www.strivetgether.org/>

¹⁹ Macaluso, Tim. (2011, December 7-13) *RCSD to Deploy School Improvement Teams*. Rochester NY: City Newspaper.

²⁰ Macaluso, Tim. (2013, January 16-22) *Improvement Plans Due*. Rochester, NY: City Newspaper.

²¹ Murphy, Justin. (2014, March 22). *Academic Failures Put East HS on Chopping Block*. Rochester NY: Democrat and Chronicle.

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The CCTE initiative has taken an asset-based approach to supporting effective teacher practice, and has sought to raise the voices of educators who are too often blamed for low student achievement. We concur with Doherty's observation that "*there is room for [student academic] improvement even within the current poverty reality*"²² and the CCTE initiative has sought to address the educational achievement gap by providing tangible support for better pedagogy and teacher engagement.

Project Description

The mission established by the CCTE Facilitation PLC was "*to work collaboratively across the K-20 continuum to improve student success by creating spaces, structures, and opportunities that support teachers and teaching excellence.*" The philosophy adopted by the group recognized the central and enduring role of teachers on the success of students at all grade levels.

CCTE's primary initiative was the [CCTE K-20 Fellows Program](#), a two-semester, cross-sector professional development program for K-12 and college faculty. Of the 62 educators accepted into the program, 48 completed two semesters, 9 completed the first semester only, and 5 attended one or two sessions only. The inaugural cohort (2012-13) was comprised of urban and suburban K-12 and MCC faculty; over half of the group had taught for 11-20 years. The second cohort (2013-14) was comprised of educators from urban and suburban K-12 districts, MCC, and four-year colleges; most of this group had taught for 4-10 years. Ten program facilitators and coaches from partner institutions staffed the program, facilitating PLC sessions and/or supporting affinity groups during action research implementation.

Rich conversations occurred in Fellows PLCs, both face-to-face and online. Over the course of five meetings in the first program semester, Fellows (a) read, reflected upon, and discussed CCTE-selected readings on core topics, (b) formed affinity groups based on self-selected pedagogies of interest, (c) made classroom visits, (d) voluntarily tried new teaching strategies or pedagogies, and (e) learned about action research and

²² Doherty, page 37

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designed an action research project for the second semester when they would implement a new pedagogy in a course/class. During the second program semester, Fellows implemented instructional change(s) and conducted action research to assess their impact. They met monthly in small pedagogy affinity groups led by a CCTE Dialogue Facilitator whose role was to assist the Fellows with their action research projects. Dialogue Facilitators served as mentors, coaches or facilitators as needed, implementing CCTE's [Supported Practice model](#).

Running parallel with the Fellows Program was the development of the [CCTE website](#) which was specifically designed as an important program element. The site includes public and private spaces, and is a primary repository of CCTE work. It serves as a regional knowledge base for educators and includes action research reports, project reports, a pedagogy glossary, college readiness symposium summaries, and a regional professional development calendar. The website receives 300 or so visitors per month (see footnote 4). A recent survey was conducted with educators not familiar with CCTE to ascertain their views on the website. Respondents indicated that Fellows' action research reports, visual appeal/ease of navigation, and the "key words and resources" tab were the features they most liked or found helpful on the site.²³

A regional symposium, "College Readiness: Bridging the Transition" was co-sponsored by CCTE on May 31, 2013. The event featured research on college readiness and the Common Core Standards from the Educational Policy Improvement Center (EPIC) and the Center for Educational Policy Research (CEPR). Educators from fifteen school districts, four BOCES districts, and six colleges, as well as private schools, charter schools, and community-based groups participated. Resources and discussion summaries are available on the CCTE website.

CCTE is conducting a qualitative research study, "*Teacher effectiveness in an academic summer enrichment program.*" It seeks to understand how teachers impact student learning in a multi-dimensional summer program, how summer teaching relates

²³ DeMario M.M. (April 2014) *CCTE Website Evaluation*, IR, 6pp.

