



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Arkansas and Professional Learning Communities at Work

What is the goal of the project?

The Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) is transforming Arkansas to lead the nation in student-focused education so that every Arkansas student graduates prepared for college, career, and community engagement. In partnership with Solution Tree, a leading provider in education professional development, ADE began the PLC at Work project, which provides support to selected schools over a three-year period. When the PLC at Work process is implemented with fidelity, schools experience dramatic improvement in learning results by both students and adults. The schools will serve as working laboratories for the PLC at Work process, conducting action research and sharing best practices with other schools throughout the state.

The PLC at Work process focuses on three big ideas that drive work inside each school:

1. The purpose of our school is to ensure all students learn at high levels.
2. Helping all students learn requires a collaborative and collective effort.
3. To assess our effectiveness in helping all students learn, we must focus on results—evidence of student learning—and use results to inform and improve our professional practice and respond to students who need intervention or enrichment.

Which schools are participating in the project?

The PLC project is currently comprised of four cohorts. For a complete list of all participating schools and districts, visit <http://www.arkansased.gov/divisions/special-projects/professional-learning-communities-in-arkansas>.

How were schools selected?

The schools were selected through a rigorous application and evaluation process. A panel of educational professionals knowledgeable of the PLC at Work process reviewed the applications and used the application scores to select the schools, which are representative of all five regions of the state.

What will the schools receive through the project?

Selected schools will receive up to 50 days of on-site professional development provided by trained and certified PLC at Work associates. These days will include a combination of training, observations, coaching, and other job-embedded staff development. Training will consist of an overview of the PLC at Work process, leadership coaching for the school's Guiding Coalition, and instruction on assessment, interventions, and subject-matter content.

In addition, schools will receive print and video resources that further support implementation, and school representatives will attend conferences where they will share promising practices and strategies.

Why was PLC at Work selected to help fulfill ADE's vision of leading the nation in student-focused education?

ADE and its stakeholders are committed to fulfilling their vision to lead the nation in student-focused education. Arkansas' leaders adopted legislation focused on providing schools with an opportunity to receive evidence-based, on-site, in-depth training to deeply implement Professional Learning Communities at Work.

How will success of the project be measured?

PLC at Work includes both educational inquiry and action research. To ensure progress, both in process and in student achievement, data will be collected, analyzed, and used to make decisions. Selected schools will be given a Needs Assessment to examine process and achievement data. Formative assessments will be given throughout the year to evaluate growth and determine next steps. Additional data, as it relates to the unique needs of each individual school, will also be determined and monitored.

[Education Northwest](#), a national research organization, will conduct an independent research study by collecting and interpreting meaningful data which will provide an objective evaluation of the project. The organization provides high-quality research, technical assistance, and evaluation services across the country.

Where can I go to learn more about PLC at Work?

[AllthingsPLC.info](#) is the authoritative source for information about PLC at Work. The site is designed exclusively for those who are committed to improving student learning and want to learn more about the process.

Visit our ADE PLC web page for more information on the project and our cohort schools at [Professional Learning Communities in Arkansas](#).