High Reliability Teacher
Cohort 4 Applications
Open

RTI at Work that Works: A Conversation
with Mike Mattos

SUGGESTED READING:
- *Leading Beyond Intention* by Jeanne Spiller and Karen Power
- *PLC at Work and Your Small School* by Breez Longwell Daniels
- *Building Great School Counselor-Administrator Teams* by Tonya C. Balch and Bradley V. Balch

Collecting Evidence to Monitor the PLC Process on Campus with Brig Leane
Session #486998

Let’s Get REAL! Identifying Essential Standards and Answering the First Question of the PLC at Work Process with Eric Twadell Session #487041
In the classroom, novice teachers have adopted the practice of observing the expert, experienced teachers. This not only provides valuable learning opportunities for the observing teacher, but also creates avenues for feedback and improvement for the experienced teacher. Moments of discussion, collaboration, and reflection are mutually beneficial to both parties involved. This is exactly the type of experience available to teams in PLC work.

Visiting groups have the opportunity to observe high-functioning collaborative teams or guiding coalitions of PLCs throughout the state of Arkansas. These visiting groups have the ability to select areas of focus in PLC processes, choose which teams or campuses they might like to observe, and ask questions to advance implementation of PLC processes at their own campuses. Observing practitioners who have been successful in PLC work can offer insight and strategies for visiting teams, while simultaneously providing observed teams with useful feedback and reflection on their own work.

Kayci Hardnett in the Office of Special Projects at DESE will act as a “match-maker” to facilitate the best on-site experience for your visit. If you have a team looking to make an on-site visit, please fill out our form “PLC Project School Visit Request” and provide information that will help us select a school and team that will be a good fit. Following this, a meeting can be set to tailor the visit to your specific needs. Contact Kayci Hardnett at kayci.hardnett@ade.arkansas.gov with any questions or to coordinate a visit.

**Effective Teaching Institute: The New Art and Science of Teaching to be held October 17 - 19 in Hot Springs**

Empower educators to optimize student learning

Effective teaching is a complex but critical endeavor. High-quality instruction is the most important tool educators have at their disposal to positively affect student learning, but the development of instructional expertise requires focused, deliberate practice. This institute gives educators at all levels the knowledge and tools to become better teachers and empowers school leaders to maximize the impact of coaching, observation, and evaluation.

Join us for three days of intensive professional learning guided by experts who have worked directly with Dr. Marzano to help educators implement best practices. You’ll have the opportunity to network with some of the most insightful minds in education on topics such as instructional leadership, a common language of instruction, deliberate practice, and instructional coaching.

With keynote and breakout sessions featuring the most recent research on effective instruction, a panel of experts to address questions from the audience, and time for teams to reflect, focus on next steps, and seek the advice of the presenters, this is an event you won’t want to miss.

**Keynote Speakers:** Tina H. Boogren, Shelley Gies, and Philip B. Warrick
Professional Learning Communities collaborate in formal and informal settings. Whether face to face or in digital arenas such as Zoom or Google, technology is essential to leverage not only the content of these collective events, but also to capture formative student data, and maximize efficiency.

Many educators are overwhelmed, still experiencing the back-lash of the struggles with technology from the emergency remote learning experience. With that being said, technology cannot be abandoned. The opportunity it provides to gather formative student data to inform “just in time” instructional adjustments, and support personalized learning to meet the needs of ALL students is necessary to the work of PLCs.

So how do we integrate technology into PLCs, instruction, and the systems of the work we call “school”? You could do it on your own, but you don’t have to. There are people and systems in Arkansas to support the work you are doing through purposeful utilization of technology.

The Digital Learning/ eLearning Coordinators at DESE can help in this area. These coordinators are available via Zoom to offer support in setting up data collection systems, creating agendas, and general PLC organization. They also offer mini-trainings on Universal Design for Learning, Social Emotional Learning, Online Course Design, and digital tools training ranging from Google Classroom to Flip.

If you have a specific need regarding digital learning and a desire for support, the Digital Learning/eLearning Coordinators at DESE can help facilitate, coordinate, and connect you with resources.

