

## **ABSTRACT**

**DISSERTATION:** A study of the relationship between individual and collective teacher efficacy and the relationship to quality professional learning communities.

**STUDENT:** Jennifer Greene

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The Every Student Succeeds Act (2016) mandates that teachers receive professional development. ESSA states that professional development for teachers is to be “collaborative, job-embedded, data driven and student focused” (p.11). In a professional learning community (PLC), teachers collaboratively work together using evidence of student learning to ensure all students learn (Dufour et al., 2016). This study investigates how the individual and collective efficacy of the teachers who take part in the PLC process is related to quality PLC implementation. PLCs, also referred to in the literature as communities of practice (Hord, 1997), are adopted by school districts whose goal is to increase student achievement by changing their focus toward student learning and collaborative practices among teachers, administrators, and staff. However, not all PLCs are created equal. Dufour et al. (2016) noted that school districts who claim that they are practicing PLCs without actually implementing the core tenets are not truly fulfilling the process. The role of the building leader is to guide and ensure the implementation of the process so that it becomes embedded into the building culture.

The purpose of this research is to investigate the possible relationship between PLC quality and teacher efficacy. The quantitative study involved 3 suburban schools districts of

similar demographics outside of Indianapolis, Indiana. There were 138 teacher participants across all 3 districts. The districts have been through the PLC implementation process. The data on PLC quality and teacher efficacy was gained through rating scales. I used three variables (Individual and Collective Teacher Efficacy Scales and the PLCA-R Scale).

The study revealed collective efficacy is tied to quality PLCs. Using research-based practice to build capacity within teams of teachers, create a culture of collaboration, and guide the work to focus on student learning within district and/or a building could have a positive, lasting effect on building and districts.

*Key words: Collective efficacy, Individual Efficacy, Professional Learning Communities, Collaborate*