



REL Southeast
Director's Email

March 2023

Greetings from the REL Southeast,

For over a decade, schools looking to improve student achievement by making teaching and classroom practices more effective have turned to professional learning communities (PLCs)—groups of educators that meet regularly, share expertise, and work collaboratively to improve teaching skills. PLCs can be effective because they develop expert coaching skills among facilitators and support opportunities for peer-coaching within the built-in communities of practice.¹ When teachers disseminate knowledge to other teachers and invite feedback, their classrooms become more learning-oriented and results-focused.

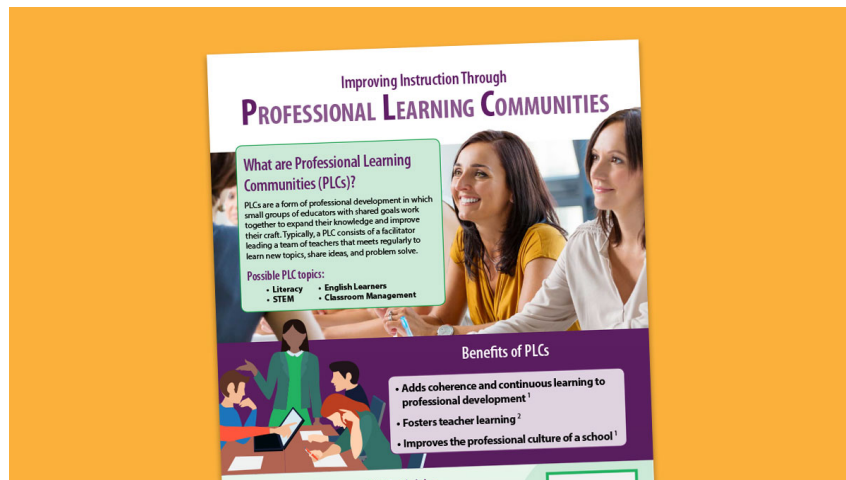
This month, REL Southeast would like to encourage practitioners to learn more about the PLC materials offered by the Institute of Education Sciences, many developed through the REL program. We hope you find these materials informative and useful, and as always, thank you for helping to improve educational outcomes for every student in our region.

With gratitude,

Dr. Nicole Patton Terry

Director, REL Southeast

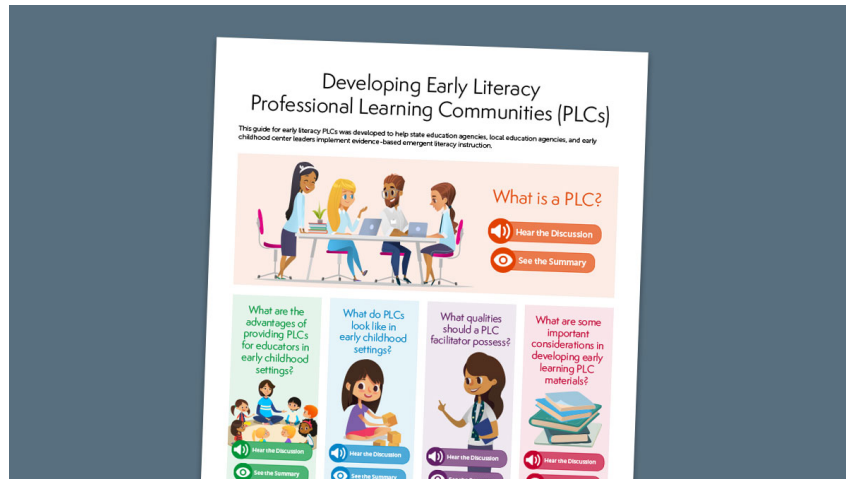
¹ Lomos, C., Hofman, R. H., & Bosker, R. J. (2011). Professional communities and student achievement—a meta-analysis. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 22(2), 121-148.



Improving Instruction Through Professional Learning Communities

This infographic from [REL Southeast](#) defines professional learning communities (PLCs) and provides information regarding PLC benefits, common activities, forming PLCs, PLC facilitators, and a 5-step process for PLC sessions.