The Digital Learning Unit is one of the best-kept secrets DESE has to offer. Reach out today and let us help you maximize the efficiency of your professional learning community and collaborative teams. To learn more contact Gerard Newsom, Digital Learning Unit Event and Support Coordinator, at gerard.newsom@ade.arkansas.gov.
The Arkansas State Board of Education visited Grace Hill Elementary in the Rogers School District to observe and learn more about inclusive teaching practices.

Tim Brown led an RTI work session for administrators in the Fort Smith School District on September 2.
Fun fact about me: I love sports and fan girl over college coaches.

What inspired you to become an educator? My father in law, a retired elementary principal. I had talked myself out of being a teacher but he encouraged me to try it and the rest is history as they say.

How long have you been involved in the work of Professional Learning Communities? Around 15 years. I went to my first institute when I was a high school counselor and also remember attending the RTI workshop with Mike Mattos.

What is the most rewarding part of this work for you? Seeing the lightbulbs come on for both teachers and students. I love when things that we have worked on start to fall in place and we see real results.

What is the biggest PLC challenge you have faced and how were you able to work through it? As you would guess, it would be the pandemic. This has been tough because it really rocked us back to the basics, but we had a good foundation in place and have been able to rebuild some things and things are going in the right direction again.

What is one thing you would say to encourage a school or teacher who is struggling with becoming a PLC? It is a game changer! When your school goes through the PLC process and becomes a true collaborative learning community you will see a complete shift in your culture, student achievement and teacher effectiveness. One of my greatest days was when one of my teachers said, "I finally get it....it's not about the teaching, but about the learning." YES!!

What is one success your school has achieved that you would like to celebrate? Northside was the first PLC Model High School in Arkansas. We are also the ONLY model high school in the country with our demographics.

Where do you see your school in five years as a result of becoming a Professional Learning Community? Northside will be a DuFour Award Winner for being the best model school in the country!

What would you say to a school who is considering joining the world of PLCs? Don't wait! It will be the most professionally rewarding thing you will ever do!
Fun fact about me: I am an artist. I love to paint, draw, and sculpt. I am also a marathon runner.

What inspired you to become an educator? My mother was an educator for 42 years. She still subs every day. She was dynamic in her work ethic. She served 22 years in Stephens Public Schools while also working at K-Mart after school for 22 years. She taught in Webster Parish Schools in Louisiana for 20 years and served for one year in the Pulaski County Special School District.

How long have you been involved in the work of Professional Learning Communities? Three years.

What is the most rewarding part of this work for you? RESULTS orientation and teamwork, as well as the equity it brings for students.

What is the biggest PLC challenge you have faced and how were you able to work through it? The biggest challenge has been making the vision live through staff doubts and building their capacity even though they may lack in experience being on high-performing teams. We continue to be diligent and focus on the good and effective work, with a focus on our mission.

What is one thing you would say to encourage a school or teacher who is struggling with becoming a PLC? Consider the efficacy it will bring to your colleagues and scholars. In addition, I would encourage you to remember your why and reflect on the opportunities for equity you would wish for your own children or grandchildren.

What is one success your school has achieved that you would like to celebrate? We have formulated teams and established processes to monitor data, allowing us to make adjustments midstream instead of waiting on autopsy results. We have celebrated incremental gains in creating systems, CFAs, etc. We are investing in our new teachers.

Where do you see your school in five years as a result of becoming a Professional Learning Community? In five years, we will be a National PLC Model School and our doors will be bursting open with students who want to attend our school. Overall, we will close achievement gaps for students and reduce our number of special education referrals.

What would you say to a school who is considering joining the world of PLCs? Invest yourself in the research and process. It is the best thing that has happened to me in my professional learning as an educator. Also, consider inter-rater reliability, calibration, and proficiency-based assessment & instruction. When we learn and grow, we are better able to help our students.
PD Opportunities

The New Art and Science of Teaching Series: Specific Classroom Strategies for Optimal Student Learning

Make Your Goals SMARTer with Jason Andrews - Session #486860

Improving Teacher Development and Evaluation Book Study Session #486990

Laying the Foundation: Getting Insanely Clear on Our Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum with Eric Twadell Session #488134

Resources:

Cognitive Rigor Matrices

Practitioner/School Spotlight Form

Project Collaboration Website

Project School Site Visit Request Form

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