



Community Advisory Groups

Ypsilanti Community Schools Small Learning Communities VS Comprehensive Schools

February 28, 2013 Adapted from Oxley, PhD, D. (2008). *High school to learning communities - Five domains of best practice*. Portland, OR: Northwest Region Educational Laboratory.

Committee Membership

Jennifer Martin, District
Administration

Debra Swanson, Teacher

Sandy Bogoski, Teacher

Kelly Pennington, Principal

Scott Heister, Teacher

Natalie Turner, Assistant Principal

Bert Okma, Administration

Jeannette Woltmann, WISD

Bob Oliver, District Staff

Meredith Schindler, Parent

Design Pillars

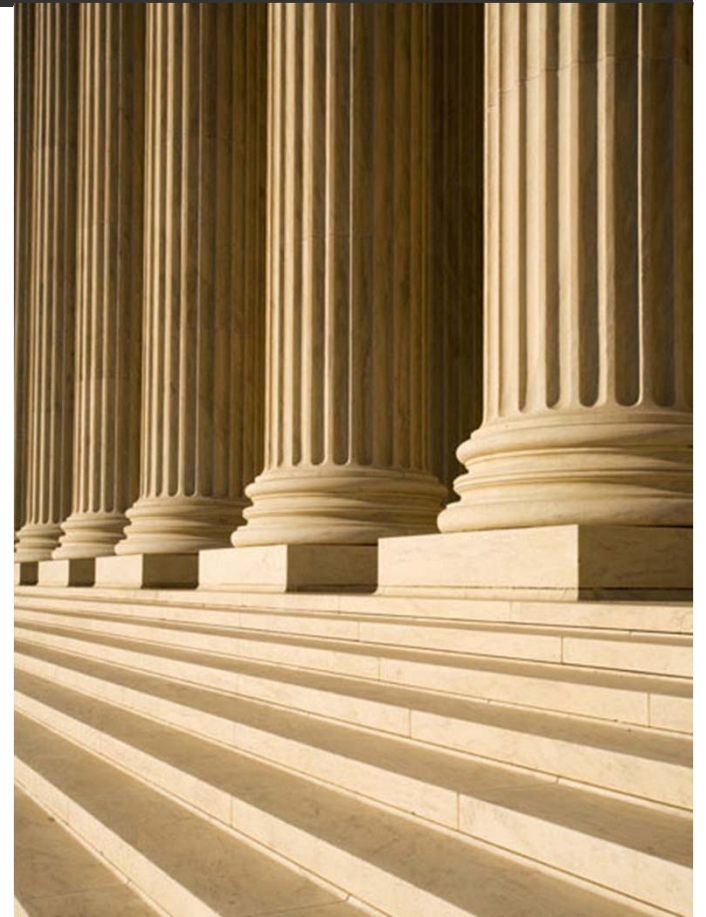
Birth Through Kindergarten Entry

Leadership at All Levels

Positive Culture/Climate Focused on Learning

High Quality Teachers/Teaching

Every Student Will Have an Opportunity to Earn College Credit or a Career Credential Prior to High School Graduation



Core Values

Diversity

High Expectations
for All Students

Student Voice
and
Empowerment

Educational
Excellence

Vibrant Family
and Community
Partnerships

Resilience

Creativity and
Innovation

Respect

Responsibility

Recommendation

- The High Quality Teachers and Teaching Committee recommend that the Board of Education adopt a Small Learning Community Model with the first focus of implementation being at the secondary level.
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Guiding Principles



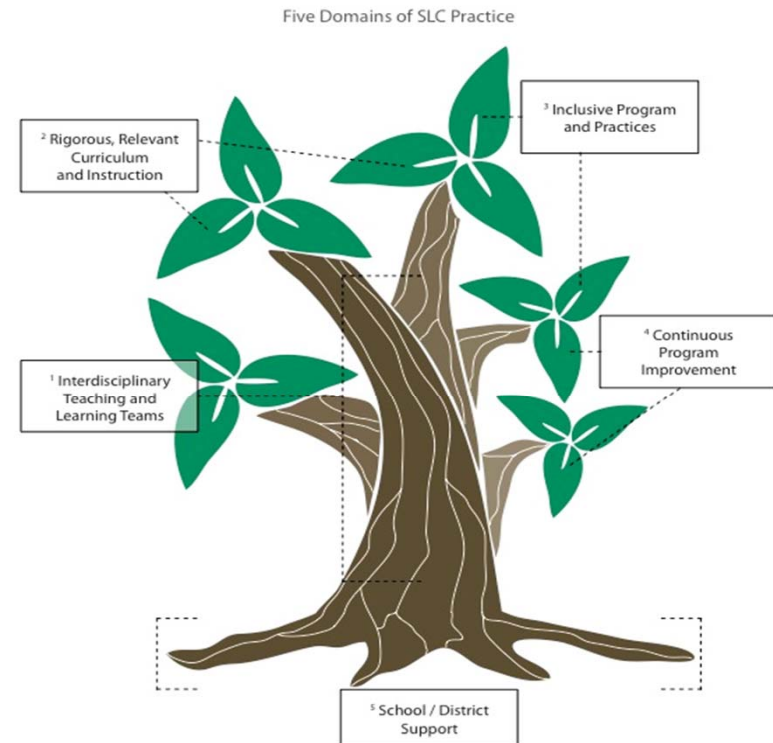
1. High expectations for ALL learners
 2. Evidence-based best practices while allowing for innovation and creativity
 3. Family and community partnerships
 4. Student voice and empowerment
 5. Responsibility, efficiency and financial viability
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What are Small Learning Communities?

