

ROWMAN & LITTLEFIELD

Real World Professional Learning Communities

Their Use and Effects

Daisy Arredondo Rucinski

Foreward by Terri Croft Boman

“In Real-World Professional Learning Communities, Arredondo Rucinski has provided a fresh and needed look at the phenomenon of professional learning communities. Starting with a healthy skepticism about the nature and effectiveness of PLCs, the author/editor and her colleagues not only implemented the process in a variety of “real world” situations, but also identified the critical components of successful executions of this ever-growing innovation. This book should help anyone wishing to understand what works and what does not work when designing and implementing an effective PLC.”

Robert J. Marzano
CEO Marzano Research

“In this book, scholar-practitioners provide reasons to be hopeful about educational practice in a current, dark era of accountability reform. Their research vividly portrays the professional learning community as a viable and meaningful strategy for studying and improving teaching and learning at all scholastic levels. Their collective voices demonstrate how, as educators work hard together, intelligent and productive insight can emerge in the spaces between people. The final chapter presents a synthesis of the major ideas and implications for both research and practice. The book will appeal to educators involved in public schooling and pre-service training, as well as parents and policy makers, those who recognize the significance of renewal and growth through collective wisdom as demonstrated by the authors themselves.”

Noreen B. Garman, Ph.D.
Professor, Administrative and Policy Studies
University of Pittsburgh

“Arredondo Rucinski has invited key stakeholders to crucial conversation around Professional Learning Communities. In her approach we benefit from the perspectives of leading researchers, district leaders, classroom teachers, and school leaders. It is typical to consider the perspectives of one or two of these constituencies, but it is refreshing and exciting to benefit from a broad range of educators all of whom share in a commitment to thoughtful, practical, and impactful learning communities.”

Zach Kelehear, Dean and Professor
College of Education
Augusta University

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Developing schools as professional learning communities appears to be one of the most powerful trends in school reform on the horizon today. Several state departments of education have developed school reform initiatives for professional learning that encourage and/or require the implementation of critical components of PLCs. While more than 3300 scholarly refereed journal articles have been published about PLCs, fewer than two dozen of these articles report rigorously designed, quantitative studies reporting results of levels of implementation and the effects on either faculty or student learning. The authors of this set of reports examined levels of implementation of several of the components of PLCs identified as critical to changes in student learning. These included: (1) collaborative teacher dialogue about student learning, (2) collective responsibility for all students learning, (3) deprivatization of teaching practices, and (4) collaborative structural supports. Each of the studies also examined the results of such use.

Daisy Arredondo Rucinski is professor of educational leadership and policy at the University of Alabama. She teaches graduate classes in educational leadership, supervision, school policy and instructional leadership. She conducts research on supervision for improved student learning, teacher evaluation and professional development policy, reform, reflection, and cognitive development in supervision and leadership practices that support restructuring and reculturing of public schools. Arredondo Rucinski received her bachelor's, masters, and doctoral degrees from the University of Washington.