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to school-year teaching, and whether effective approaches in the summer are transferable to school-year instruction. An action research study conducted by the [CCTE Connected Educator Team](#), *“Use of an Online Fellows Forum”* (spring 2013) focused on the use of a private online forum’s contribution to the Fellows PLC, and patterns of teacher discourse in the online space. CCTE also sponsored a year-long 12th grade college-prep math course, co-designed by an MCC math faculty member and a 12th grade R-HCSD math teacher, to help students upgrade their math skills and be prepared for credit-bearing math courses upon college entry.

A key assumption underlying each CCTE initiative was that we all share responsibility for students along the education continuum, albeit at various points in their development. Each partner institution had a stake in the work, and we sought to draw from the considerable strengths of Facilitation Committee members to inform program development from their particular vantage point. Establishing the Facilitation Committee as a PLC provided an operating structure for the work. Frequent, intense meetings at the beginning of the project (5 bi-weekly meetings from October through December 2011) enabled the Facilitation PLC to form bonds of trust which served as a foundation for subsequent work throughout the life of the project.

The cycle depicted on page four was adopted for CCTE work so that continuous improvement was built into the model. A rhythm of staff and committee work followed by Facilitation PLC review/revision/approval was established and enabled us to move forward quickly to implement initiatives. Members took responsibility for various aspects of each program such as researching and developing the cross-sector model, recruiting faculty to apply to the Fellows Program, and leading CCTE qualitative research. When new structures were needed, members help expedite the process with their respective institutions (e.g., obtaining approval from Institutional Review Boards for research done by the Fellows). Project milestones and their related Facilitation Committee process are depicted on the following page.

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Project Milestones by Year

YEAR ONE: 2011-12	
Facilitation Committee Process	Initiatives & Products
Mission, goals, outcome defined	Key words glossary developed & published
Facilitation Committee operates as PLC of educational leaders	K-20 Faculty Fellows Program 2012-13 cohort begins with K-12 & MCC
Researched & designed Fellows Program	Fellows Program Curriculum Manual
Partners identify key participants characteristics and recruit Fellows	Website created
YEAR TWO: 2012-13	
Facilitation Committee Process	Initiatives & Products
Supported Practice Model developed; maintenance of effort on Fellows Program	2012-13 Fellows implement instructional change and action research
Connected Educator Team & Research Committee active	Regional symposium, <i>College Readiness: Bridging the Divide</i>
Ongoing review of programming & website development	2013-14 Fellows Cohort begins for K-12, MCC & four-year college faculty
YEAR THREE: 2013-14	
Facilitation Committee Process	Initiatives & Products
CCTE future scenarios developed.	2013-14 Fellows implement instructional change and conduct action research. Research submitted for presentation at regional & national conferences
Plan for : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCTE website continuation • Supporting teacher-led Fellows Alumni groups • Local/regional cost model for Fellows Program 	12 th grade math pilot
Move toward a <i>Networked Improvement Community (NIC)</i> ²⁴ , building upon research interests of members	Summer program (K-8) teacher study currently in process
	CCTE website survey conducted

²⁴ Byrk, A.S., L.M. Gomez & Brunow (2011). *Getting Ideas into Action: Building Networked Communities in Education*. Stanford, CA.: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Retrieved May 10, 2014 http://carnegiefoundation.org/sites/default/files/bryk-gomez_building-nics-education.pdf

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Evaluation/Project Results: Summary of Major Findings

External evaluators implemented both formative and summative evaluation measures to address three questions: (1) Can we create a useful knowledge base of effective teaching practices across K-20? (2) Will improving teacher practice improve student engagement and successful course completion?, and (3) Is this collaborative PLC model effective?

With respect to question one, creating a knowledge base, the CCTE K-20 Faculty Fellows Program was a key initiative. Evaluation of the program reveals that: (1) both Fellows cohorts had **higher average scores of knowledge and use of pedagogies and teaching strategies** but the increase was greater in Cohort II, (2) Use of **action research** had the highest average classroom impact score for both cohorts, (3) institutional decisions as a result of CCTE had the largest personal impact on Fellows.

With respect to question two, improving student engagement and course completion, our conclusions after careful review of the external evaluator's student data are: (1) pre-post student surveys are most useful at the classroom level for Fellows to gain the student perspective as they experiment with a new pedagogy or instructional strategy, (2) disparity in survey administration and number of K-12 vs. college respondents limited the utility of the aggregate data and comparison between the two Fellows cohorts, and (3) for the most part, K-12 and higher education students rated engagement measures similarly. On post-intervention surveys, 60% to 67% of students from both cohorts agreed that their **teacher tries new ways of teaching and seeks feedback**.

