

## Figure 1.2: Addressing Barriers to Collaborative Learning and Improvement

### Expose and Address Institutional Barriers

1. Review current policies and procedures to see how they either encourage or hinder people working collaboratively.
2. Examine your priorities, and shift how you spend your time so that your priorities get the most time and attention.
3. Examine schedules to identify opportunities to combine individual planning time into team time, to establish blocks of time for teachers to collaborate: such as arranging specials so that each grade is at specials together or modifying academic start time.
4. Examine the duration of team tasks taking into account time needed to accomplish both short- and long-term objectives.
5. Examine the composition of teams (for example, grade level, vertical grade level, departmental, cross-curricular, leadership, and so on) to determine if the participants are best-suited to meet the team's purpose and fulfill its objectives.
6. Examine meeting objectives and agenda to determine if these fulfill the team's needs and expectations.
7. Create learning forums (for example, study teams, action research teams, focus groups, community planning groups, and so on) as part of the real work of the school.
8. Embed professional learning in real work, bringing successful best practices into alignment with emerging best new evidence-based practices.
9. Make data accessible, and use the data regularly to inform decisions.
10. Consider all the stakeholders and ways in which they can be brought together to address schoolwide issues (for example, safety, discipline, playground or study hall supervision, community involvement, and so on).

### Expose and Address Social Barriers

1. Explore the mental models, assumptions, and beliefs people have about teamwork.
2. Celebrate team accomplishments.
3. Model effective teamwork yourself.
4. Sponsor skill-building sessions for teams.
5. Speak in terms of *we*.
6. Manage personal and team meeting time more effectively.
7. Challenge how faculty, department, and grade-level meetings currently work.
8. Create opportunities for diverse groups to come together to challenge assumptions, learn new perspectives, and share ideas.
9. Encourage innovation teams to find new and better ways to meet emerging student needs.