



Understanding the Basics of a Professional Learning Community

Category: Professional Learning Communities

Workshop Overview

Following is a general overview of this workshop, including desired participant outcomes, an explanation of the workshop’s alignment with Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning, and resources that are included in print and electronic form.

Category: Professional Learning Communities

Duration: Full workshop – 3 hours

Desired Outcomes:

Participants will...

- Identify the key attributes of professional learning communities.
- Understand how learning communities can impact school improvement.
- Utilize three corollary questions to guide their work as a PLC.

Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning:

- **Learning Communities:** Occurs within learning communities committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and goal alignment.
- **Leadership:** Requires skillful leaders who develop capacity, advocate, and create support systems for professional learning.
- **Resources:** Requires prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources for educator learning.
- **Data:** Uses a variety of sources and types of student, educator, and system data to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning.
- **Learning Designs:** Integrates theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes.
- **Implementation:** Applies research on change and sustains support for implementation of professional learning for long term change.
- **Outcomes:** Aligns its outcomes with educator performance and student curriculum standards.

Resources in This Binder:

- Handouts
 - PLC Preview Survey
 - Activity Sheet: Pillar Talk
 - Workshop Agenda
 - Attendee Notes
 - 3-2-1 Evaluation Form
 - Certificate of Completion
- “Think About It” Exercise
- Follow-Up Team Meeting Agenda
- Ready, Set, Go Planning Activity





Topic Outline

Understanding the general flow of topics to be covered is an important part of giving a strong presentation. This allows the presenter(s) to lead effective group discussions and speak extemporaneously. Following are the main topics covered in this PowerPoint presentation. As you prepare to give the workshop, you may want to refer to this page often.



Main Topics:

1. Origin of the Thinking About Professional Learning Communities
2. Pillar #1: A Focus on Learning
3. Pillar #2: A Collaborative Culture
4. Pillar #3: A Focus on Results
5. Next Steps for Developing Our PLC

Subtopics:

1. Origin of the Thinking About Professional Learning Communities

- a. Business Origins
- b. Dr. Richard DuFour
- c. Defining a PLC
- d. 3 Pillars of a PLC

2. Pillar #1: A Focus on Learning

- a. Mission
- b. Learning for All Students

3. Pillar #2: A Collaborative Culture

- a. Working Together
- b. Qualities of Effective Collaborative Teams

4. Pillar #3: A Focus on Results

- a. Data-Driven Decisions
- b. Systematic and Timely Interventions

5. Next Steps for Developing Our PLC

- a. It's Not an Overnight Process
- b. Tight vs. Loose Leadership

Presentation Outline



This outline is designed for you to see the PowerPoint presentation at a glance. Note that slide numbers and the approximate amount of time needed per slide are shown in the right two columns. **The times in bold print show the approximate total time needed for that topic, which includes the approximate times for the activities, shown in parentheses.** You might consider keeping this page within reach during the presentation.

Section of Presentation	Slide #	Timing (mins)
Getting Started		
Introduce self, co-teacher, participants	1-2	
Explain materials issued to participants		
Cover objectives (from Workshop Overview)	3	10
Activity – Pillar Talk	4	(5)
Topic 1 – Origin of the Thinking About Professional Learning Communities		
	5-9	10
Topic 2 – Pillar #1: A Focus on Learning		
	10-13	30
Activity – Pillar Talk #1	13	(20)
Topic 3 – Pillar #2: A Collaborative Culture		
	14-22	40
Activity – Pillar Talk #2	22	(20)
Break		
Topic 4 – Pillar #3: A Focus on Results		
	23-29	50
Activity – Pillar Talk #3	29	(25)
Topic 5 – Next Steps for Developing Our PLC		
	30-34	30
Activity – PLC Preview Survey	34	(20)
Closing Thoughts		
	35-36	5
Total of 2 hours and 55 minutes (not including break)		

Helpful tip!

This workshop can be broken up into shorter sessions so that you can adapt the presentation according to your time constraints.

Slide 13

PDXPERT A FOCUS ON LEARNING

- Does our school have a continuous focus on learning? For students? For adults?
 - *Describe any evidence that supports your opinion.*
- Does our school culture collectively support learning for all?

ACTIVITY: Pillar Talk #1

The MASTER Teacher
Doing. Better. Here.

Activity: Pillar Talk #1

Allow 20 minutes for this activity.

Instructions:

At your signal, have participants move to join their Pillar #1 partner. Once they are in their partner groups (which can be standing or sitting), read the guiding questions on this slide. Instruct them to discuss these points with their partner. Remind them to take turns so that each person has a chance to share. Leave this slide up so the guiding questions are visible. Allow 8 minutes for discussion. After 8 minutes (which can be adjusted according to your needs), have people stay in their groups in order to debrief.

Debrief:

Ask:

- *What were some of the things that came up when discussing our first question?*
- *Does our school have a continuous focus on learning? What evidence is there of this?*

Allow the opportunity for participants to share their thoughts. This time can be flexible based on the number of participants wanting to share. As appropriate, invite participants to commit to learning all they can about PLCs and striving to implement the concepts.

After the debrief, have participants return to their seats.

“Think About It” Exercise

Fill out your responses to the questions in each quadrant. This document will be used during your next group or team meeting. A recommended agenda for your meeting is on the back of this page.



Something I learned during the workshop, or something that surprised me...	Something I would like to discuss further with my team...
I would like more information about...	Other comments about the workshop...