

Types of learning communities

	1. Professional Learning Community (PLC)	2. Community of Practice (CoP)	3. Professional Learning Network (PLN)
Focus of Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School-wide focus on improvement of student learning within one school through regular face-to-face discussion, inquiry and data collection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blended learning strategy that creates opportunities to address both professional and personal goals with a small group of educators who share an identified domain of interest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal use of social media and online searches to find and share resources that match professional development interests
Group Size and Composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All teachers on staff or grade/subject groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varies – small (10 – 50) to large (more than 100) • Practitioners in a common profession or area of interest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infinite • Includes all the people one learner connects with online, anywhere in the world
Key Components	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal and may be mandated • Developed by members based on group goals • Teachers work together to analyze data and improve student learning • Members are formally accountable to the group • Occurs regularly during school hours over a school year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiated by a sponsor, has one or more facilitators, purpose and activities are developed by all participants • Learners collaborate to share and create knowledge in an area important to them • Has a life span, typically over one school year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal and voluntary, often described as “do it yourself learning” • Individuals use social networking and online tools such as websites and wikis to find resources on personal learning interests • Short or long-term, dependent on individual’s interests, motivation and professional needs
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becomes part of onsite regular professional development • Builds community among staff • Academic gains for students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invites those who have a stake in finding answers to be part of the search • Offers solutions based on real-world experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly relevant to one learner • Global possibilities greatly increase learning resources • Can connect with learning network at any time or location
Limits/ challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top-down management may decrease the effectiveness • Small membership and single location may limit ideas generated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality dependent on facilitator's skills and members’ commitment to share • Focus may be perceived as limited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The onus is on the individual to reach out to make connections • Quality and accuracy of information may vary • Time spent online may be significant
	For more information:		For more information: