

December, 2015 FEA survey about CLTs

Executive Summary

FEA conducted a survey of teacher-scale FEA members to learn about the implementation of Collaborative Learning Teams (CLTs) in Fairfax County Public Schools. Key findings include:

- The implementation of CLTs varies widely around the county.
- Nearly half of all respondents attend two or more required CLTs per week. The rate is higher in elementary (52%) and middle (62%) than in high schools (31%).
- Some elementary specials teachers, counselors and others have too little CLT time.
- 24% report that some required CLT meetings are held outside the 7 ½ hour contract day.
- 14% report that required CLT meetings occur during their “duty-free” lunch.
- Most CLTs are tightly managed by administrators: appointing leaders, setting agendas.
- CLT autonomy correlates with the sense that CLT time is well spent.
- 58% agree that CLTs help them do their jobs better, but only 49% agree that CLT time is well spent.
- Respondents who attend two or more required CLTs per week are much less likely to agree that CLT time is well spent.

Some common themes brought up in comments include:

- CLTs take too much time and cut into time for planning.
- Some CLTs work well.
- Too much time is spent preparing data for administration, and not enough on common planning.
- Some staff are required to meet with CLTs outside their own subjects, which is viewed as a waste of time.
- Some administrators take too much control over CLTs; respondents desire more autonomy.
- Some CLTs continue meeting when done with the meeting agenda in order to fill a mandated time requirement.

FEA believes that FCPS can improve the utility of CLTs by providing better training, guidance and Regulations in order to:

- Stop requiring staff members to regularly attend a CLT in any subject that they don’t teach.
- Limit the number of required CLT meetings to one meeting per week and allowing additional CLT meetings on a strictly voluntary basis.
- Increase CLT autonomy in selecting leadership and preparing agendas.
- Focus CLTs primarily on activities that directly impact student instruction.
- Eliminate required CLT meetings outside the contract day and during lunch.

Survey description

The survey, conducted in December 2015, was divided into several sections:

Demographics – school, type of job

Required CLT meetings – number, time spent

Voluntary CLT meetings – number, time spent

CLT autonomy – who leads, who sets the agenda, administrator involvement

Attitudes toward CLTs – is the time enough, is it well spent

Finally, we asked for comments about CLTs

Survey invitations were sent to FEA members that are on one of the FCPS teacher pay scales, plus SBTS. A total of 705 people responded to our survey.

Respondents by level



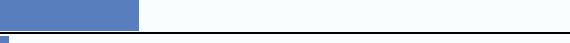
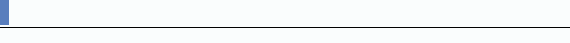
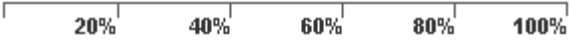
Q1. What kind of school do you work in? (if you work in a Secondary School, please choose middle or high, whichever fits best for you)			
Responses	Count	%	Percentage of total respondents
Elementary	434	61.56%	
Middle	88	12.48%	
High	173	24.54%	
Other (Alternative, Center, etc.)	10	1.42%	
(Did not answer)	0	0%	
Total Responses	705		

Figure 1

Required CLT meetings

94% of respondents reported that they attend required CLT meetings.

Q10. How many CLT meetings are you required (or strongly encouraged) to attend each week?			
Responses	Count	%	Percentage of total respondents
0	41	5.82%	
less than 1 on average	58	8.23%	
1	272	38.58%	
2	243	34.47%	
3	56	7.94%	
4	12	1.70%	
5	6	0.85%	
more than 5	17	2.41%	
(Did not answer)	0	0%	
Total Responses	705		

Figure 2

While FCPS Regulation calls for a minimum of one CLT meeting per week (for elementary teachers), 47% of respondents are required to meet in CLTs at least twice per week. 13% are required to meet three or more times per week.

The number of required CLT meetings varies by school level. Here are the percentages having two or more required CLT meetings per week by level:

Elementary: 52%

Middle: 62%

High: 31%

Of the small number of respondents reporting that they are required to attend more than 5 CLTs per week, 7 were reading specialists and 3 were instructional coaches. There was also one each of SBTS, math coach, math specialist and ESOL teacher.

We asked how much time is spent in required CLTs, broken out by time of the day: before/after the students' school day, during the students' school day. For respondents who reported CLT meetings before/after the students' school day, we asked how much time they spend in required meetings outside of the 7 ½ hour contract time. For respondents that reported CLT meetings during the students' day, we asked how much of their lunch time is spent in CLTs. Summarizing, of the total attending required CLTs:

37% report required meetings outside of the students' day;

24% report required meetings outside of the 7 ½ hour contract day;

94% report required meetings during the students' school day;

14% report that required meetings occur during their scheduled lunch time.