With respect to question three, course completion, research conducted by MCC's IR Office finds **that student outcomes across four participating colleges for the 2013-14 Faculty Fellows cohort include a statistically significant increase in the percentage of students who completed the course**. The Facilitation PLC did not investigate student outcomes for high school students due to the system stressors discussed earlier, and the fact that the focus of the grant was post-secondary education.

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With respect to the efficacy of the PLC model, the external evaluation reveals that:

(1) Over three years, 80-100% of members agreed that CCTE meetings are productive, they feel confident in program leadership, their expertise is well utilized, the right people are involved, and the group is receptive; (2) **Impact on individual educators** and **institutional cooperation** are considered the two most valuable aspects of the CCTE model.

Summary, Conclusions, and Lessons Learned

At the March 2014 Facilitation PLC meeting, the group discussed lessons learned concerning the Facilitation Committee as a PLC, and the Faculty Fellows Program. Their perspective concerning what worked best and what could have been done better is shared here.

What worked best for the Facilitation PLC was making connections, sharing information regularly, co-creating a cross-sector knowledge base, engaging in table discussions, being action-oriented, and maintaining an open dialogue. Planning the Fellows Program strengthened both the Facilitation PLC and the Fellows Program. The group's flexibility and good communication skills coupled with the level of members' expertise are strengths. Co-creating the group culture and CCTE programs led to a high level of ownership. Personal and professional benefits of networking were noted, e.g. networking made our jobs easier, and the education program has gotten stronger due to relationships in the CCTE network.

Reflections on **what we could have done better as a Facilitation PLC** include:

(1) having more consistency of participants (having an institutional designee plus an alternate worked best), (2) communicating about CCTE work at home institutions, especially with supervisors and program leaders, (3) rotating face-to-face events across institutions, (4) creating vertical teams with specific tasks, and (5) organizing a K-16 conference for Fellows to present research. Members want to continue with the program to see impact over time.

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What worked best with the Fellows Program: classroom visits, cross sector collaboration, validation and motivation of teachers, understanding and use of action research, potential of Fellows alumni continuing action research, peer-to-peer sharing, space for dialogue, supported practice facilitators, teachers were both experts and novices within the same experience. We created a safe environment for that to happen.

