

Norms of Collaboration

- 1. Pausing.** Pausing before responding or asking a question allows time for thinking and enhances dialogue, discussion, and decision-making.
- 2. Paraphrasing.** Using a paraphrase starter that is comfortable for you – *So ...* or *As you are ...* or *You're thinking ...* – and following the starter with an efficient paraphrase assists members of the group in hearing and understanding one another as they converse and make decisions.
- 3. Posing Questions.** Two intentions of posing questions are to explore and to specify thinking. Questions may be posed to explore perceptions, assumptions, and interpretations, and to invite others to inquire into their thinking. For example, *What might be some conjectures you are exploring?* Use focusing questions such as, *Which students, specifically?* or *What might be an example of that?* to increase the clarity and precision of group members' thinking. Inquire into others' ideas before advocating one's own.
- 4. Putting ideas on the table.** Ideas are the heart of meaningful dialogue and discussion. Label the intention of your comments. For example: *Here is one idea ...* or *One thought I have is ...* or *Here is a possible approach ...* or *Another consideration might be ...*
- 5. Paying attention to self and others.** Meaningful dialogue and discussion are facilitated when each group member is conscious of self and of others, and is aware of what (s)he is saying *and* how it is said as well as how others are responding. This includes paying attention to learning styles when planning, facilitating, and participating in group meetings and conversations.
- 6. Presuming positive intentions.** Assuming that others' intentions are positive promotes and facilitates meaningful dialogue and discussion, and prevents unintentional put-downs. Using positive intentions in speech is one manifestation of this norm.
- 7. Pursuing a balance between advocacy and inquiry.** Pursuing and maintaining a balance between advocating for a position and inquiring about one's own and others' positions assists the group in becoming a learning organization.