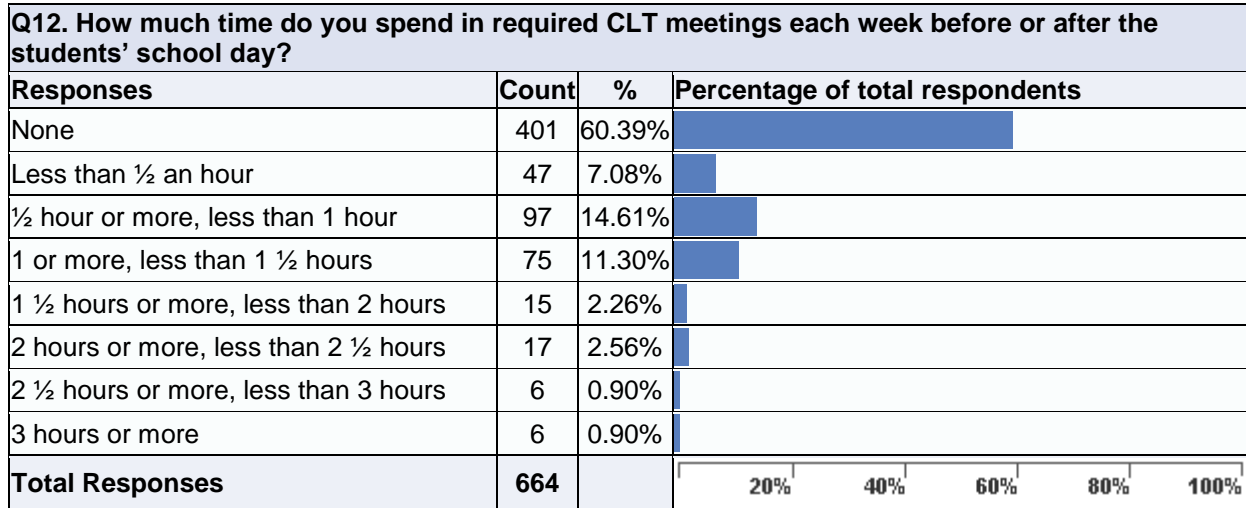


Figure 3

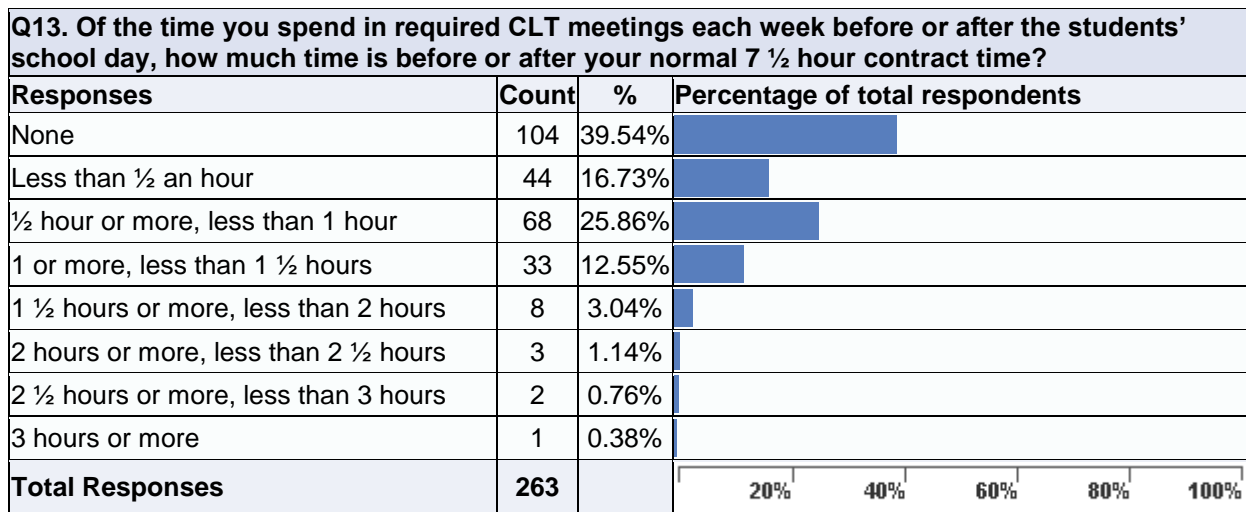


Figure 4

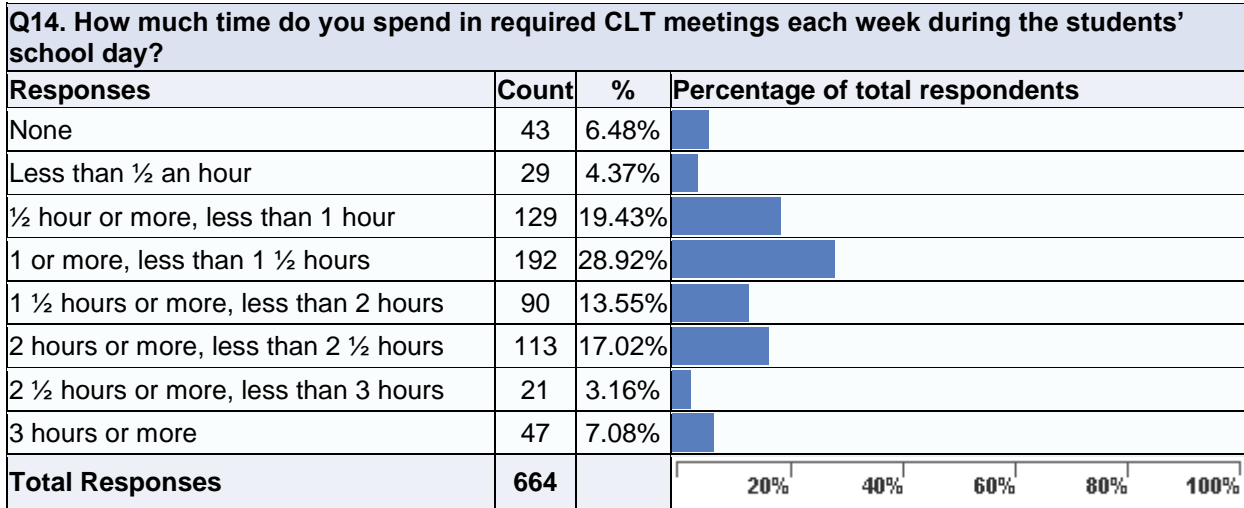


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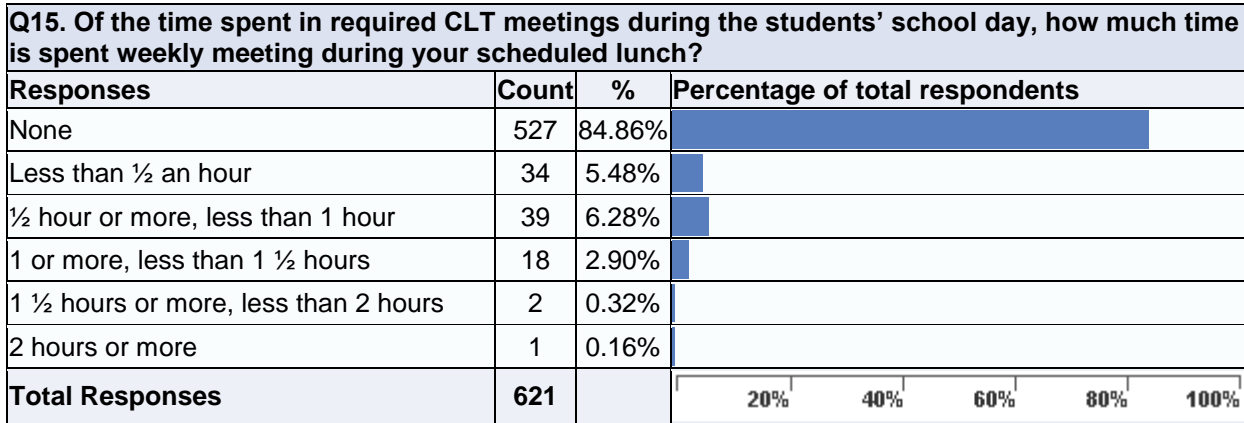


Figure 6

Voluntary CLTs

32% of respondents reported that they attend additional CLT meetings on a voluntary basis. We asked the same questions about voluntary CLT attendance that we asked about required CLTs.

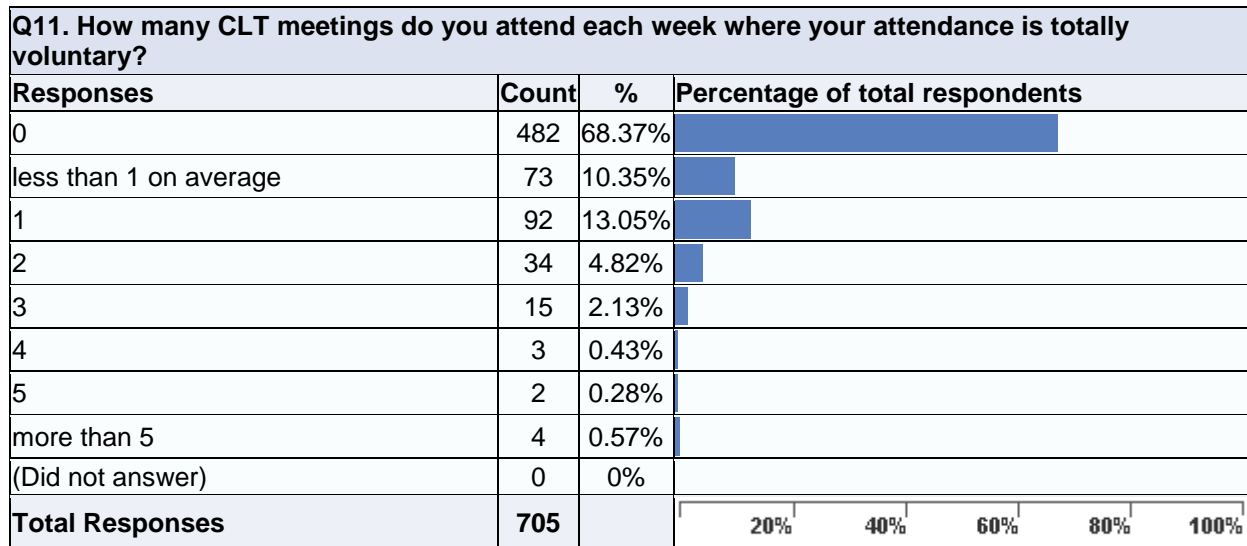


Figure 7

Summarizing, of the total attending additional CLTs on a voluntary basis:

- 52% report voluntary meetings outside of the students' day;
- 40% report voluntary meetings outside of the 7 ½ hour contract day;
- 74% report voluntary meetings during the students' school day;
- 22% report that voluntary meetings occur during their scheduled lunch time.

Looking at the voluntary attendance as percentages of **all** CLT attenders:

- 16% report voluntary meetings outside of the students' day;
- 13% report voluntary meetings outside of the 7 ½ hour contract day;
- 25% report voluntary meetings during the students' school day;
- 7% report that voluntary meetings occur during their scheduled lunch time.

