

DuFour, Richard, Robert Eaker, Rebecca DuFour, **On Common Ground: The Power of Professional Learning Communities**, Solution Tree, 2005. Roland Barth, Rebecca DuFour, Richard DuFour, Robert Eaker, Barbara Eason Watkins, Michael Fullan, Lawrence Lezotte, Douglas Reeves, Jonathan Saphier, Mike Schmoker, Dennis Sparks, Rick Stiggins.
(PLC)

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Section 1 Overview of PLCs

7 Chapter 1 Recurring Themes of Professional Learning Communities and the Assumptions They Challenge, *Richard DuFour, Robert Eaker, Rebecca DuFour*

p 9 Daunting Challenges facing PLCs:

1. Developing and applying shared knowledge
2. Sustaining the hard work of change
3. Transforming school culture

p 16 Collaborative Cultures Versus Teacher Isolation

- **Goodbye Mr. Chips** – 1939 [1969] A shy, withdrawn English schoolteacher, Charles Edward 'Mr Chips' Chipping (Robert Donat) [Peter O'Toole] falls for a flashy showgirl.
- **To Sir With Love** – 1967, Engineer Mark Thackeray (Sidney Poitier) arrives to teach a totally undisciplined class at an East End school.
- **Dangerous Minds** – 1995, LouAnne Johnson (Michelle Pfeiffer), a Marine, arrives at a high school with poor racial minorities from East Palo Alto, CA
- **Stand and Deliver** – 1988, Jaime Escalante (Edward James Olmos), Garfield High School, East Los Angeles, CA

p18 Collective Capacity Versus Individual Development

- "... capacity building ... is the daily habit of *working together*, and **you can't learn this from a workshop or course**. You need to learn it by doing it and getting better at it on purpose." Michael Fullan, 2005, p69.

p 20 A Focus on Results Versus a Focus on Activities

p 21 Assessment For Learning Versus Assessment of Learning

p 23 Widespread Leadership Versus the Charismatic Leader

"... shared or distributive leadership" is essential to building learning communities, The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, p 17, 2003.

- No heroes need apply.
- Negative correlation between charismatic leadership and sustained organizational excellence, Collins and Porras, 1997.

31 Chapter 2 What is a Professional Learning Community? *Richard DuFour*

p 32 Big Idea #1: Ensuring that students learn

- What do we want each student to learn?
- How will we know when each student has learned it?
- How will we respond when a student experiences difficulties in learning?
 - **The third question separates learning communities from traditional schools**

p34 Response of PLC's response to students who experience difficulty:

- *Timely*. The school quickly identifies students who need additional time and support.
- *Based on intervention rather than remediation*. The plan provides students with help as soon as they experience difficulty rather than relying on summer school, retention, and remedial courses.
- *Directive*. Instead of *inviting* students to seek additional help, the systematic plan *requires* students to devote extra time and receive additional assistance until they have mastered the necessary concepts.
- Example: Progress report for every student, every 3 weeks – Stevenson HS.

p 36 Big Idea #2: A Culture of Collaboration

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- **Formative assessment**
 - “Are students learning what they need to learn?”
 - “Who needs additional time and support to learn?”
- Summative assessment:
 - “Which students learned what was intended and which students did not?”
- Normative assessment:
 - x
- Curriculum:
 - intended
 - implemented
 - attained

p 39 Bid Idea #3: A Focus on Results

Section 2 Critical Questions of PLCs

45 Chapter 3 Putting It All Together: Standards, Assessment, and Accountability in Successful Professional Learning Communities, *Douglas Reeves*

p 46 Standards are not enough

- First, standards, in their present form are inadequate as a foundation for improved achievement and professional practices. Schools and school systems must translate standards into a set of rational, relevant, and above all *focused* expectations that I have labeled “power standards.”
- Second, standards must be accompanied by frequent common assessments in the classroom. While the nation may be, according to the charges of many critics, over-tested, our students are actually under-assessed. This critical distinction lies at the heart of effective reform efforts.
- Third, state and local accountability systems must include not only test scores, but also explicit indicators of adult behavior such as teaching practices, curriculum, leadership, and other influences on student achievement.

p 48 Power Standards: From Fantasy to Focus

- “While academic standards vary widely in their specificity and clarity, they almost all have one thing in common: there are too many of them (Marzano & Kendall, 1998). [Infinitely long lists of irrelevant standards.]

p 49 Standards: The Best Alternative to the Bell Curve

- Standards may be bad, but the bell curve is worse.

p50 Criteria of Power Standards

- Standard, academic expectation, objectives, curriculum elements, benchmarks, whatever)
 1. Endurance
 - Recurring nature of key skills and knowledge that students must display
 - Both academic (i.e., RRR) and ancillary skills (e.g., time mgmt, proj mgmt, personal organization)
 2. Leverage

