

Solution Tree | Press

Kid by Kid, Skill by Skill:

Teaching in a Professional Learning Community at Work™

By Robert Eaker and Janel Keating

Study Guide

This study guide is a companion to the book *Kid by Kid, Skill by Skill: Teaching in a Professional Learning Community at Work™* by Robert Eaker and Janel Keating. *Kid by Kid, Skill by Skill* focuses on the role teachers should take in their school's PLC in order to positively impact student achievement.

This guide is arranged by chapter, enabling readers to either work their way through the entire book or focus on the specific topics addressed in a particular chapter. It can be used by individuals, small groups, or an entire team to identify key points, raise questions for consideration, assess conditions in a particular school or district, and suggest steps that might be taken to promote a healthy school culture.

We thank you for your interest in this book, and we hope this guide is a useful tool in your efforts to create a healthy culture in your school or district.

Copyright © 2015 by Solution Tree Press

Guide

Chapter 1

Looking Inside a Professional Learning Community

1. What does a loose culture entail? What does a tight culture mean? How is a professional learning community (PLC) culture, or another organization that follows the loose-tight principle, both loose and tight?
2. Which of the eleven actions illustrative of solid support for a learning mission that Richard DuFour, Rebecca DuFour, and Robert Eaker propose do you see in your school? In which of these areas could you and your school use the most work?
3. What are the differences between what a shared vision defines and what collective commitments spell out?
4. How are teachers' work and expected actions different in a high-performing PLC than they are in a traditional school?
5. What does Robert Marzano mean by a “guaranteed and viable” curriculum?
6. Which types of assessments are most important, and why is this the case?

Guide

7. How do PLC teachers more effectively address the reality that students learn at different speeds and in different ways than more traditional school structures do?
8. What is job-embedded professional development? What do researchers and practitioners have to say about the usefulness of this kind of professional development?

Guide

Chapter 2

Being a Teacher in a Professional Learning Community

1. What should first be scrutinized when considering what being a PLC teacher means?
What determines effective teaching in a PLC?
2. Consider what it means to be a get-to teacher and a have-to teacher. In which category would you place yourself, and why?
3. Ask yourself and fellow teachers what they think the fundamental role of a teacher is.
How do these descriptions of a teacher's role compare and contrast?
4. How is being a teacher about much more than instructional strategies used in the classroom? When you were a student, how did specific teachers positively impact your life for years after you left their classrooms? What did these educators teach you?
5. Briefly define *teacher expectations*, and clarify the meanings of the two types of expectations that researchers Harris Cooper and Thomas Good identify. How do these two types of expectations influence students' academic performance differently?

Guide

6. How do expectations in a school's overall culture impact what happens inside one of the school's classrooms?
7. What does Janel Keating's experience at a registration night for prospective kindergarten say about self-efficacy and how teachers can increase it in students?
8. When should recognition and celebration occur in relation to the actions being celebrated? In your classroom and your school overall, how do you celebrate accomplishments and exemplary effort, attitudes, and behavior?

Guide

Chapter 3

Working in Collaborative Teams

1. On what does the quality of collaboration significantly depend?
2. What is an accountability protocol? What accountability protocol does your school have in place, and how might you improve upon this protocol's stated procedures?
3. Why is it important that special education students be general education students first?
4. Why is the co-teaching model a powerful shift from the traditional model of teaching?
5. In moving from teaching content to teaching skills, what must a teacher team learn how to do? What hurdle must a teacher team get over in doing this?
6. Which two guiding philosophies do the authors believe in?
7. Consider the questions that the authors' social studies teachers ask people who apply for positions on their team. What questions would you ask applicants seeking to join your department?

Guide

8. Besides teacher teams, what are the other types of teams in a PLC that stay focused on learning? Who gets involved in these teams, and what do they do?

Guide

Chapter 4

Using the Effective Teacher's Toolbox

1. What is differentiated instruction, and what doesn't it involve? What does a teacher who has a grasp on differentiated instruction understand?
2. Name the five elements in Carol Ann Tomlinson's framework for differentiated instruction. What does each of these elements consist of? What does Tomlinson consider the three key elements of effective differentiated instruction?
3. How does product feedback differ from process feedback?
4. Where does much of the power of formative assessments lie? How does feedback obtained from formative assessments differ from feedback gained through summative assessments?
5. Experiment with the two techniques presented for raising a question in class with your students: first, ask a question, and immediately call on a specific student to answer it. Second, ask a question, pause for all students to think of an answer, and then call on a student. How do the results of these questioning techniques differ?

Guide

6. How are the convergent questioning, divergent questioning, and choral questioning strategies related to each other?
7. What are some ways in which teachers can demonstrate that they care about their students? How have you used these techniques in the past, and how could you improve how you communicate caring to your students?
8. How do you express a healthy sense of humor in your classroom? What do you think you could improve or start doing to use humor effectively and appropriately with your students?

Guide

Chapter 5

Managing Classroom Behavior

1. How are the terms *discipline* and *classroom management* different?
2. What do teachers who exhibit withitness experience? What do teachers who do not possess withitness devote time to that teachers who have withitness do not? How does the concept of overlap relate to withitness?
3. What happens in stimulus-boundedness, and when do dangles occur?
4. Which two factors that influence instructional smoothness and momentum are the most momentous?
5. What are the three cues that Jacob Kounin found to destructively influence group focus and accountability? What are some positive teacher accountability cues?
6. In what ways are the approach to managing student behavior in a PLC similar to the approach to improving student learning?

Guide

7. What steps does the check-in/check-out (CICO) process involve, and whom does it support?
8. Why did the authors find the School-wide Information System (SWIS) behavior data tool to be essential while at Wilkeson Elementary School?

Guide

Chapter 6

Teaching in a Results-Oriented Culture

1. By what factors and measurements have agencies determined schools' quality for decades? What issue does this measurement not address?
2. How does Doug Reeves use the difference between a checkup and an autopsy to explain the relationship between summative assessments and formative assessments?
3. How are the roles of assessment—and students' roles in these assessments—different in assessment *for* learning contexts and assessment *of* learning contexts?
4. What are the five strategies teachers can use to foster a classroom culture that helps students learn to examine and take responsibility for their own learning?
5. Write a few “I can” statements that would appropriately fit the aims that you have for your course or unit.
6. Which nicknames does Doug Reeves give to common formative assessments that teacher teams collaborate to create? For what reasons are team-developed common formative assessments impactful?

Guide

7. What is the key to capturing a common formative assessment's power? What is the first step toward capturing this power?

8. What does everyone hold responsibility for in data meetings? For what reasons are districtwide data meetings useful for principals?