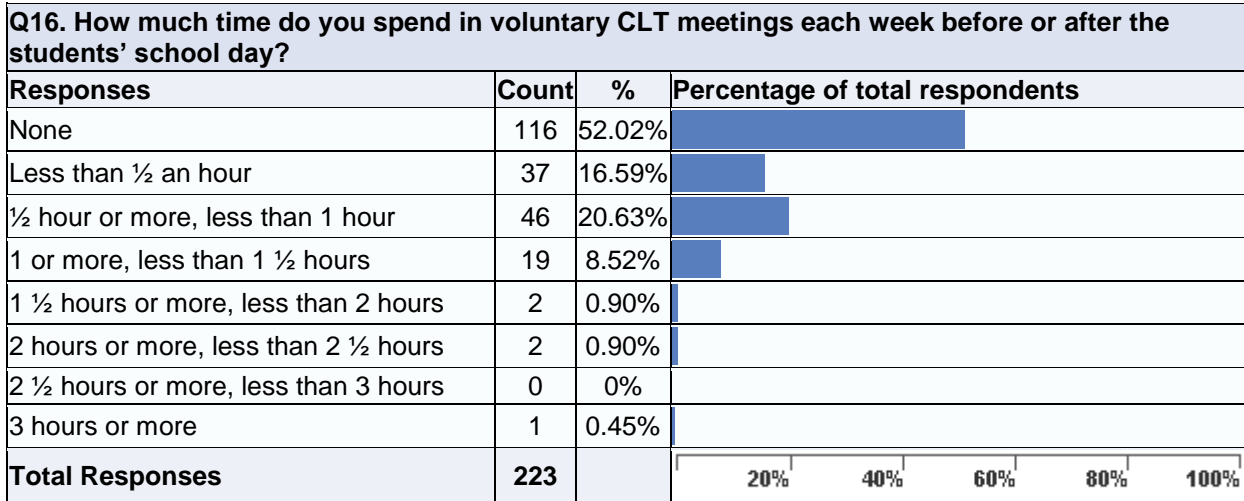


Figure 8

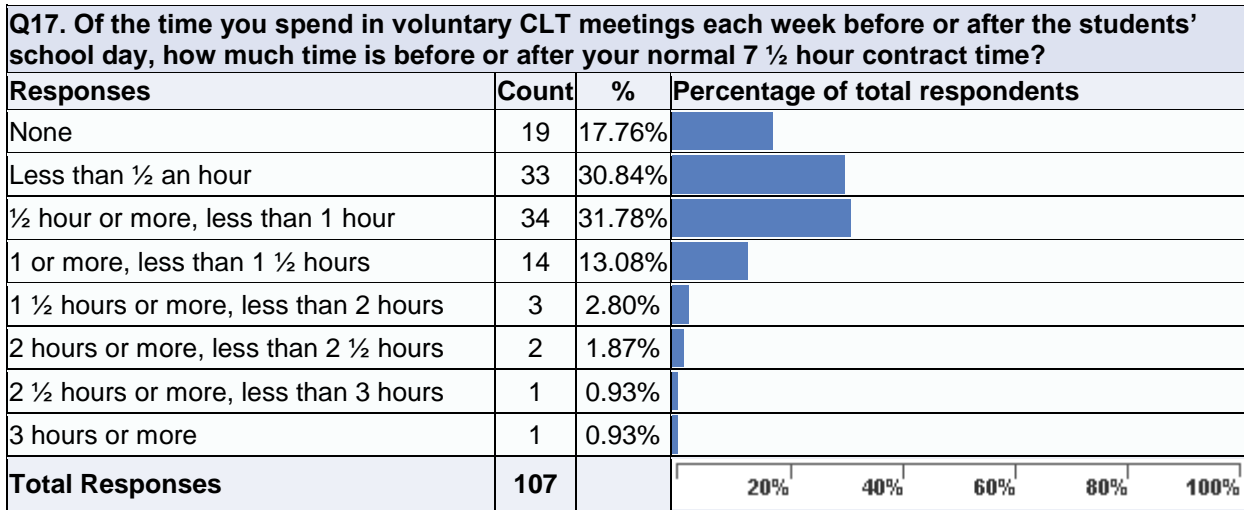


Figure 9

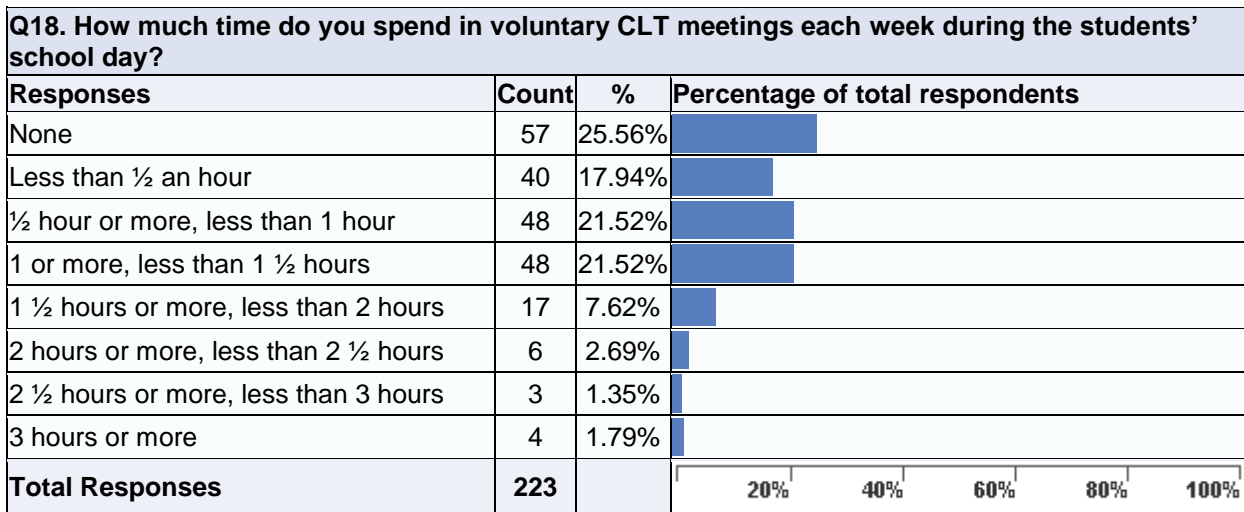


Figure 10

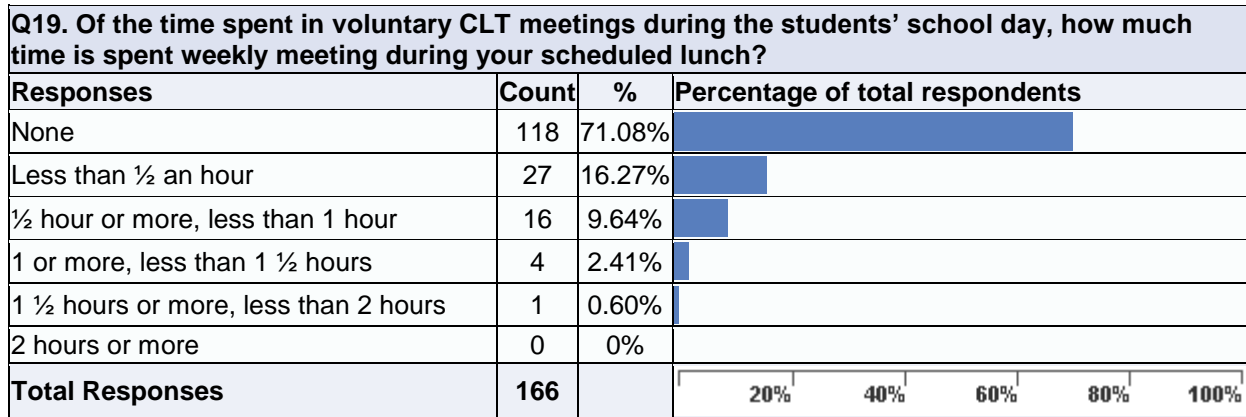


Figure 11

CLT autonomy

We asked four questions aimed at elucidating the degree of autonomy of CLTs and the level of involvement by school administrators.

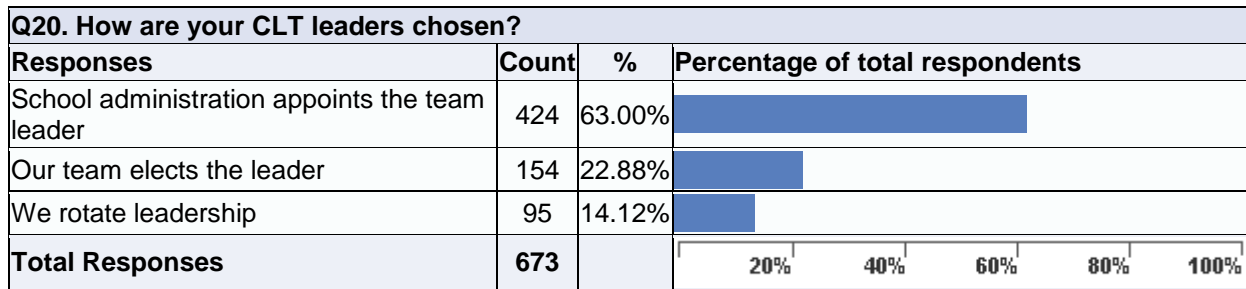


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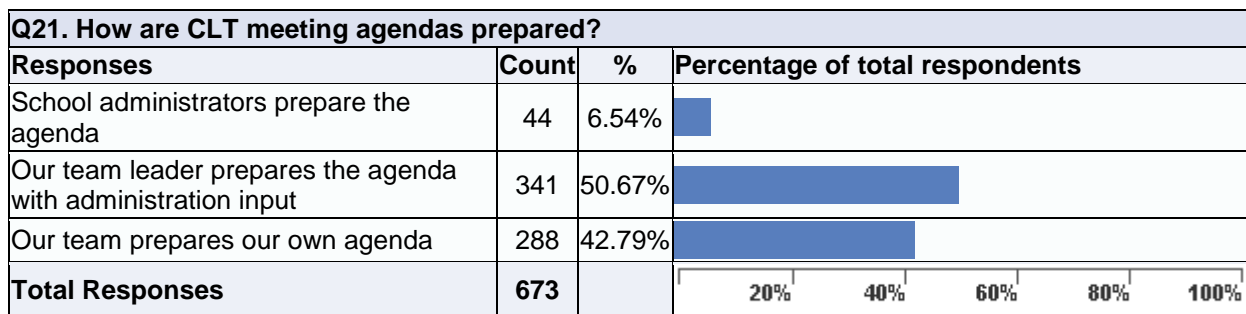


Figure 13

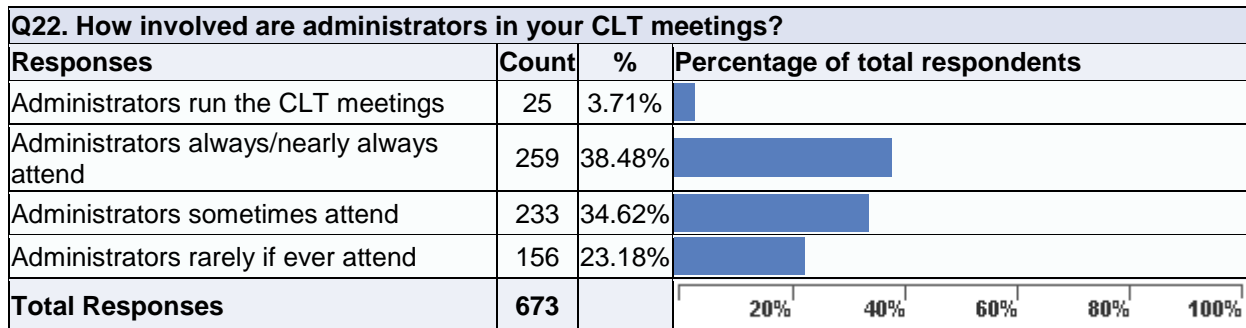


Figure 14

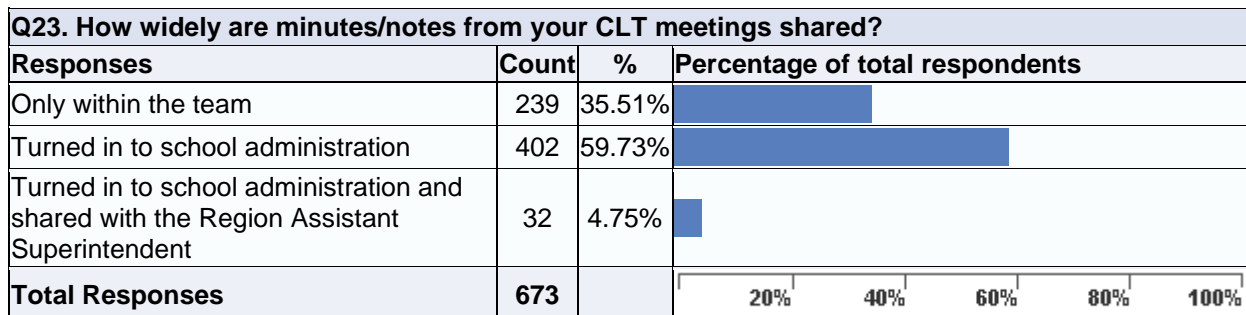


Figure 15

The degree of CLT autonomy correlates with respondents' sense that CLT time is time well spent. Respondents were much more likely to view their time as well spent: when the CLT rotates leadership or

elects a leader than when an administrator appoints a leader; when the Team sets the agenda; and when administrators attended the meetings less frequently.

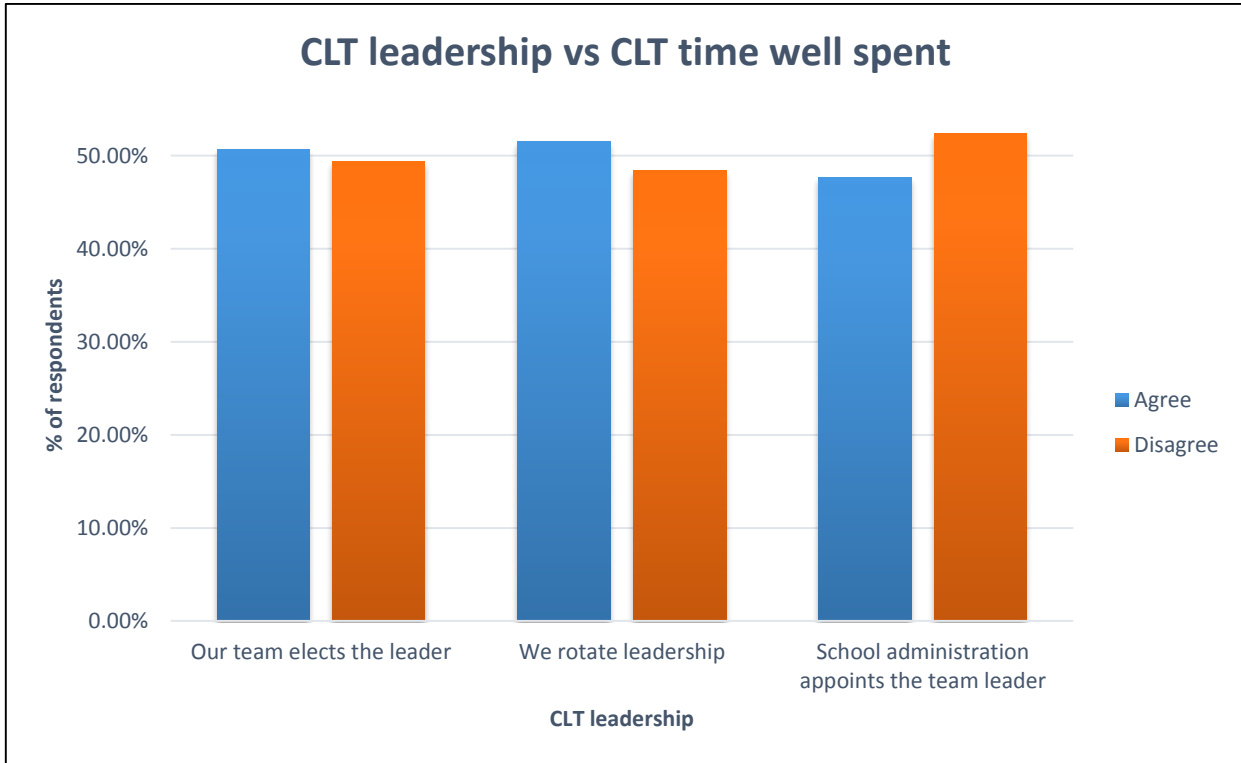


Figure 16

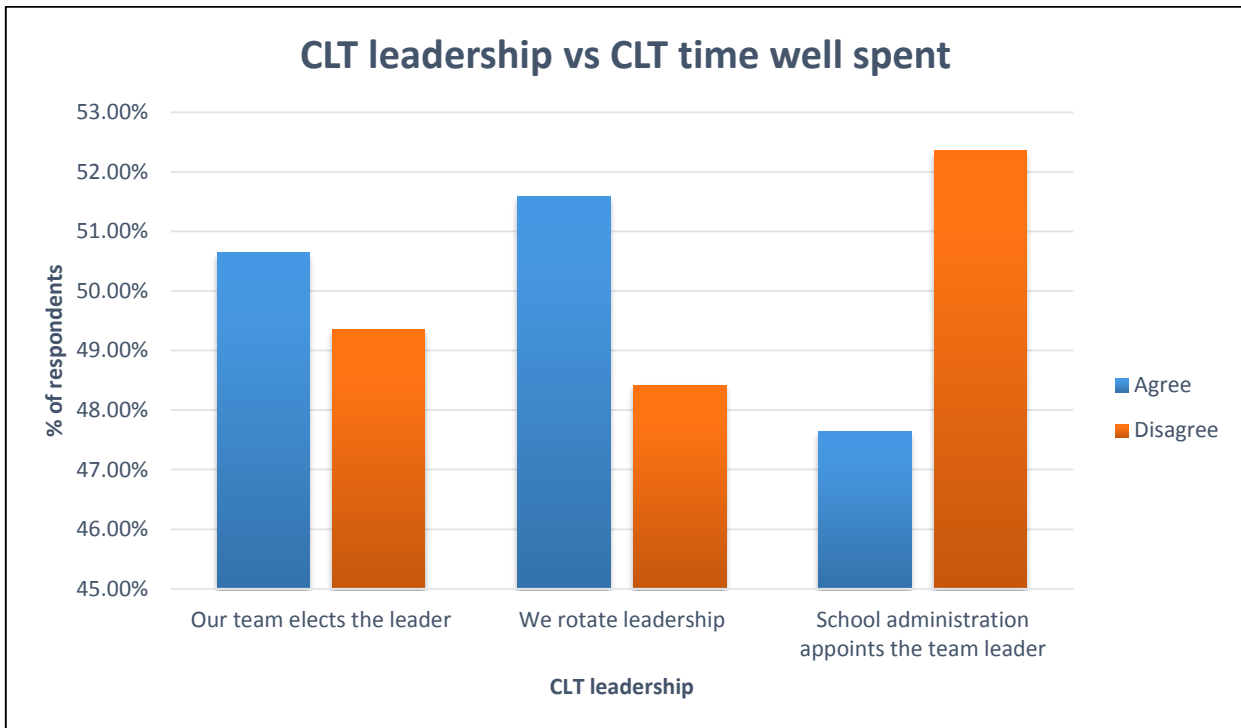


Figure 17

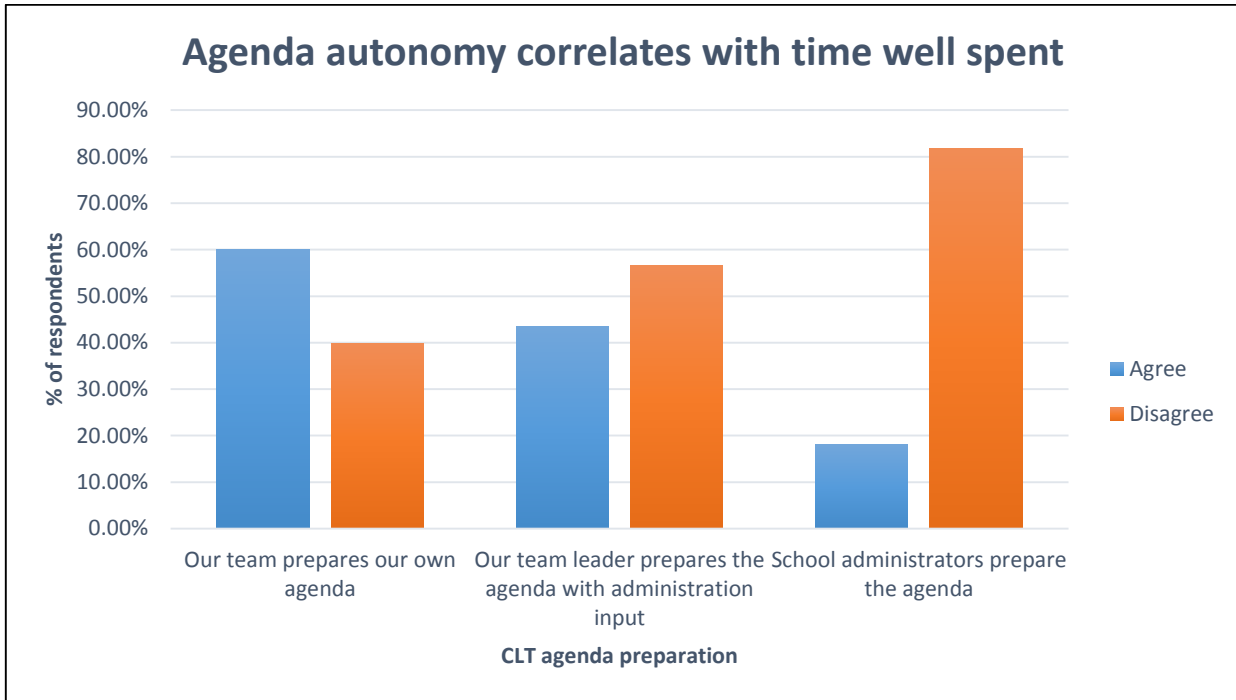


Figure 18

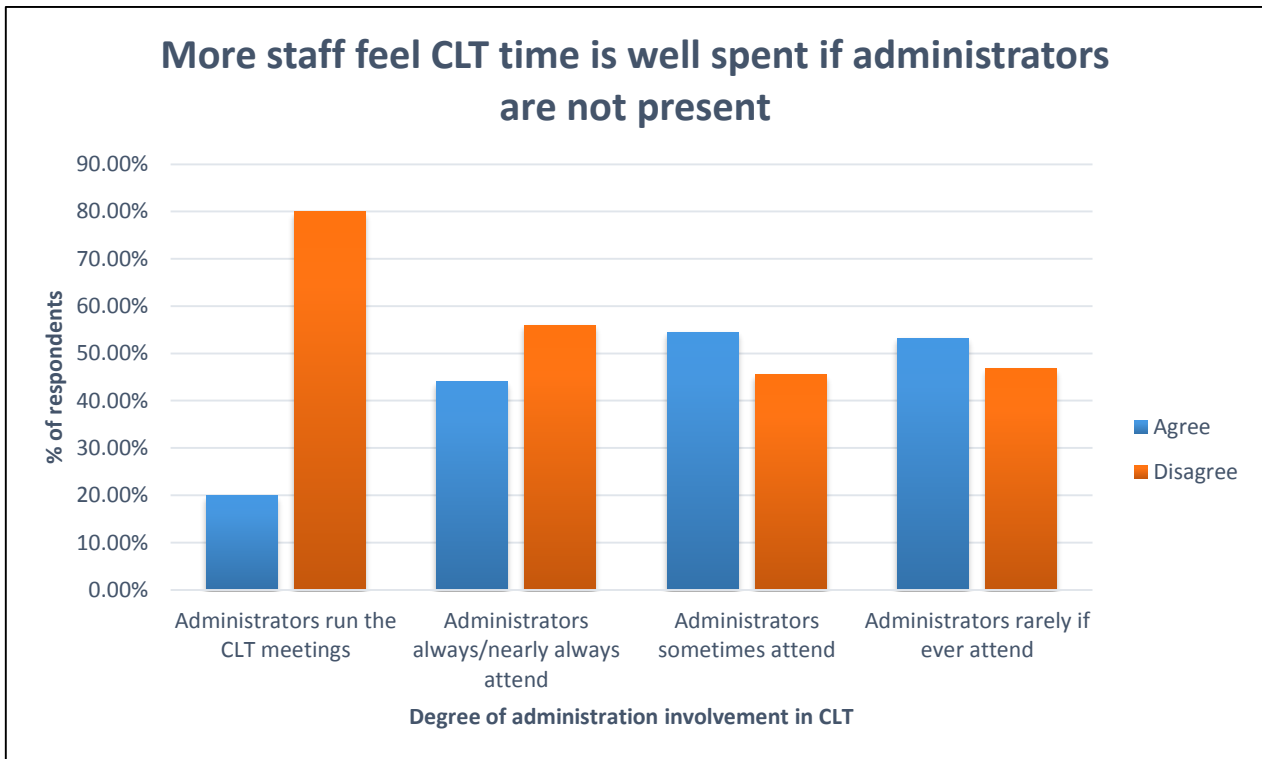


Figure 19

Value of CLTs

We asked respondents three questions to tell us about the value of CLTs.