- Small Learning Communities emphasize small structure and curricular specialization as well as focus on the learner and learning and in particular, the active and collaborative nature of students' and teachers' work.
 - In a Small Learning Community, interdisciplinary teams of teachers assume responsibility for student educational progress across years of school and maximize flexibility to act on the knowledge of students' needs.
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Successful SLC's Include...

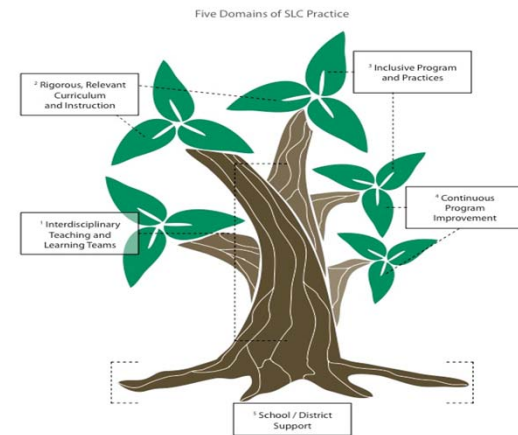
- ❑ Self-determination
- ❑ Identity
- ❑ Personalization
- ❑ Support for teaching
- ❑ Functional accountability



Cotton (2001). *New Small Learning Communities*

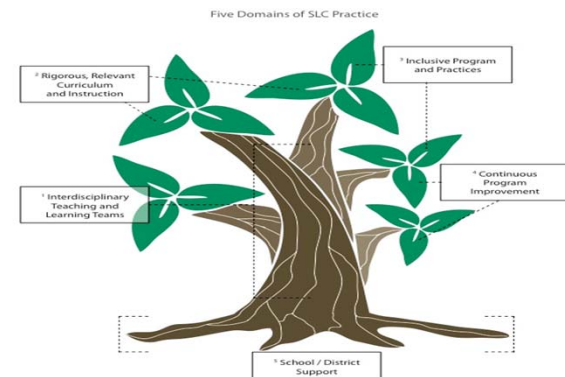
Self-Determination

Autonomy in decision making, physical separateness, self-selection of teachers and students, and flexible scheduling must all be present to allow small learning community members to create and realize their own vision.



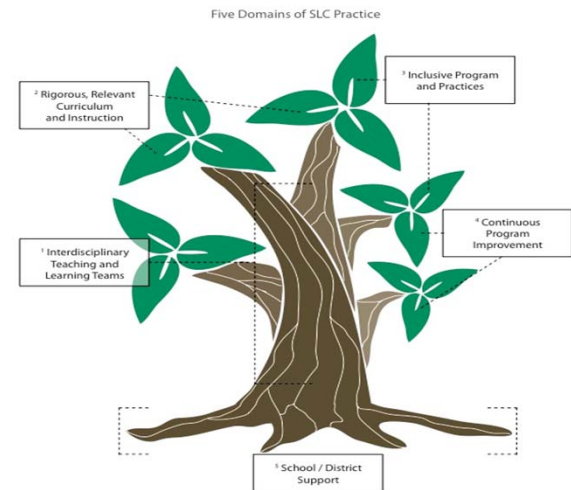
Identity

Small learning communities profit from developing a distinctive program of study that originates in the vision, interests, and unique characteristics of their members.



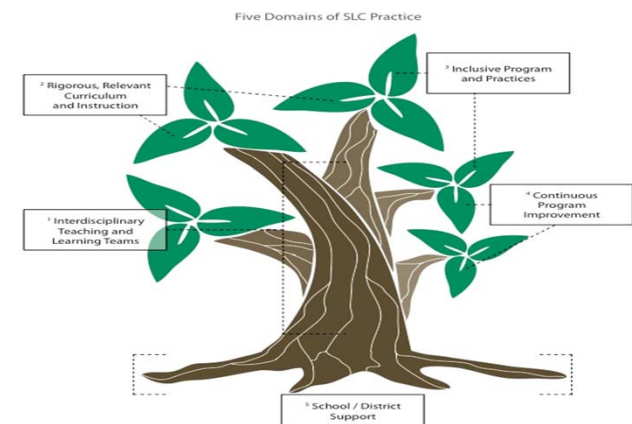
Personalization

Small learning community members know each other well. Teachers are able to identify and respond to students' particular strengths and needs.



