**Why Collaborative Work Teams?**

Collegiality takes teacher professional development beyond personal, idiosyncratic reflection and beyond dependence on outside ‘experts’ to a point where teachers can learn from each other, sharing and developing their expertise together (*Liberman and Miller 1984*).

When teachers work collaboratively research has shown that it builds teacher confidence and can then create a culture where teachers are willing to experiment and take risks in trialling and implementing school improvement strategies. Teachers’ working together collaboratively is a pivotal practice for ensuring that teaching is of the highest standard.

Teachers and schools can benefit from collaborative work teams in several ways:

* Through formal and informal discussions about teaching, that can shape and support individual and school improvement.
* Teachers are better prepared to support one another's strengths and accommodate weaknesses.
* Schools become better prepared and organised to examine new ideas, methods, and materials.
* Teachers working in teams with a range of experience can support and mentor new graduates. All teachers can learn from each other.

**What does collaboration look like?**

* Two of more teachers working together to investigate a common problem/issue
* There is shared responsibilities amongst the group members
(shared fairly and equally)
* The work is ‘owned’ collectively and there is mutual responsibility for the outcomes.
* Decisions are made together
* Members give each other feedback
* Work is interdependent