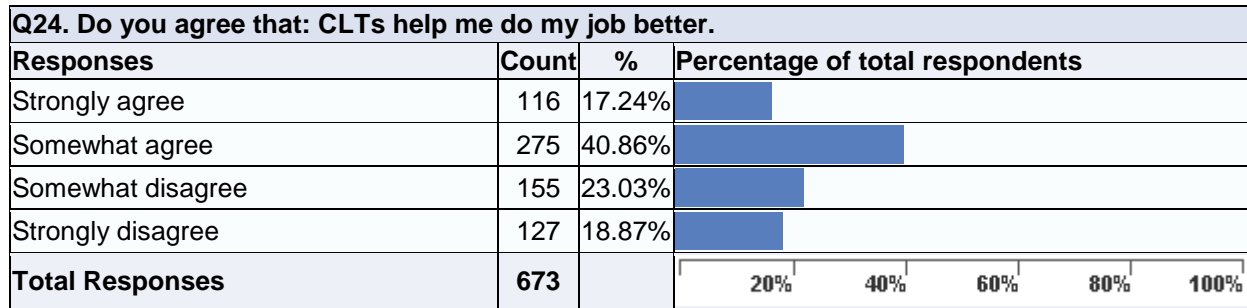


Figure 20

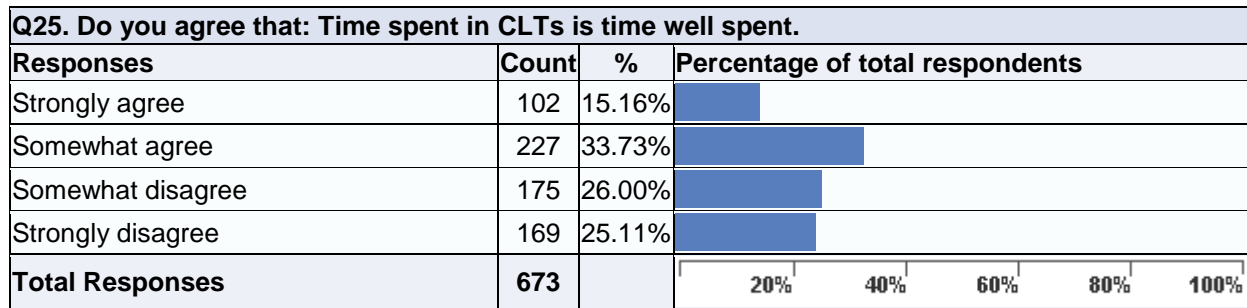


Figure 21

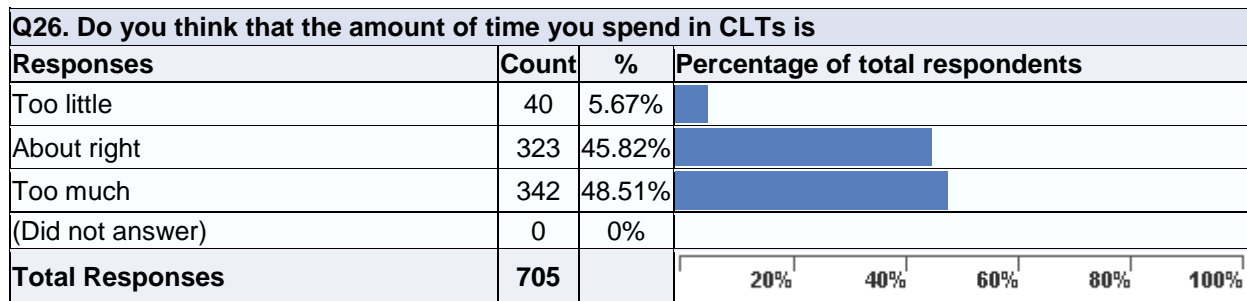


Figure 22

We looked further to see the relationship between how respondents felt about CLTs as a function of the number of required CLT meetings that they attend each week. The graph below shows that most respondents agree that CLTs help them do their work, and there is not much variation by the number of required CLT meetings that respondents attend each week.

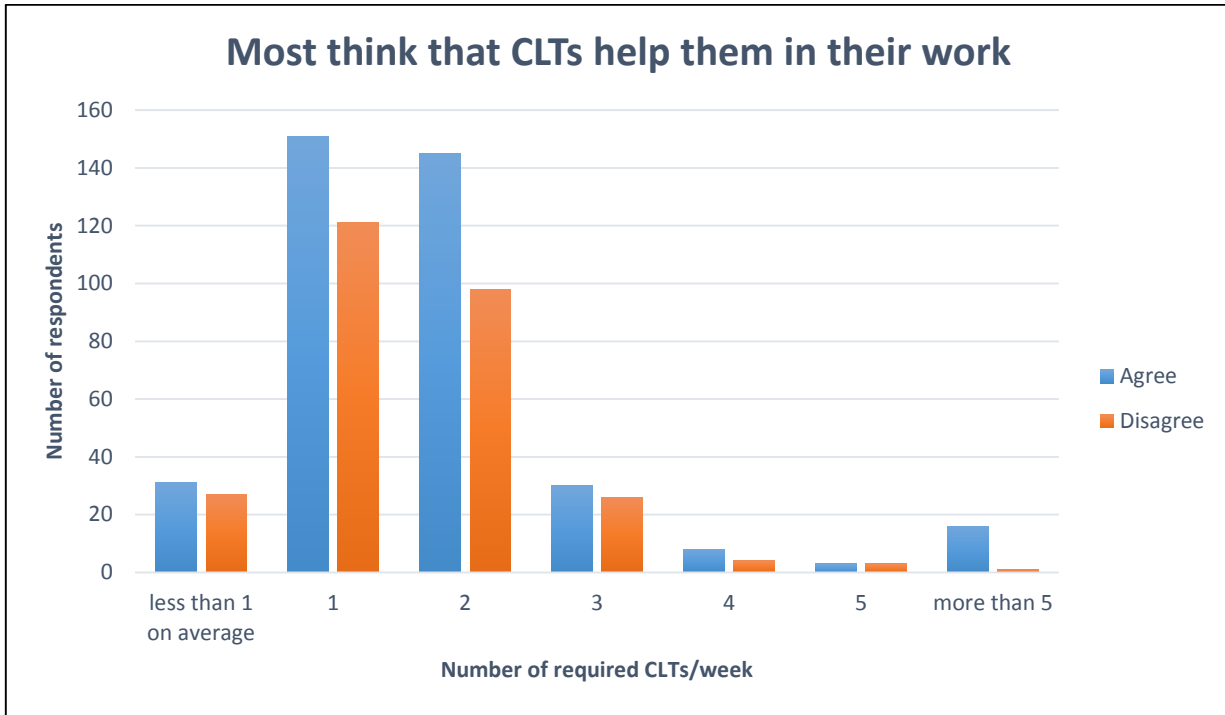


Figure 23

More than half of respondents disagree with the statement “Time spent in CLTs is time well spent”. The proportion disagreeing is higher for respondents that attend two required CLTs per week. We note that those attending five or more CLTs per week think that it is time well spent, and that most of those people are instructional coaches, etc., who have been assigned to lead multiple CLTs.

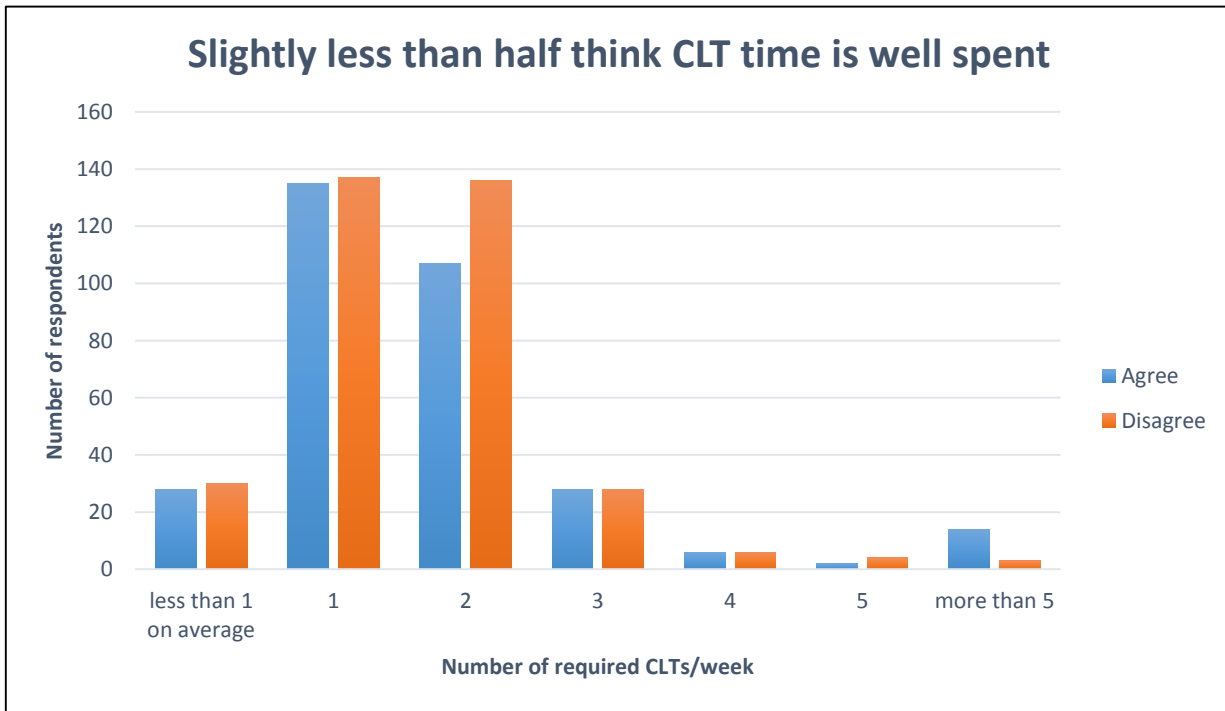


Figure 24

Respondents who attend one or fewer required CLT meetings per week generally feel that the amount of time spent in CLT is either “too little” or “about right,” while a majority of respondents that are required to attend more than one CLT per week responded that it is “too much.”

