



ARKANSAS PLC AT WORK™ PILOT PROGRAM TALKING POINTS AND FAQ

TALKING POINTS

- The Arkansas Department of Education and Solution Tree have established a partnership to develop and expand the PLC at Work™ process within select schools/districts. These sites will serve as working laboratory schools for the PLC at Work process, conducting action research and sharing best practices with other schools throughout the state.
- PLC at Work schools are distinguished by the process in which educators work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve. PLC at Work operates under the belief that the key to improved learning for students is continuous job-embedded learning for educators.
- The PLC at Work process emphasizes a focus on learning for all, within a collaborative culture, using collective inquiry into best practice. Through action orientation and a commitment to continuous improvement, schools and districts yield positive results.
- The pilot program will span a period up to five years, providing intensive training and support for a growing number of schools each year. Participating schools will be part of a collaborative evaluation process that gathers data regarding student achievement, teacher practices, and effective professional development.
- Selected schools will be matched with a certified PLC at Work associate from Solution Tree and receive intensive on-site support as they implement, deepen and sustain the PLC at Work process. Each school will create action plans that focus on increasing student achievement through aligned curriculum, formative assessment practices and proven instructional strategies. The plans will be collaboratively developed, based on a thorough needs assessment at the beginning of the program.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the goal of the program?

The Arkansas Department of Education is transforming Arkansas to lead the nation in student-focused education so that every Arkansas student graduates prepared for college, career and community engagement. In partnership with Solution Tree, a provider in education professional development, ADE has started a PLC at Work pilot program, which begins with selected schools in the first year. When the PLC at Work process is implemented with fidelity, schools experience dramatic improvement in learning results by both students and adults. The pilot schools will serve as working laboratories for the PLC at Work process, conducting action research and sharing best practices with other schools throughout the state.

What are the “big ideas” of the PLC at Work process?

The PLC at Work process focuses on three big ideas that drive work inside each school:

1. The purpose of our school is to ensure **all** students learn at high levels.
2. Helping all students learn requires a **collaborative** and **collective effort**.
3. To assess our effectiveness in helping all students learn, we must **focus on results**—evidence of student learning—and use results to inform and improve our professional practice and respond to students who need intervention or enrichment.

Which schools were selected for the first round of the program?

- Ballman Elementary School in the Fort Smith School District
- Bragg Elementary School in the West Memphis School District
- Douglas MacArthur Intermediate School in the Jonesboro School District
- Eastside Elementary School in the Greenbrier School District
- Frank Mitchell Intermediate School in the Vilonia School District
- Joe T. Robinson Middle School in the Pulaski County Special School District
- Monticello Middle School in the Monticello School District
- Morrilton Intermediate School in the South Conway County School District
- Premier High School of Little Rock
- Prescott School District
- Rogers High School in the Rogers School District
- Spradling Elementary School in the Fort Smith School District



Why was PLC at Work selected to help fulfill the vision of ADE?

The ADE, in partnership with the Arkansas state legislature, is committed to fulfilling their vision to lead the nation in student-focused education. Building on what they know works locally, Arkansas adopted legislation focused on providing pilot schools with an opportunity to receive on-site, in-depth training to deeply implement transformative Professional Learning Communities at Work.

What advantages will these schools receive through the program?

Selected schools will receive professional development provided by trained and certified PLC at Work associates. Schools will receive a mix of on-site training, observation and coaching, and print and video resources. Additionally, school representatives will attend an annual conference where they will share promising practices and strategies.

How were the schools selected for this program?

The schools were selected through a rigorous application and evaluation process. A panel of educational professionals knowledgeable of the PLC at Work process reviewed 83 applications and ADE selected the schools to receive support from Solution Tree. Consideration was given to ensure that all five regions of the state were represented.

How many applications were received?

Eighty-three applications were received. All five regions of the state were represented.

How many schools are in the program?

The pilot program starts with 11 schools and one district in the first year and adds an agreed-upon number of schools each year for up to five years, to expand the effort and grow state-level PLC leaders.



What kind of professional development will school representatives receive?

PLC associates will spend up to 50 days on site at each of the pilot program schools. These days will be a combination of on-site training, observation, coaching and other job-embedded staff development. Training will occur with building leaders, the school's leadership team, collaborative teams and individual teachers. The schools will fully implement the three big ideas of a PLC at Work with fidelity, with the guidance of trained and certified PLC at Work associates.

How will progress be tracked in the pilot schools?

PLC at Work includes both educational inquiry and action research. To ensure progress, both in process and in student achievement, data will be collected, analyzed, and used to make decisions. All pilot schools will be given a needs assessment. This assessment will include process and achievement data. Formative assessments will be given throughout the year to evaluate growth and determine next steps. Additional data, as it relates to the unique needs of each individual school, will also be determined and monitored.

Where can I go to learn more about PLC at Work?

AllthingsPLC.info is the authoritative source for information about PLC at Work. The site is designed exclusively for those who are committed to improving student learning and want to learn more about the process.

Where can I learn more about the Arkansas pilot program?

<http://www.arkansased.gov/divisions/special-projects/professional-learning-communities-in-arkansas>

Where can I follow the pilot program journey on social media?

You can follow the hashtag #PLC4AR on Twitter and on Facebook.