

project based learning

**Suggested Reading
& Resources**

PUBLICATIONS

Professional Learning Communities At Work: Best Practices for Enhancing Student

Achievement, by Richard Dufour and Robert Eaker (Solution Tree). This practical How-To collaboration details the processes by which educators and administrators can consistently improve school performance. By conceptualizing ideal schools as “results-oriented professional learning communities,” Dufour and Eaker are able to present a proven and accessible approach to school environment transformation. From leadership and assessment strategies to curriculum and professional development programs, this resource details every relevant aspect of the process, drawing heavily upon real-world applied examples in addition to leading research. <http://www.solution-tree.com/Public/Media.aspx?ShowDetail=true&ProductID=BKF032>

Project Based Learning Handbook, by Thom Markham, John Mergendoller, John Larmer, and Jason Ravitz. This book, developed by the Buck Institute for Education (BIE), guides teachers through the development and achievement of successful standards-focused, student-driven projects. Combining extensive research with proven practices and examples, the handbook details every phase of effective Project Based Learning, from choosing themes to “reflecting on the outcomes.” Aimed at both novice and experienced PBL educators, this book is a vital resource for anyone serious about implementing PBL in the classroom. Find downloadable rubrics, implementation tools, planning forms, and other resources at: www.bie.org/index.php/site/PBL/pbl_handbook/

Reinventing Project-Based Learning: Your Field Guide to Real-World Projects in the Digital Age, by Suzie Boss and Jane Krauss (International Society for Technology in Education). This book takes a project-based approach to illustrate project-based learning. Structured like a project arc, this book covers the full progression of student-driven, technology-rich learning. Complete with discussions of assessment, project management, teacher interviews from around the world, as well as helpful troubleshooting tips, this book is useful for educators dedicated to integrating PBL and technology in the classroom.

Teaching Beyond the Test: Differentiated Project-Based Learning in a Standards-Based Age: For Grades 6 & Up, by Phil Schlemmer and Dori Schlemmer (Free Spirit). According to the book jacket, “As a teacher, you understand that it’s essential for students to meet curriculum benchmarks. Yet it’s equally important for kids to engage their imagination and creativity while being challenged at their ability level. The way to ensure this is through a combination of differentiated instruction and project-based learning ... This book is your guide to navigate today’s complex classroom. Rather than ‘teaching to the test,’ use these strategies and projects to shape committed, self-directed, lifelong learners.”

Facilitating Problem-Based Learning: Illuminating Perspectives, by Maggi Savin-Baden (Open University Press). This comprehensive book, developed by The Society for Research into Higher Education, delves into the intricacies of PBL. Barbara Dutch, a professor at the University of Delaware writes, “Maggi Savin-Baden has written the ‘Bible’ on facilitation in PBL and related issues, such as assessment, educational and curricular development. In addition, the author summarizes the current research related to topics that she explores in the book. This is a book that everyone who uses PBL as an instructional technique should read and reflect on.”

ONLINE RESOURCES

Swift House. This progressive middle school team at Williston Central School in Vermont has championed Project Based Learning for years. Their mission is to “create a student-centered environment that facilitates cooperative, generative, life-long learning.” Their school is a “unique, technologically rich environment that emphasizes individual learning plans for each child, flexible scheduling, and a standards-based curriculum model.” Swift House is a model example of PBL at its best.

<http://www.williston.k12.vt.us/Houses/SwiftHouse/swifthousemain2.html>

Center For Effective School Practices, Rutgers University. A unit of the Rutgers Graduate School of Education, CESP promotes well-researched, field-tested practices for advancing the organization and optimization of classroom and school environments. Through its wide range of programs, CESP works to train, mentor, and evaluate educators and administrators in the implementation of innovative educational practices. The Center provides leadership training, school coaching, development workshops, facilitation retreats, and much more through programs like the Academy for Teaching and Learning (ATL), the Coalition of Essential Schools, Critical Friends Groups, and Project Based Learning.

<http://cesp.rutgers.edu/index.html>

New Technology Foundation. This non-profit organization based in Napa County, California, progresses national education reform through its Napa New Technology High School model. By establishing a network of participating high schools, NTF facilitates the implementation and practice of their innovative methods, which are largely based in Project Based Learning. All network schools receive the full slate of NTF services, including their School Development and Management resources as well as the extensive PBL library that provides project units organized by course and grade. Begun in 2000 with grants from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, NTF is now a leading proponent of national education reform, and the Napa New Technology High School is considered an exemplary demonstration model for the future of project-based schools.

www.newtechfoundation.org/index.html

Edutopia, The George Lucas Educational Foundation. Edutopia seeks to inform and nurture a new World of Education. Through articles, real-classroom success stories, and instructional/documentary online videos, the publication encourages educators to learn and implement changes in teaching methods and the integration of technology in the classroom. They seek to instill in students “the technical, cultural, and interpersonal skills [needed] to succeed in the twenty-first century.” They list their priority topics as: Project Learning, Technology Integration, Teacher Development, Social and Emotional Learning, and Assessment.

The Three-Pronged Attack: “Edutopia.org: an in-depth and interactive resource ... offers practical, hands-on advice, real-world examples, lively contributions from practitioners, and invaluable tips and tools. Edutopia magazine: The preeminent publication for promoting positive change in education ... presents a continual flow of fresh ideas and inspiring success stories. Edutopia video: through an extensive offering of documentaries, Edutopia video is a catalyst for innovation by helping educators and parents, as well as business and community leaders, see and understand pioneering best practices.”

www.edutopia.org