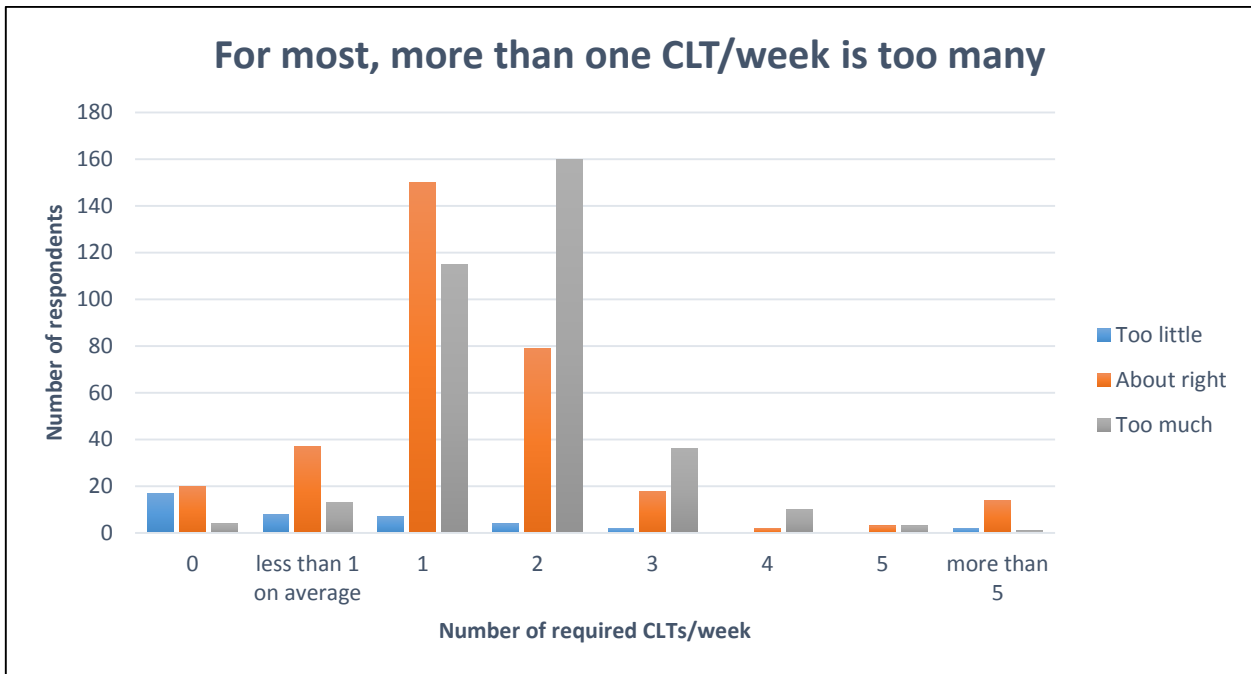


Figure 25

Recommendations for FCPS

The implementation of CLTs varies widely from school to school. In some schools they work well; in others there is room for improvement. Teachers that feel that CLT time is not well spent are much more likely to be in a situation where they are required to meet two or more times each week. It is also clear that most respondents think that CLTs should have more autonomy.

FEA believes that FCPS should provide more training – for administrators as well as teachers – on how successful CLTs operate and provide better guidance on best practices. We think that Regulations should be put in place to put limits on some of the most onerous time burdens.

Teachers should not be required to attend weekly CLTs for subjects that they do not teach. Several elementary teachers report being required to attend, for example, a math CLT even though a colleague teaches all of the math. While it may prove useful to be briefed on what is going on in math, it shouldn't require a full hour every week. Secondary teachers of less common subjects are sometimes lumped together in CLTs with other teachers where there is very little overlap in curriculum. For example, it probably does not make sense to require a dance teacher to meet weekly with a drama teacher.

Teachers should not be required to spend more than one hour per week in CLT. By making agendas shorter, elementary grade CLTs should be able to cover all subjects as necessary, perhaps devoting more time to each subject on a rotating basis. This could be worked out by each team. Teams could meet more often on a strictly voluntary basis, without “encouragement” from administrators, which is frequently viewed as a mandate.

A way needs to be found to allow special education teachers to have their own CLT as well as having time to meet with team teachers in the subject areas. This also true for ESOL teachers and others.

Administrators should stop micromanaging CLTs. Teachers get more satisfaction and find the time more useful when they get to choose their leader and set their agenda. Many teachers complained that CLTs spend too much time generating data for administrators and not enough time on activities that have a direct impact on improving student instruction and outcomes. Administrators should allow CLT meetings to end when the agenda has been completed, not require teachers to sit in the meeting for some required length of time.

CLTs should be focused on work that directly impacts students. This includes planning common lessons and assessments. Use CLTs to share good ideas about instruction.

CLTs should never be required outside the 7 ½ hour contract day or during the duty free lunch period guaranteed by Regulation.

Appendix: Comments on CLTs

Respondents' comments indicated a wide variety of experiences with CLTs and raise a number of issues. A sample of typical comments follows, grouped by dominant theme (many comments covered more than one theme). The themes are ordered by the number of comments received on each topic.

CLTs take too much time, cutting into planning (90)

I had to advocate for my prep time- because attending a required CLT put me without any and when I did I was told then it would be moved to Mondays at 8:00 unless I could fix my schedule.

How about learning target discussions? We now have another biweekly meeting (classroom teachers) to discuss student learning targets; many before the school day starts- 8:15-9:15 so now that is another meeting that I must attend weekly as I work across grade levels. I am now going back in the evenings to prep for lessons for the most struggling learners that take thoughtful decision making and time to plan appropriate lessons.

Elementary Reading Specialist; 4 required CLTs/wk totaling 2.5 hrs

I am sooo tired of meetings!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

We are forced to be in CLT meetings for Language Arts, Math, Virginia Studies, and Special Education. Some of these meetings (sped) are helpful. The others are not. It seems as if teachers are asked to do the same things each year. We do not work smarter, we work harder. The meetings are useless and a complete waste of time.

Elementary Special Ed. self contained; 3 required CLTs/wk totaling 6 hrs

Three preps and three CLTs are wearing me out. I think the only value of CLTs is helping teachers maintain a common pacing.

High Special Ed. self contained; 3 required CLTs/wk totaling 3 hrs

The minimum CLT time required by my school is too much. We are required to attend one math, one literacy, and one team (grade level) CLT each week. Our math and literacy coach do their best to make the time meaningful for us (classroom teachers), but truly I just want to have my own time to plan and prepare for lessons. Our CLTs are held during Specials which is my first real break of the day. I am often exhausted and overwhelmed at this point, but I feel pressure to "perform" during these meetings because our administration is critical if you don't participate enough.

Elementary General Ed. K-6 teacher; 3 required CLTs/wk totaling 3 hrs

Many math teachers in middle and high schools have multiple preps. There are 2 teachers that are on 3 CLTs and therefore meet with a CLT almost every day. Although I feel CLT time is well focused and is purposeful, I am not prepared to teach my classes when I leave the meeting and I have precious few minutes of individual time to attend to administrative tasks, reflection, material preparation, differentiation, other meetings, grading papers, preparing weekly lesson plans I'm required to submit, preparing required bi-weekly grade reports, etc. Our school has continually increased the specific demands of our time with requirements added each year, with no alleviation or understanding of insurmountable tasks that simply can't be done in the time that used to be allotted with more flexibility. Other people's specific demands of what I do with my planning time have significantly encumbered my ability to be prepared for meaningful work with students.

Middle Math teacher; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 1.5 hrs

CLTs work well (87)

each teaching team runs its clt a bit differently. As a resource teacher clts help keep me involved and informed. by and large the meetings are productive except on the teams where there is conflict and then it's actually better that an administrator is usually there.	Elementary AAP teacher; 1 required CLTs/wk totaling 1.5 hrs; 2 voluntary CLTs/wk totaling 1 hrs
Meeting planning and looking at data is good practice. My team has always done this frequently and as needed. The way fcps implement clts adds a huge layer of time consuming paperwork. Fcps and especially our school administration does not treat teachers as professionals. They developed this system to make sure everyone does their job. So more work for us and the bad teachers still skate. Focus on those that needs improvement and give me my plan tome back	High Science teacher; 1 required CLTs/wk totaling 1.25 hrs
When CLTs are done correctly, they make the job easier. That includes a group of people who trust each other and are willing to share the workload equitably. When they don't, they are a waste of time. An undue and uncompensated amount of work is placed on the team leader, and the discussions can be counterproductive to the team goals when members bring ego or distrust to the table. When solely focused on data, CTs are less valuable. When they involve best practices, instructional methods, and a division of the workload each teacher has to face alone, they are fantastic. I have been on both kinds, and I can confidently say that the former has made my job more difficult, while the latter has improved it exponentially.	High History/Social Studies Teacher; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 1.5 hrs
We have a very supportive and well run CLT!	Middle Special Ed. resource teacher; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 2.25 hrs
When CLTs are done right, they can be a wonderful resource - a chance to share best practices, remediation strategies, etc. The members of the CLT I belong to would agree that the time we invest in CLT makes us more effective and efficient. It helps that our admins don't "micro-manage" us, but are content to judge our process by the results - students are passing standards and closing gaps as a result of our collaboration. However, when we are required to perform tasks that are unnecessary (ex: unpacking standards we unpacked each of the past 3yrs), inefficient (ex: all of us required to work on one task rather than allowing us to designate parts to specific individuals), or invalid (pretending 1-2 questions on a test is sufficient information to judge whether a student has mastered a standard), the time is merely wasted.	Middle Special Ed. self contained; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 1.5 hrs
CLTs are highly effective if the members are collaborative, the meetings are organized, and the outcome is results-oriented. CLTs are a waste of time if they are not tightly focused.	High Foreign Language teacher; 1 required CLTs/wk totaling 1 hrs
CLTs have made planning, communicating, and student talk so much easier. If CLTs disappeared, it would be such a disservice to the students and the teachers.	High ESOL teacher; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 1.5 hrs

Too much time is spent generating data for administrators (57)

CT's are horrible. They drain the teacher away from the classroom. For all the years we have done CTs, we have NEVER made up a lesson together. We are so busy doing what the administration tells us to do, there is never time. CTs are all about collecting data for administrators and have almost NOTHING to do with teaching. We, in the classroom, know when a student doesn't know something. We need more time to teach what that child does not know and less time collecting data purely about managing perceptions for adults out of the classroom. It is repulsive what this has gone to, taking the professionalism of a teacher and reducing it to this.

Middle English teacher; 1 required CLTs/wk totaling 1.5 hrs

it's nice to have a team to come together and discuss ideas, tests, activities, etc.. However, the amount of work that goes into planning, taking minutes, and debriefing is way overwhelming. This process is insane. Last week we had a one hour meeting that showed us how to set up Outlook Calendar invites so that we could make a school wide calendar to show the regional office when ever CT takes place. An hour, so someone can look at a document and see when our meetings are. It's really ridiculous.

High History/Social Studies Teacher; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 3 hrs

Let us meet with our teams and do what we need to do. This 'checking over our back' and 'mark the box' concept is not helpful

I have taught for more than 20 years. I have always worked in a collaborative environment with other teachers of my subject. Prior to mandated CLTs, this was productive. Mandated CLTs have come with agendas that do not always match the needs or goals of the team. The time spent in CLTs is not as productive as it used to be. Creativity has been diminished. It has changed the focus from planning engaging lessons to checking off tasks that are required by administrators and have little impact on what happens in the classroom. CLTs as they are now do not inspire teachers to be their best (sadly.)