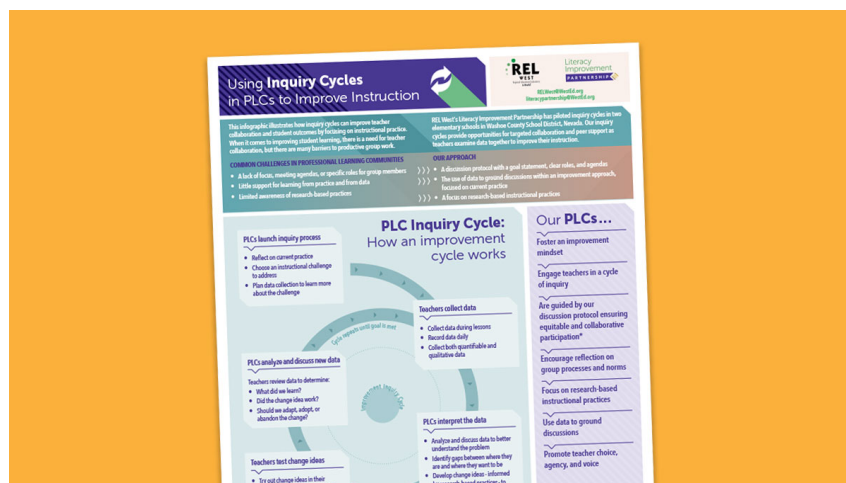
[Click here to explore the infographic.](#)



Developing Early Literacy Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

This infographic from [REL Southeast](#) provides information, as well as links to audio conversations, regarding the benefits of early literacy PLCs, PLCs in early childhood settings, PLC facilitator qualities, and considerations in developing PLC materials.

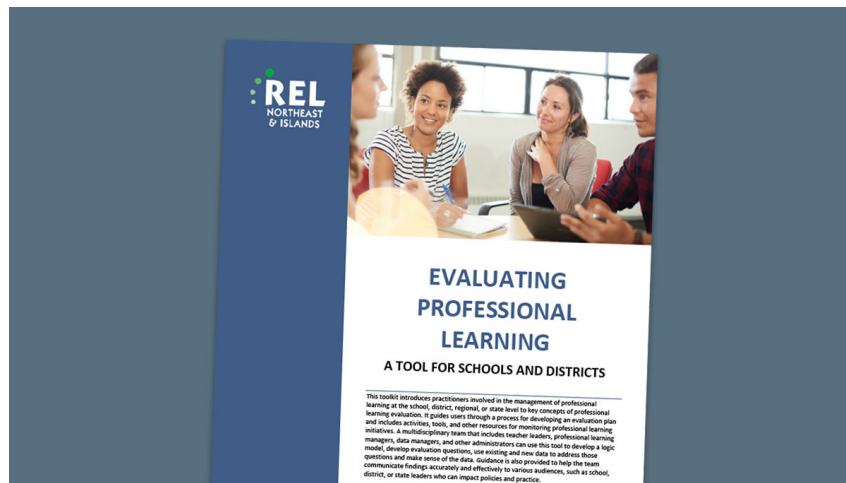
[Click here to explore the infographic.](#)



Using Inquiry Cycles in Professional Learning Communities to Improve Instruction

This infographic from [REL West](#) explores the use of inquiry cycles in professional learning communities. Inquiry cycles can provide opportunities for peer support as teachers examine data and evidence together and engage in testing change ideas to improve their practice and support student learning. In addition to presenting specific information about inquiry cycles, the infographic also includes a step-by-step example data analysis protocol and links to relevant resources.