- Success in one standard is very likely to be associated with success in other standards
 - Example: non-fiction writing => math, social studies and science
 - Example: creating and drawing inferences from tables, charts and graphs => record/interpret results from a science experiment, better analyze/understand data in economics, geography, history, health and phys ed
3. Essential for the next level of instruction
- What are you willing to give up in YOUR curriculum? A: Nothing.
 - What can the grade below you give up in THEIR curriculum? A: There is ALWAYS something.

p 52

- Standards, in sum, are a necessary but insufficient element of the equation for improving student achievement and educational equity.

p53 Assessment for Learning: The Key to Continuous Improvement

- Consistency
- Timeliness
 - p 55 Timeliness: The “Nintendo Effect”
 - Make learning as interesting as playing Nintendo
 - Immediate feedback, as in music lessons
- Differentiation
 - Variety of assessment strategies, techniques, methods

p 60 Accountability: The Leadership and Learning Connection

- Tier 1
 - Typical: test scores and other data
- Tier 2:
 - Measurable indicators that reflect professional practices [?]
- Tier 3:
 - School narrative – story behind the data [?]

65 Chapter 4 Assessment FOR Learning: Building a Culture of Confident Learners, Rick Stiggins

- thin

85 Chapter 5 Masters of Motivation, Jonathon Saphier

p 86 Crucial Messages for Effort-Based Ability

1. This is important.
2. You can do it.
3. I won't give up on you.

p97 Table: Creating a Climate of High Achievement for All Students

p. 97 Creating a Climate of High Achievement for All Students			
Community of Mutual Support	Confidence and Risk Taking		Influence and Control
Knowing others	Mistakes are a sign of weakness	Mistakes help one learn	Students are empowered to influence the pace of the class
Greeting, acknowledging, listening, responding, and affirming	Speed counts. Faster = Smarter	Care, perseverance, and craftsmanship count.	Students negotiate the rules of the “classroom game.”
Group identity, responsibility, and interdependence	Good students do it by themselves	Good students need help and a lot of feedback	Students are taught to sue the principles of learning and other learning strategies
Cooperative learning, social skills, class meetings, group dynamics	Inborn intelligence is the main determinant of success	Effort and effective strategies are the main determinants of success	Students use knowledge of learning styles and make choices
Problem solving and conflict resolution	Only the bright few can achieve at a high level	Everyone is capable of high achievement	Students and their communities are sources of knowledge

p 98 Explicit Teaching of Effective Effort to All Students

Six attributes of effective effort:

- Time
- Focus
- Resourcefulness
- Strategies
- Use of Feedback
- Commitment

115 Chapter 6 Turning Book Burners Into Lifelong Learners, *Roland S. Barth***p 129 Reduce didactic instruction**

- ~85% is teacher-directed, didactic instruction
- ~15% is something else
- ~5% is retained
- Oops

Section 3 Creating PLCs**135 Chapter 7** No Turning Back: The Ironclad Case for Professional Learning Communities, *Mike Schmoker***p 138 The Case for Learning Communities****p 139 The Effects of Isolation****155 Chapter 8** Leading for Transformation in Teaching, Learning, and Relationships, *Dennis Sparks***p 164 Teachable Point of View (TPOV)**

- => Virtuous Teaching Cycles

Section 4 Placing PLCs in a Broader Context

177 Chapter 9 More Effective Schools: Professional Learning Communities in Action, *Lawrence W. Lezotte*

p 184 The Core Beliefs of the Effective Schools Process

1. School improvement must be school-by-school and one school at a time.
2. There are only two kinds of schools – improving schools and declining schools.
3. Every adult in a school is important.
4. The capacity to improve a school already resides in the school.
5. You and your colleagues are already doing the best you can given what you know and the current conditions in which you find yourself.
6. All children can learn and the school controls enough of the variable to assure that virtually all students do learn.

193 Chapter 10 Implementing PLCs in the Chicago Public Schools, *Barbara Eason-Watkins*

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Section 5 A Call to Action

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p 227 Ten Barriers to Action and How to Overcome Them

1. Substituting a decision for action.
2. Substituting mission for action.
3. Planning as a substitute for action.
4. Complexity as a barrier to action.
 - Virtue of simple language, simple structures, simple concepts, and the power of common sense.
5. Mindless precedent as a barrier to action.
6. Internal competition as a barrier to action.
7. Badly designed measurement systems as a barrier to action.
 - Good: In-process measures.
 - Bad: End-of-process measures.
8. An external focus as a barrier to action.
9. A focus on attitudes as a barrier to action.
10. Training as a substitute for action.
 - Job-embedded learning

p 239

- Not observation-based
- “Teacher of the Year” as counterproductive force

p240 SMART goals

- **S**trategic and **S**pecific.
- **M**easurable.
- **A**ttainable.
- **R**esults-Oriented.
- **T**imebound.

p 241 **Formative assessments**

- Formative assessments: in-process
- Summative assessments: end-of-process

p242 Frequent assessments

- Few, frequent assessments Good
- Many, infrequent assessment: Bad

p 249 Not ready – analysis paralysis