High Science teacher; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 2.5 hrs

CLTs are for administration data. They are not for the benefit of the team, or the children. Our voices don't matter. We are asked for input, we give it, and it is overridden by administration. I don't know any teacher who feels that CLTs are a productive use of valuable teacher time without children, or who feel that anything productive comes out of them. I feel lucky that we only have one required CLT each week. I know others have it much worse. However, I would love to have the time to get things done for my classroom that really matter.

Elementary General Ed. K-6 teacher; 1 required CLTs/wk totaling 1 hr

CLTs are mostly used to fill in online worksheets for the "higher ups." They do not benefit us or our students. We are not treated as professionals, and have no say in how we'd like to do things. I leave most CLT meetings exhausted, stressed out, frustrated, and irritated. They are a WASTE of my day, and have strongly influenced me to leave the profession.

Elementary General Ed. K-6 teacher; 1 required CLTs/wk totaling 1 hr

More CLT time should be used for common planning (48)

CLT's need to focus more on planning curriculum and how to differentiate for students. This would give teachers more power in their own classroom!

Elementary General Ed. K-6
teacher; 2 required CLTs/wk
totaling 2.5 hrs

CLTs should have more autonomy (43)

Our agenda items are too restrictive. Our team feels forced to concentrate on topics that aren't particularly helpful or pertinent to instruction.	Elementary AAP teacher; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 2 hrs
Our 2 Ct's are run by a coach. One is not familiar with our curriculum, and the other is on a mission to promote her own agenda. All lessons that are planned are put into a huge one note document that is "for the state" but incredibly hard to navigate or use. We are a title one school.	Elementary General Ed. K-6 teacher; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 2 hrs
I enjoy our team CLT meetings, but I wish that we were allowed to run them the way the TEAM wants to run them, without administration "suggesting" ideas that our team doesn't like... Our admin will always get it their way. Why fix what isn't broken? Especially when the "suggestion" to "fix" it isn't what the team wants? It's supposed to be a TEACHER directed meeting; listen to the teachers.	Elementary General Ed. K-6 teacher; 1 required CLTs/wk totaling 1 hrs
We were TOLD that we would be in charge of our CLTs but that has not happened. There is a prescribed agenda that we must adhere to even when it is NOT feasible. Most of the attendees are disinterested and feel pressured to assemble information to share. We spend the other teacher planning days preparing material to share at CLTs. I rarely get to look at student work and give feedback on their submissions as I am busy planning for meetings. This has not resulted in more time with kids, it has led to more time away from student learning. Rarely do I get an opportunity to reflect.	Elementary General Ed. K-6 teacher; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 1.5 hrs
CLTs are the worst idea ever. We have "instructional" coaches who run them. We sit there while they impart their great wisdom about how we should be teaching. Yet they refuse to work with children or even model lessons-- "not in our job description". We are supposed to carry back to the classroom what they have told us to do. They want to micromanage. They have less experience than many of us, yet we are supposed to do as they tell us. Sometimes they show up briefly in our classrooms to observe (claiming it has nothing to do with evaluations) and leave useless notes about what they have seen. All in all CLTs are enormous waste of time. I have many years of experience but that is not acknowledged or respected. Also, I have worked with many different teams over the years and we virtually always work in an effective and supportive manner. I have a new team this year yet we respect one another, support one another and help one another OUTSIDE of CLTs. It was the same with my previous team.	Elementary General Ed. K-6 teacher; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 2.5 hrs
CLT's should be 100% teacher directed. We should decide if and when we would like to meet and what we talk about. We are professionals and should be trusted to behave as such. I attended the Du Fours' workshop when they were here in Fairfax and have read their books. I believe that if they could see and participate CLTs done the FCPS way, they would be rolling over in their metaphorical graves.	Elementary AAP teacher; 1 required CLTs/wk totaling 1.5 hrs

Composition of CL Teams not always appropriate (30)

The concept of a CLT is great for teams that have common classes or subject areas. However, many of the CLTs within our school are made up of members of a department that do not have an courses in common (ex: performing arts = band, choir, orchestra; CTE = business, marketing, tech ed). For these CLTs, it is not beneficial to follow the standard CLT format since there is no common planning or common assessments to create.

High CTE teacher; less than 1 on average required CLTs/wk totaling 0.5 hrs

I have been placed in an English 8 clt, however, nothing that I teach or strategies I use are discussed or welcomed to talk about I the clt. Most times I sit and listen to the team discuss what lessons they are doing in their aap, honors and general Ed. Classes . The team taught teacher is also ignored. I find the clt a total waste of time for me. The special education team would be better served if we could have our own clt. We have requested this from administration and been told no.

Middle Special Ed. self contained; 1 required CLTs/wk totaling 1 hrs

Teachers in "unique" positions within a building, (Band Director, Theatre Director, Choral Director, etc.) derive very little from regular CLT meetings, at least in the way that CLT meeting are supposed to help professional development. A Band Director and Theatre Director have almost zero curriculum in common so an "in-building" CLT makes no sense. A "building-to-building" CLT would make much more sense. i.e. 3 or 4 Choral directors from close-by high schools meeting in a CLT would be more productive.

High Speech & Drama Teacher; 1 required CLTs/wk totaling 0.5 hrs

I am required to attend the Language Arts CLT and the Math CLT for my grade level. I don't teach Math. I only teach Language Arts, so the Math CLT is not a good use of my time. I think CLTs are a good idea and can help teachers with struggling students, but no one really needs more than one CLT per week. I have to stay after school or come in early every day because I am only left with 3 out of my 5 planning periods for doing my planning. My team often meets again after school for purposes that we see as necessary, but it should be a choice that teachers, as professionals, can make themselves. It would be most helpful to have ONE CLT meeting per week with both the Math and LA Coaches present. More than that is too much.

Elementary Other (Please specify):Double Language Arts opposite Spanish Immersion; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 1.5 hrs

We are required to attend an hour of CLT for a subject that we don't teach each week. I see the importance of knowing the curriculum that our shared students are learning (I know the curriculum very well and have a good sense of where the students are but not from the time spent at their CLT but rather from my speaking with my colleagues). The work we do during the CLT of the subject that I don't teach is not is not conducive to me being a better teacher to my students but rather takes away valuable and limited time from my planning time that could be better spent planning, grading, prepping for lessons etc.

Elementary General Ed. K-6 teacher; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 2 hrs

For teams that share curriculums, I think this time could be well spent. In a specialist team where we do NOT share a curriculum, I strongly feel this is a waste of our time, and we are only in there because "ALL teams must have CLT's". Teachers and staff are quick to make accommodations for students when their learning needs are different. Our teaching JOBS are different, and all teachers must follow the same set of rules whether they help or not. It's wasteful.

Elementary Specials - Art; 1 required CLTs/wk totaling 0.5 hrs

The Algebra team at xxxxxx High School was divided into General Ed and Special Ed. When members of the team asked for both gen ed and Sped teachers to meet together, the AP over math said the Principal would not support that. We must meet before contract school hours. We where not allowed to choose to meet after school, we were told we must meet before.

High Special Ed. self contained; 1 required CLTs/wk totaling 0.5 hrs

The CLT addresses the needs of regular, honors and AP students, but not the special education/ self-contained students. All assessments are geared towards challenging the regular and honors students which leaves the self-contained students overwhelmed.

High Special Ed. resource teacher; 1 required CLTs/wk totaling 2 hrs

CLTs are rigid, inflexible & an increasing waste of time. We are required to attend CLT's for SUBJECTS WE DO NOT TEACH! There are literally not enough minutes to teach what's required; At CLT's we are repeatedly given additional things to teach & told to find time. It's impossible to do so without compromising other requirements. If we point this out, we are told not to bring it up. Planning time for elem. teachers has decreased steadily, with CLT's & elimination of Mon. afternoon for planning. We are now required to attend meetings after contract hours. The labels for teacher workdays changed so that admin can require attendance at MORE meetings. Parent conferences are eliminated unless needed, but most parents want one anyway. Since CLT's take so much time, conferences occur before or after contract hours. Teachers are held to the highest standards of performance & less time than ever to prepare increasingly rigorous lessons. Negativity is the highest ever. We need time in classrooms

Elementary General Ed. K-6 teacher; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 2.25 hrs

Two required meetings a week on top of required team, department, committee, and staff meetings. I would definitely be able to do my job better if there were not so many required meetings in general. Also, more care needs to be put into training the CLT leaders. Our CLT leader is not willing to collaborate. She is willing to share what she does, but she is not open to feedback from the group.

Middle History/Social Studies Teacher; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 1.5 hrs

More CLT time is needed (26)

My team would like CLT time, but it was not put into the schedule for us, like the rest of the teams. Now we don't have any common time to plan together unless it is outside of contract hours.

Elementary Special Ed. self contained; 0 required CLTs/wk totaling 0 hrs

We do not have CLT's and we are not able to participate in other grades CLT's because we then have their classes so they can have CLTs.

Elementary Specials - PE; 0 required CLTs/wk totaling 0 hrs

Administration is too involved with CLTs (21)

CLTs were originally meant to help teachers plan lessons together. Now they are taken over by administrative ideas of how things should be run! The Instructional Coach is the dictator of most of the requirements. She does more to promote bad feelings on our team than anything else. We get little done with her there that could be used effectively. Being at the meeting is mandatory, and I have never heard it be said, that we did not need to meet!

We often meet for meeting sake! We must use our planning time for these meetings! Much needed planning time. I do not believe the school board realizes how our planning time is taken up by these meetings every week!

English is an area where teachers need time, much more than just planning time to grade papers! You can not run scantrons in English. These CT meeting are taking away time for this purpose!

Middle Reading/writing teacher; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 1.5 hrs

During CLTs my team feels that we are justifying everything we are planning for the week. Our Instructional Coach and Administrator who attend our meetings do not understand what is developmentally appropriate for our grade level. During meetings we have to share what is developmentally appropriate and why. This has made the atmosphere during some of our meetings uncomfortable.

Elementary General Ed. K-6 teacher; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 2 hrs

Our CT meetings are rarely collaborative this year. It is almost as if the specialists that run our meetings are "checking a box." Recently, we expressed our frustration, that the agendas have been set for us, at a CT meeting. We were told that the specialist are getting the agenda from up above.

Elementary General Ed. K-6 teacher; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 1 hrs

CLTs meet for the sake of meeting a time requirement (19)

Weekly meetings are expected by the administration, but, at times, they are not needed. We meet just to meet.

Middle English teacher; 1 required CLTs/wk totaling 0.5 hrs

If they are done correctly and everyone is on board they are amazing!!! I am at a new school this year and they are so far behind what my old school was doing as far as effective CT's. I do not think the ones here are operating as intended. They are really just having meetings to have meetings.