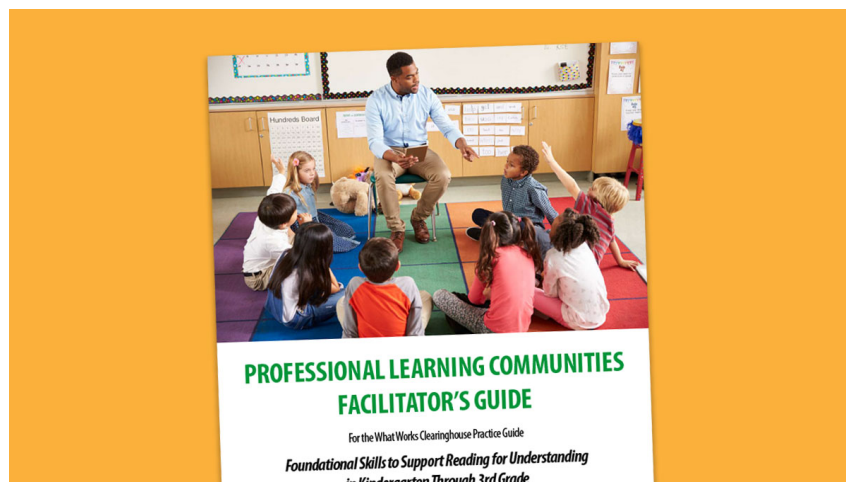
[Click here to explore the infographic.](#)



Evaluating Professional Learning: A Tool for Schools and Districts

This toolkit from [REL Northeast & Islands](#) introduces practitioners involved in the management of professional learning at the school, district, regional, or state level to key concepts of professional learning evaluation. It guides users through a process for developing an evaluation plan and includes activities, tools, and other resources for monitoring professional learning initiatives.

[Click here to explore the toolkit.](#)



Professional learning communities facilitator's guide for the What Works Clearinghouse practice guide: *Foundational skills to support reading for understanding in kindergarten through 3rd grade*

These professional learning community materials, developed by [REL Southeast](#), focus on the practice guide [Foundational skills to support reading for understanding in kindergarten through 3rd grade](#) and were designed to assist a literacy leader in guiding a professional learning community in applying the recommendations from the practice guide. The materials include a facilitator's guide, participant activities, and YouTube videos.

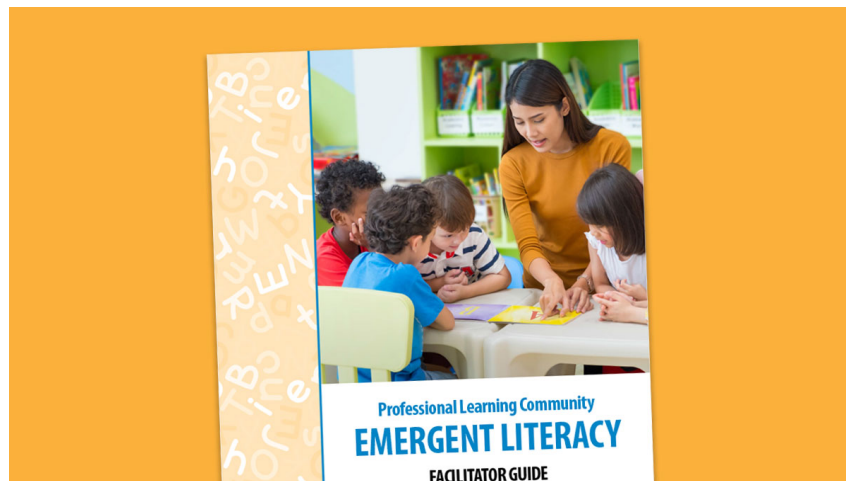
[Click here to explore the materials.](#)



Professional Learning Community: Improving Mathematical Problem Solving for Students in Grades 4 through 8

This professional learning community tool, developed by [REL Southeast](#), was designed to supplement the What Works Clearinghouse practice guide, [Improving Mathematical Problem Solving in Grades 4 Through 8](#) and provide teachers in a PLC setting with additional, step-by-step guidance for the best ways to implement some of the evidence-based recommendations presented in the guide.

[Click here to explore the tool.](#)



Professional Learning Community: Emergent Literacy

These guides and accompanying suite of materials, produced by [REL Southeast](#), enable facilitators to lead a team of preschool teachers through emergent literacy PLC sessions. The guides include four modules—Print Knowledge, Phonological Awareness, Vocabulary, and Oral Language—and include a structured plan to deliver professional learning, slides, and speaker notes.

[Click here to explore the guides.](#)