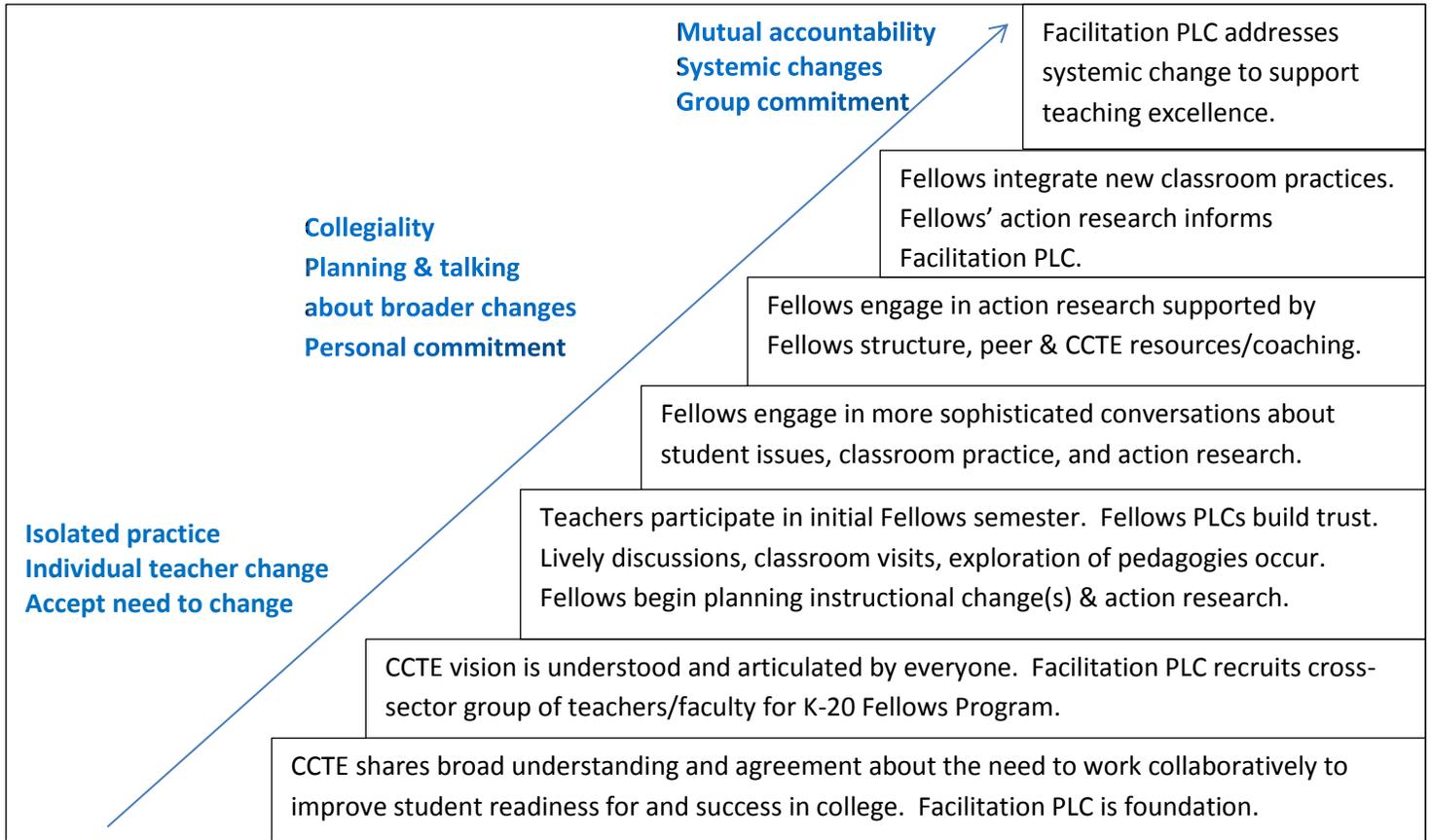
Reflections on **what we could have done better with the Fellows Program** include:

- (1) invite K-8 teaching faculty to join Fellows and engage in action research,
- (2) investigate whether doing action research is a good framework for K-8 vs. other professional learning modalities (e.g. lesson study, immersion in teacher practice),
- (3) allow more freedom for individual choice throughout the program e.g. using a flipped approach, beginning action research in the 1st semester. Resources for Fellows are password-protected on the CTE website due to copyright issues—perhaps publish a program bibliography to add to the public section of the website.

We borrowed the “building blocks” diagram (see page 20) from the Small Schools Report²⁵ and adapted it to the CTE model to depict changes that occurred through the Fellows Program. While there was a full range of responses to the program (a few did not like the model, most found value, several were transformed), at the three-year mark, the program was successful for most participants and improved student outcomes. We conclude that investment in cross-sector professional development (a) holds promise for improving instruction across K-20 at the course/classroom level; (b) would result in better outcomes for teachers and students as the model is refined over time; (c) shows potential to empower students as agents in their own learning, and enhance their overall engagement with learning; (c) would eventually lead to a ‘tipping point’ where the voices of reflective educators influence systemic changes to support teaching excellence and success for all students.

²⁵ Mary Beth Lambert et.al. (2006, Fall) *Adult Learning: Turning the Corner to Instructional Change*. Retrieved May 28, 2014 from http://www.nsrharmony.org/research/Lambert_et_al_2007.pdf

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The CCTE Facilitation PLC has found value in this work for themselves, for the faculty in their respective systems and for their students. They are currently working to sustain the CCTE initiative through a local/regional cost-sharing model. It is our hope that CCTE's cross-sector work will continue in the Rochester region so that (1) mid-range and long-term impact can be assessed, (2) a networked improvement community of active teacher-researchers can be fully established, (3) a culture of inquiry and teaching excellence across K-20 becomes the educational norm, and (4) administrative, financial, and political support is viewed as a wise public investment in systemic change to sustain opportunities for transformative learning across the educational continuum.