Middle Math teacher; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 1 hrs

I think CLTs are productive when we really have a need to meet. Sometimes, it seems unnecessary and as if we are simply filling the time because it is expected, rather than a productive and necessary use of our very limited and precious time as teachers. For example, in a 4 week math unit, we will have unpacked the standards and made common focus lessons prior to the unit beginning. While we do have some data to check-in about during the unit and we can unpack the next unit's standards, there are usually one or two weeks that we don't need the full hour to accomplish our goals. I think there should be more professional trust in teachers to meet when necessary and for as long as necessary in order to accomplish the intended goals of a CLT. If our agenda is to unpack standards and review data and our team can accomplish that in 30 or 40 minutes, I don't feel as though it is a fair expectation for us to fill the remaining 20 or 30 minutes just to say we met for an hour.

Elementary General Ed. K-6 teacher; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 1.5 hrs

CLT training is needed (13)

<p>CLTs were originally meant to help teachers plan lessons together. Now they are taken over by administrative ideas of how things should be run! The Instructional Coach is the dictator of most of the requirements. She does more to promote bad feelings on our team than anything else. We get little done with her there that could be used effectively. Being at the meeting is mandatory, and I have never heard it be said, that we did not need to meet!</p>	<p>Middle Reading/writing teacher; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 1.5 hrs</p>
<p>We often meet for meeting sake! We must use our planning time for these meetings! Much needed planning time. I do not believe the school board realizes how our planning time is taken up by these meetings every week!</p>	
<p>English is an area where teachers need time, much more than just planning time to grade papers! You can not run scantrons in English. These CT meeting are taking away time for this purpose!</p>	
<p>During CLTs my team feels that we are justifying everything we are planning for the week. Our Instructional Coach and Administrator who attend our meetings do not understand what is developmentally appropriate for our grade level. During meetings we have to share what is developmentally appropriate and why. This has made the atmosphere during some of our meetings uncomfortable.</p>	<p>Elementary General Ed. K-6 teacher; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 2 hrs</p>
<p>I would like to receive some quality training on how to use CLT's most effectively.</p>	<p>Elementary General Ed. K-6 teacher; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 2 hrs</p>
<p>We are told "have CLT meetings" with little guidance in what to do, then we are scolded for not doing what they want us to do.</p>	<p>Elementary General Ed. K-6 teacher; 1 required CLTs/wk totaling 1.25 hrs</p>
<p>Two required meetings a week on top of required team, department, committee, and staff meetings. I would definitely be able to do my job better if there were not so many required meetings in general. Also, more care needs to be put into training the CLT leaders. Our CLT leader is not willing to collaborate. She is willing to share what she does, but she is not open to feedback from the group.</p>	<p>Middle History/Social Studies Teacher; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 1.5 hrs</p>
<p>Our CT meetings are rarely collaborative this year. It is almost as if the specialists that run our meetings are "checking a box." Recently, we expressed our frustration, that the agendas have been set for us, at a CT meeting. We were told that the specialist are getting the agenda from up above.</p>	<p>Elementary General Ed. K-6 teacher; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 1 hrs</p>

Administration is not involved enough with CLTs (12)

There needs to be clear communication as to the purpose of our CT's. Administration needs to help steer us when the group is not working. We shouldn't meet just to say we met. There is not a clear vision at our school about what CT's are really supposed to be doing and it causes a lot of resentment and confusion between members.

Middle History/Social Studies Teacher; 1 required
CLTs/wk totaling 0.5 hrs

unfortunately, too often, team leaders are expected to enforce attendance and/or adherence to policies among colleagues on a team; this is something for which the administration should be responsible.

High History/Social Studies Teacher; 1 required
CLTs/wk totaling 0.5 hrs

Too much CLT time is spent on professional development (10)

Our CLTs are mini Inservices. We rarely discuss the needs of children. It would be nice to discuss the progress and concerns of children rather than being talked at each meeting.

Elementary General Ed. K-6 teacher; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 2 hrs

team meeting seems to be a way to justify the job of our coach

it's used as a way to get the administration's desired training in for math, guided reading and writing

we constantly go over pacing guides and quarter goals--which we are all "privy" to in our calendar/24-7/eCart, etc.

Elementary General Ed. K-6 teacher; 1 required CLTs/wk totaling 1.5 hrs

we are required to create common assessments during this time, which do not necessarily help with our teaching or planning/management

although we share out, none of us feel free to really voice our own opinion--it has to coincide with what the coaches or admin want to hear

most of the time our CLT seems punitive

When we use the time to plan and get materials ready for lessons this is great. When we have professional development in place of planning it is hard to be prepared to be the best teacher possible.

Elementary Special Ed. resource teacher; 3 required CLTs/wk totaling 3 hrs

Our CT's are run by our Instructional Coaches - are they considered administration? They set the agenda, occasionally asking for input. Ct's are often used for training - how to use Dreambox etc, kid talk and how we are going to meet the needs of each child, data days, etc. We can go for 2 to 3 weeks without planning a lesson depending on the other topics that come up. With over 4 hours of CT's a week, (1 hour 20 minutes each for Reading/LA, Math and Social Studies/Science), we often plan the order to be taught, the standards for each lesson, unpack what the standard really means, etc. Planning what book to use, what graphic organizer to use, what math project to use, group or individual experiment, copying worksheets or games or directions or recording sheets, is all done outside of CT's, usually on my time. Everyone says CT is for planning lessons, but I have yet to go to a CT and walk out with a complete lesson to take to my classroom. It has never happened.

Elementary General Ed. K-6 teacher; 3 required CLTs/wk totaling 3 hrs

Lack of buy-in by CLT members hurts effectiveness (8)

I have worked in fantastic CLTs and I have worked in horrible CLTs. Most of this is determined by the members of the CLT. What is their goal? Are they open and willing to work together? Do members share a goal? If individuals are permitted to use the CLTs to cause dissension or discord, positive results will not happen for either the other teachers or the students. If CLT members work collaboratively, sharing both ideas and materials with a positive attitude and work ethic, these can be great.

Middle Math teacher; 3 required CLTs/wk totaling 3 hrs

Conflicts among the team hurt CLT effectiveness (5)

Our CLT leader assigns tasks (review and improve a test) and dismisses everything the group worked on. CLT leader is dismissive of anything she does not participate in or initiate. (very frustrating)!!!

High Other (Please specify):Special Ed Team and SC; 1 required CLTs/wk totaling 0.5 hrs

Other comments of interest

The idea of collaborative teams is a good one, and had benefited both me as a teacher, and my team, but as with most types of reform, goes too far. CTs should not, but do, exist for guidance counselors, admins, secretaries, or in cross-curricular levels. As has happened of late in FCPS, a good idea gets carried too far, and well past the point of effectiveness. Curriculum teams should get together to study student performance, develop common assessments, identify weak spots, and remediate needy students. The constant enforcement and needless accountability ruins the entire organic nature of what should be a best practice.

High English teacher; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 0.5 hrs

CLT leader selection is done in secret and arbitrary. I was a most successful CLT leader -- all students passed their SOL and my co-teachers and I enjoyed working together. Then I was given a different set of classes -no explanation. My co-teachers miss me this year and ask for my advice.

With regard to IB, the CLT team leader was self-appointed (at the first meeting she stated that she wanted to be team leader and, and it was obvious that there had been a meeting before the meeting to decide to make her one--some in the room were "in the know.") As far as some of the questions are concerned, there are days when there are TWO CLT meetings (there is little effort to coordinate) and meeting times are driven by the next crisis or emergency that the administration has deemed necessary. CLT meetings rarely have agendas, and when they do, the meetings veer off-track. There are some in the meetings that are favorites, and their ideas are used without enough discussion.

High English teacher; 3 required CLTs/wk totaling 3.5 hrs

Believe it or not, the Math Coaches and Instructional Coaches who run the meetings can be unprepared, snarky and rude. They have seemed to have completely forgotten what it's like to actually teach. There is zero differentiating for classroom teachers, nor any consideration given to the amount of expertise and experience acquired. Overall, a serious lack of respect.....

Elementary General Ed. K-6 teacher; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 4 hrs

CLTs have changed since the Monday school day was extended at elementary schools. More administrators and non-classroom teachers attend. These are not really members of the grade-level team. So the meetings are not really focused entirely on grade-level planning and collaboration. Specialists are making presentations about new technology (like at staff meetings) and teachers are discussing student performance for at-risk students (like the old SST meetings). So the team members often don't have time to share about common plans, assessments or field trips/events. Team members have to do some of their coordinating OUTSIDE of CLTs because so much other stuff is being brought up at CLTs. The purpose/function of the CLTs seems different now since we are covering more schoolwide issues and student-specific issues.

Elementary Special Ed. self contained; less than 1 on average required CLTs/wk totaling 0.5 hrs

I feel that the instructional coaches are a waste of FCPS's money. I believe that dedicated teachers can collaborate and design weekly lessons to meet the needs of their students without the help of the coaches. I believe that data analysis is important for the team to view and discuss areas of growth and strength, but I would like to see the instructional coaches set up targeted interventions lessons and pull small groups of the team's students to reteach specific standards. I feel the best use of the CLT meeting time would be to plan out weekly lessons, enrichment activities, common assessments and discuss students who are struggling with specific standards. We should be able to make copies of materials and prepare center activities for the upcoming week.

Elementary General Ed. K-6 teacher; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 1.5 hrs

100% of our CLT meeting time is spent re-hashing common assessments and tracking where everyone is (on pace/behind/ahead). Zero time is spent on improving instruction. Near the end of the year, some time is spent discussing a remediation plan, zero time spent on preparing for the remediation.

High Math teacher; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 2 hrs

As a specialist, we don't focus on students at all during our CLT's. The meetings mostly consist of going over information that could be sent in an email (such as FLE coverage schedules, reminding teachers to have emergency sub plans, etc.)

Elementary Librarian; less than 1 on average required CLTs/wk totaling 0.5 hrs

The same team members do all the work and some team members do not contribute. We are required to do the same thing at the same time on the same day- regardless of our students abilities. It seems to be a way for incompetent teachers to get the benefits from stronger team members, often to the detriment of students and teachers. The theoretical idea of a CLT is great, implementation and expectation is not. Our admin considers the 15 minutes in the am and the 10 min in the pm as part of our 300 planning minutes (for classroom teachers only- specialists have way more planning time and less CLTs).

Elementary General Ed. K-6 teacher; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 2 hrs

The meeting are helpful, but ESOL, Special Ed, and other specialists are often choosing between attending CLT or missing a class we should be teaching.

Elementary Special Ed. resource teacher; 2 required CLTs/wk totaling 1.5 hrs