



FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

Creating and Protecting the Shared Foundation

of a Professional Learning
Community at Work™

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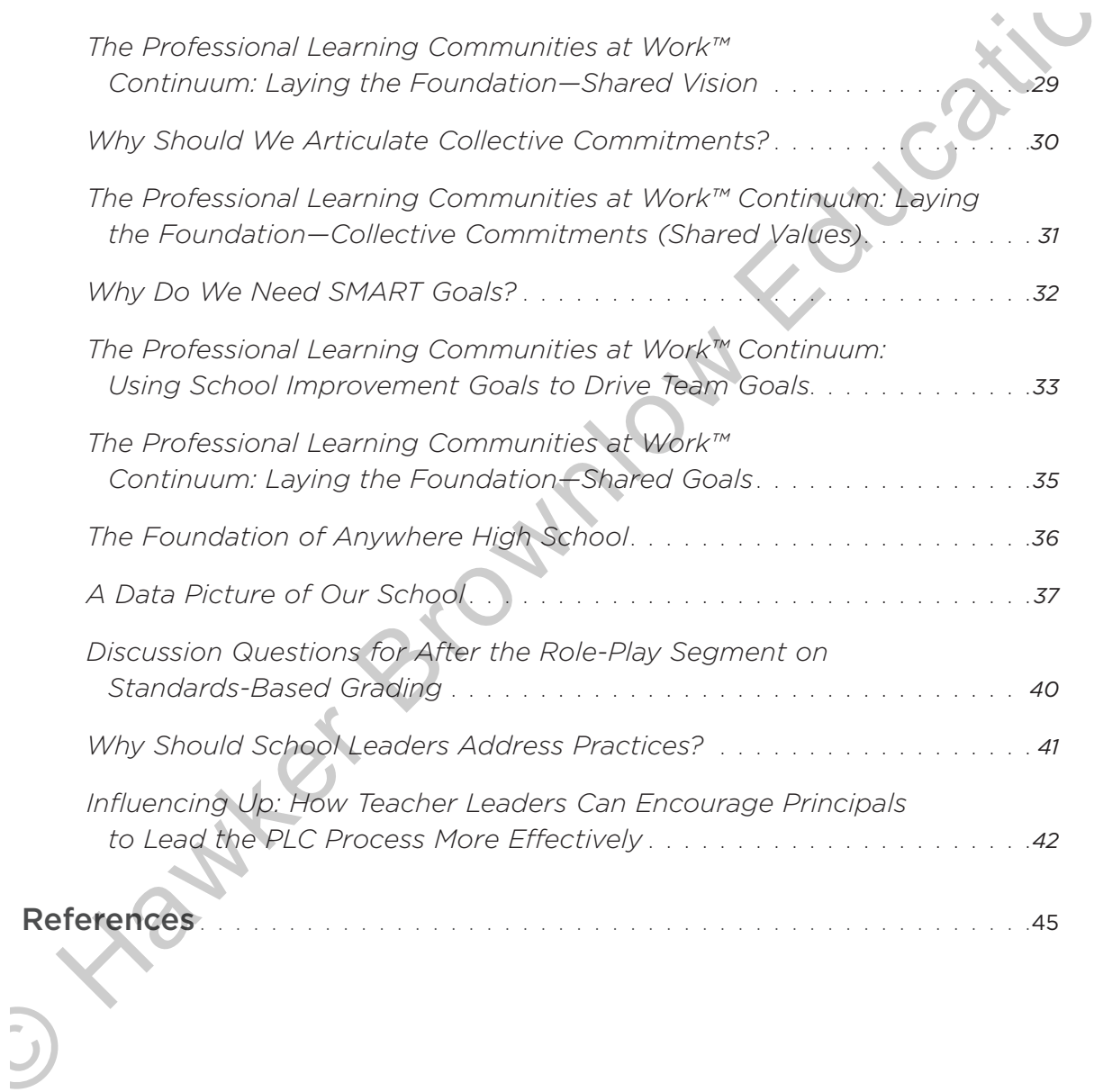
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Notes to the Facilitator

This workshop is for educators who are attempting to implement the professional learning community (PLC) process, as well as those who hope to strengthen their existing PLCs. Its purpose is to provide educators with greater clarity about the process and the importance of aligning practices, policies, and procedures with the shared foundation of effective PLCs. The workshop is intended to instill a deeper understanding of the assumptions and thought processes of PLC members and to supply the compelling rationale behind *why* educators should fully commit to the PLC process.