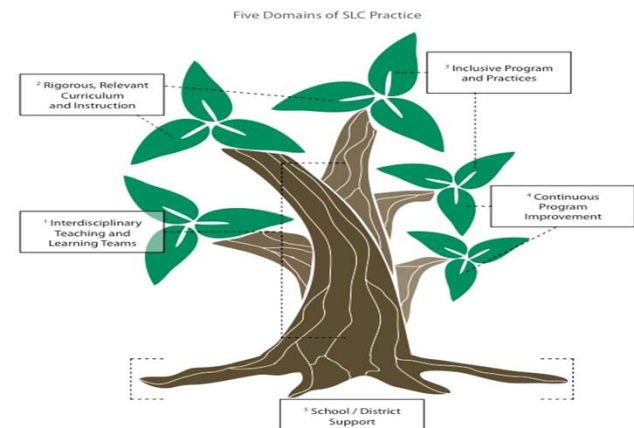
Support for Teaching

SLC teachers assume authority as well as responsibility in educating their students. School leadership does not reside only in the administrative staff; administrators teach, and teachers lead.



Functional Accountability

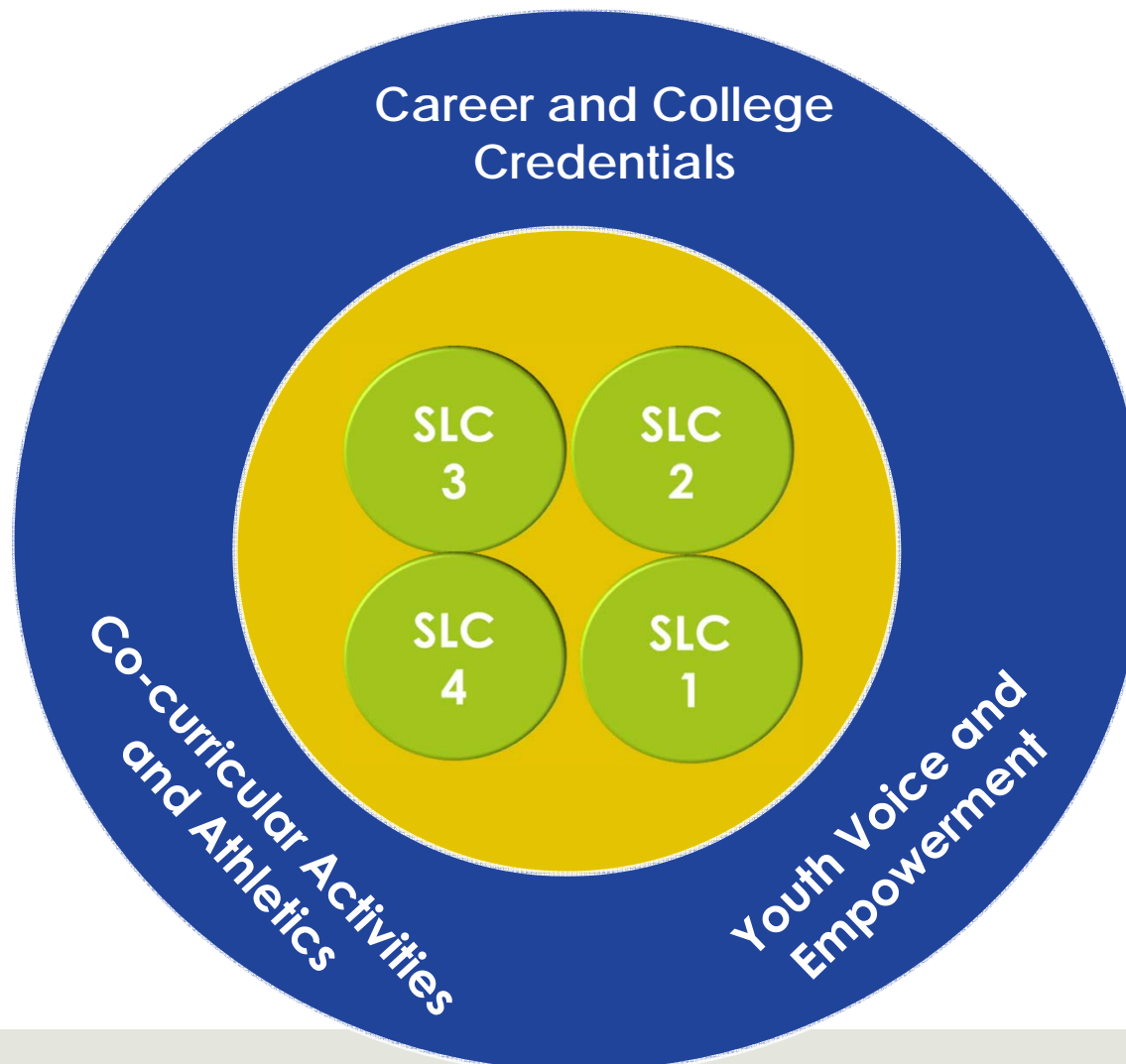
SLC teams use performance assessment systems that require students to demonstrate their learning and the SLC to demonstrate its success.



Effective Implementation of SLC's includes...

1. Interdisciplinary Teaching and Learning Teams
 2. Rigorous, Relevant Curriculum and Instruction
 3. Inclusive Program and Instructional Practices
 4. SLC-Based Continuous Program Improvement
 5. Building/District-Level Support for SLC's
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Small Learning Communities



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Questions?
