

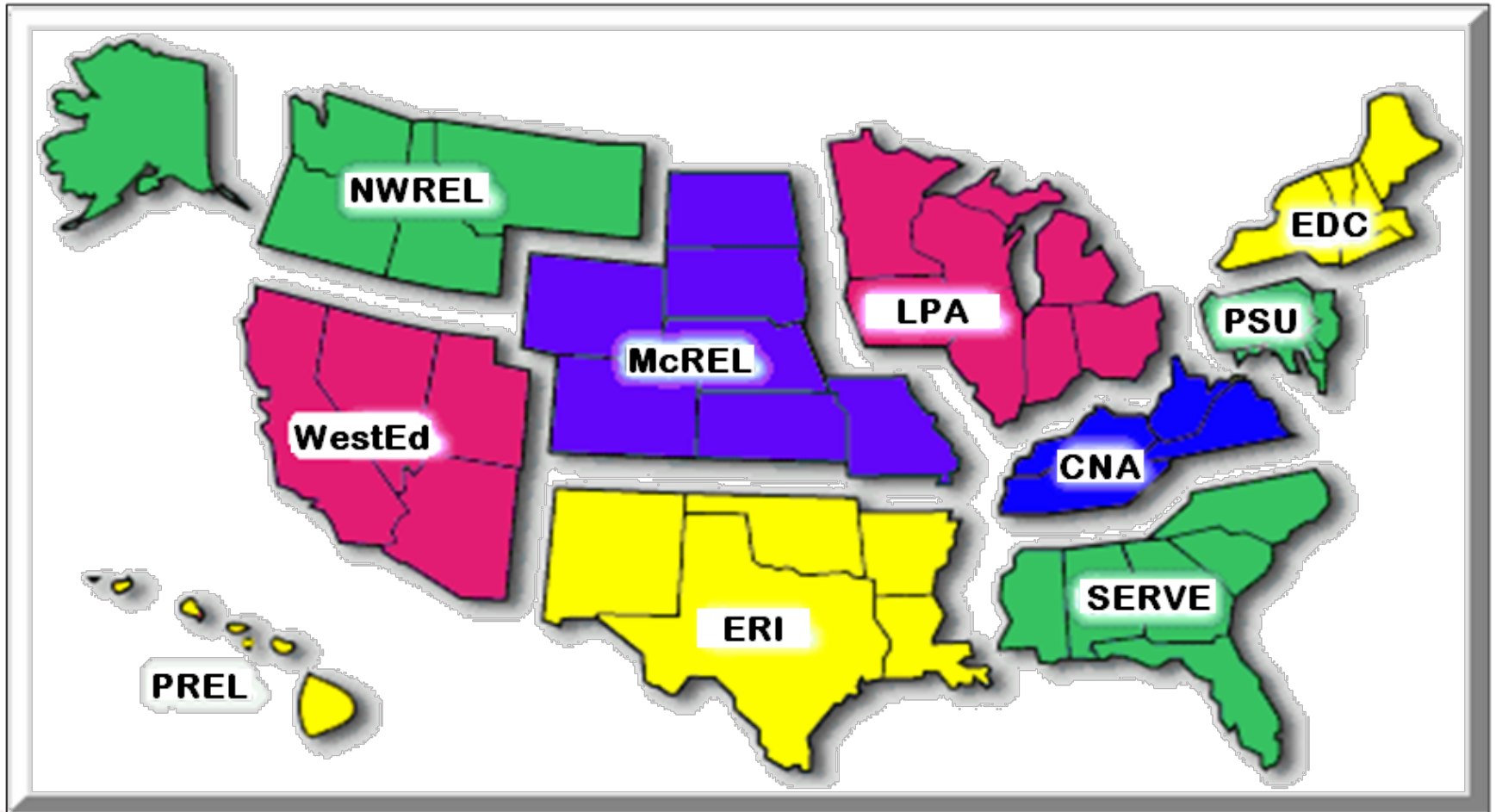
Professional Learning Communities and the Role of Leadership

SERVE Center's 10-Minute College Series

Goals

- To review the research of Professional Learning Communities
- Review the role of PLCs
- Identify ways administrators can support learning teams

Regional Education Laboratories



Pop Quiz!

Pop Quiz!

The most important determinant of student achievement is

- a. Socio-economic status
- b. Teacher knowledge and expertise
- c. Parental and societal factors

Pop Quiz!

How much time per year do teachers typically spend in professional development?

- a. 8 hours or less
- b. 3 days
- c. One week

Pop Quiz!

What percent of teachers identified strong results from those learning experiences?

- a. 8%
- b. 15%
- c. 42%

Pop Quiz!

Which group reported spending the least amount of time working together with colleagues on instruction?

- a. Beginning teachers
- b. Elementary teachers
- c. Secondary teachers

Pop Quiz!

Teacher experience (years of teaching) is correlated with gains in teaching quality in what way?

- a. The more experienced the teacher, the higher the quality of the teaching.
- b. There is no correlation between teacher experience and teaching quality.
- c. There is little or no correlation between experience and teaching quality after the first year of teaching.

Pop Quiz!

Which of these structures has proven to be essential for improving teaching quality?

- a. Collaboration to improve instruction
- b. Supportive school conditions and culture
- c. Both of these

Results & Discussion

Teacher quality is the most critical component for producing higher quality learning in all students.

- The difference in annual achievement growth between having a good and a bad teacher can be more than one grade level in test performance (Hanushek)

Results & Discussion

Teachers need more than classroom experience to improve teaching quality.

Results & Discussion

Team-based professional learning does improve teaching quality.

Results & Discussion

According to the National Bureau for Education Statistics teachers must

1. Spend more time in professional development
2. Collaborate and learn on the job
3. Engage in learning that is ongoing and long term.

So what do PLCs *do* anyway?

- Examine student achievement and classroom data
- Develop a shared instructional goal
- Establish shared norms
- Study and learn

So what do PLCs *do* anyway?

- Build supportive relationships
- Work together
- Communicate
- Analyze
- Rotate leadership responsibilities

“The literature on educational leadership and school change recognizes clearly the role and influence of the campus administrator (the principal, and sometimes an assistant principal) on whether change will occur in the school. It seems clear that transforming the school organization into a learning community can be done only with the leaders’ sanction and active nurturing on the entire staff’s development as a community.”

--Hord, 1997, p. 14

Types of Leadership

- Transformational
 - Innovates
 - Establishes a vision
 - Raises awareness
- Instructional
 - Manages curriculum, instruction & assessment
 - Leads hierarchical system
- Shared Instructional
 - Collaborates
 - Shares responsibility

Strategies for Leadership

- Provide a time and place
- Establish communication
- Understand multiple roles and duties of teachers
- Value and protect PLC time

Strategies for Leadership

- Expand definition of community
- Focus on content and outcomes
- Articulate vision, beliefs, goals, and expectations
- Remain at the center of the process
- Build capacity among staff

Strategies for Leadership

- Arrange schedules to allow for PLC process
- Confront areas of conflict as they arise
- Empower team leaders to make participation mandatory
- Establish a sense of collaboration and sharing

For more information on Professional Learning Communities at SERVE, contact

Katie Dufford-Melendez
Senior Program Specialist
SERVE Center at UNCG
kdufford@serve.org
336.543.6760