Using the four pillars of the PLC foundation, the workshop presents opportunities for personal reflection and group collaboration leading to:

- § The construction and implementation of a school's mission, vision, values (collective commitments), and goals
- § Use of tools to help establish and align practices and procedures with the PLC foundation
- § A means by which school professionals can identify and address discrepancies between practice and pledges

This workshop is based on the work of Richard DuFour, Rebecca DuFour, Robert Eaker, Thomas W. Many, and Mike Mattos (2016) and influenced by the writings of Kerry Patterson and colleagues, authors of *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes Are High* (Patterson, Grenny, McMillan, & Switzler, 2002), and Joseph Grenny and colleagues, authors of *Influencer: The New Science of Leading Change* (Grenny, Patterson, Maxfield, McMillan, & Switzler, 2013). The workshop is divided into eight components.

1. **Welcome and Opening:** This segment establishes the context in which members of a true PLC think. It explores how the journey to PLC success begins with the four pillars of the PLC foundation.
2. **The Mission Pillar—Establishing a Mission for Your School:** This segment defines a mission statement, identifies the biggest problems schools have with mission statements, and presents research in support of establishing a mission statement. Importantly, it also introduces “The Professional Learning Communities at Work™ Continuum: Laying the Foundation,” a tool to help school staff members build shared knowledge.
3. **The Vision Pillar—Establishing a Vision Statement for Your School:** This segment explains the vision statement and provides the opportunity for participants to evaluate and create a vision statement that impacts their daily practice.
4. **The Values Pillar—Establishing a Values Statement (Collective Commitments) for Your School:** This segment asks participants to develop the PLC mindset by clarifying the commitments they

are willing to make to help create the school described in their shared vision. This pillar is the most frequently overlooked pillar in the PLC foundation, and yet it is vital to the PLC process because it moves people from discussion to action.

5. **The Goals Pillar—Establishing Goals for Your School:** This segment presents the importance of goals that are specific and strategic, measurable, attainable, results oriented, and time bound (SMART) in the PLC process, asking participants to write a team SMART goal that aligns to a school improvement goal. Participants then share their perceptions on which, if any, of the four pillars of the foundation warrant additional attention.
6. **Clarifying Your Current Reality Pertaining to the PLC Foundation:** In this segment, participants actively begin building background information about their schools through the use of the “A Data Picture of Our School” instrument.
7. **Aligning Practices and Processes With the PLC Foundation:** Participants evaluate a role-play segment in which a principal and members of a collaborative team discuss traditional grading practices in the context of the school’s foundation. This segment asks participants to identify and discuss one practice in their school that seems misaligned with a commitment to high levels of learning for all students.
8. **Addressing Discrepancies Between Actual Practice and the Pledges of the Foundation and Closing:** Finally, participants have the opportunity to consider whether or not their own school should address behaviors and practices that are clearly inconsistent with the purposes and priorities established in the PLC foundation. They learn strategies to *influence up*—that is, to help persuade the principal to take steps to protect and strengthen the PLC foundation.

Conducting the Workshop

The workshop is designed to be either a full-day experience or two half-day sessions. This set includes all of the professional development materials you will need, including a video (approximately forty-seven minutes) featuring insight and instruction from Richard DuFour and Rebecca DuFour, overhead masters, several worksheets, and group discussion handouts. All are intended to engage participants in serious reflection and dialogue about conditions in their own schools. Participants receive time for lunch and breaks.

To conduct a successful learning event, please consider the following.

- § **Preparation:** Please view the entire video program, read all materials, and complete all activities.
- § **Location:** The workshop should take place in an area large enough for individual, team, and whole-group work.
- § **Equipment:** You will need a DVD player, a projector, and one or more monitors. Ideally, you will have one video monitor for every ten to twelve participants. You may also create transparencies of the handouts and display them with an overhead projector or computer projector.

- § **Handouts:** This guide includes reproducible handouts for all participants (starting on page 25). Duplicate these handouts before the workshop begins and distribute them to participants according to the workshop instructions.
- § **Additional equipment:** You will need note paper and pens for each participant. Flip charts, whiteboards, or chalkboards and appropriate writing materials are useful for group discussions.
- § **Refreshments:** The agenda for the workshop should include one or more breaks in which beverages are on hand. Snacks and lunch are optional, but water should be available throughout the session.

Video Program

This workshop incorporates a video program that is approximately forty-seven minutes in length. The video begins with an introduction by Richard DuFour of the four pillars of the PLC foundation and continues with instruction by both Richard and Rebecca DuFour to help educators construct a mission statement, a vision statement, collective commitments, and goals. Each of the four pillars is presented in “The Professional Learning Communities at Work™ Continuum: Laying the Foundation” (divided into four separate tools—Shared Mission, Shared Vision, Collective Commitments [Shared Values], and Shared Goals)—and “The Professional Learning Communities at Work™ Continuum: Using School Improvement Goals to Drive Team Goals.” These documents, along with the team-reflection tool “A Data Picture of Our School,” form the basis for workshop activities. Your workshop handouts include all of these documents.

Print

Learning by Doing: A Handbook for Professional Learning Communities at Work™, Third Edition by Richard DuFour, Rebecca DuFour, Robert Eaker, Thomas W. Many, and Mike Mattos

Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes Are High, Second Edition by Kerry Patterson, Joseph Grenny, Ron McMillan, and Al Switzler

Influencer: The New Science of Leading Change, Second Edition by Joseph Grenny, Kerry Patterson, David Maxfield, Ron McMillan, and Al Switzler

Video

Leading Difficult Conversations: Professional Learning Communities at Work™: Professional development video set by Richard DuFour and Rebecca DuFour

Web

allthingsplc.info

go.SolutionTree.com/PLCbooks

Workshop Overview at a Glance

Time (in Minutes)	Section	Handouts and Overheads
20	Welcome and Opening	Learning Objectives
50	The Mission Pillar	Why Should We Clarify Our Mission? Four Questions About Our Mission Statement The Professional Learning Communities at Work™ Continuum: Laying the Foundation—Shared Mission
45	The Vision Pillar	Why Should We Describe the School or District We Are Trying to Create? Five Questions About Our Vision Statement The Professional Learning Communities at Work™ Continuum: Laying the Foundation—Shared Vision
45	The Values Pillar (Collective Commitments)	Why Should We Articulate Collective Commitments? Three Questions About Our Values Statement (Collective Commitments) The Professional Learning Communities at Work™ Continuum: Laying the Foundation—Collective Commitments (Shared Values)
45	The Goals Pillar	Why Do We Need SMART Goals? Five Questions About Our Goals The Professional Learning Communities at Work™ Continuum: Using School Improvement Goals to Drive Team Goals The Professional Learning Communities at Work™ Continuum: Laying the Foundation—Shared Goals The Four Pillars of a PLC Foundation
45	Clarifying Your Current Reality Pertaining to the PLC Foundation	The Foundation of Anywhere High School A Data Picture of Our School

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60	Aligning Practices and Processes With the PLC Foundation	Criteria for Evaluation of Role-Play Video Segment Discussion Questions for After the Role-Play Segment on Standards-Based Grading
30	Addressing Discrepancies Between Actual Practice and the Pledges of the Foundation and Closing	Why Should School Leaders Address Practices? Influencing Up: How Teacher Leaders Can Encourage Principals to Lead the PLC Process More Effectively

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