



Transcript- Episode 78

We Planned Your Next PLC (You're Welcome.)

Hi, everyone.

Think about the best professional learning you've ever experienced. I'm going to guess it wasn't because someone showed you 50 slides or spoke at you for multiple hours. It was because you left thinking differently.

You left talking to colleagues, and you were excited about trying something new. Today, we're going to share a simple way to turn a podcast like this one into meaningful professional learning that educators will really look forward to. You know, Julie, as you invited us to think about it, this always makes me cringe because I'm like, did people leave my professional learning thinking differently, talking with colleagues, and excited to try something new, or did they just have a fully completed grocery list and were ready to go? Oh, Kristie, I know.

The outcome of professional development is something we spend so much time and energy thinking about: making sure people leave our sessions feeling energized, excited, and talking about things. The thing we want to share with you is that educators brought this idea to our attention. They said, "Hey, we're using The Inclusion Podcast for professional development."

And you and I were like, brilliant. So, for us, professional development doesn't mean everybody has to sit in an auditorium. Well, I know that's shocking to people because everybody keeps asking us to come and sit in the auditorium with them.

I know. We keep saying, "No, friends, we don't need to be there. We don't need to all be together to interact or connect."

And so, I think this is inviting people not only to go, "Okay, we can use podcasts." I don't think people will be shocked by that. They'll see us as content experts. Just like if they said, "Kristie, Julie, come do a keynote," they'd be like, "You're experts on inclusion." So they might go to The Inclusion Podcast and say, "Oh, it's Kristie and Julie talking about inclusion." But I think it's still outside their ideas about how adults learn and how adults are accountable for learning.

They're like, "If they aren't sitting in front of me, all looking at my PowerPoint, how will I know they're learning?" So I think there's a bit of that, too. Kristie, I just love that you asked that question because so many times people say, "How will we know they're learning if they're not looking at us, or if I can't watch them learn?" What we're talking about is giving adults a lot more autonomy, a lot more decision-making, and a lot more respect. We think professional learning should be active, meaning you could go for a walk and listen to this podcast. You can be

outside in your backyard listening to this podcast, and you don't have to be sitting in a way that I can observe you.

And I think most people have had experience with podcasts on their own, and they know sometimes they get something out of it, and sometimes they're like, "Oh, that was a dud." Others are like, "I've got to send this to everybody on my family group thread and on my social media." So that's what we want.

We want people to leave PD wanting to share with everyone. Before we go back to what you said, Julie, about the idea and what a couple of districts have started to do with our podcast in particular, I think maybe it's important to remind people what makes good PD. It doesn't really matter if it's a podcast, a tweet - well, I guess we don't do tweets anymore, but you know what I mean - reading a blog, a PowerPoint, or a sage on the stage. They all have pros and cons.

So maybe we could highlight a couple of things about what we know from the literature, the research, and our own experiences that make PD effective in the first place. Then, when people think about the ideas we give for using our podcast for PD, they can compare that to what they know is effective. I like that, Kristie. So we're going to get into effective professional development for adults.

When you think about the adult learner, they need an engaged mind, body, and heart. And when we say mind, body, and heart, that doesn't necessarily happen in an auditorium, although it might. Good.

It could happen. It could happen. Educators need a little bit of relief from other responsibilities to make room for the change, the learning, the conversations about it, and the ability to put it into practice.

And it needs to support different stages of learning. One of the things we think our podcasts do - and honestly, all of our professional development, if you wanted to bring us to your district to do this work - is consider the novice educator as well as the educator who's 30 years in. We want to bring something fresh to everyone.

Yeah, definitely.

And maybe even just readiness. We may have equal amounts of time doing this job, but our readiness to change will be different. Yes, yes.

Oftentimes, I remember something someone first told me. I was probably a doctoral student, and at the University of Oregon, we had this really strong group. I don't even remember why it was funded, but its sole job was to help faculty be better faculty - not better researchers or better at sitting on committees, but better at teaching. Yeah.

Even as doctoral students, we interfaced with this group, and they would come and videotape us. This was in the early '90s. They would videotape us and then give us feedback on how effective our lesson design and delivery were.

Somewhere, someone told me that as long as there are opportunities for people to interact with you - human to human, or even with you as an expert - interact with the content, and interact with others, that's like a trifecta of effectiveness. So when you think of the podcast and you say, "Go for a walk and talk," it's like, okay, heart, mind, body, soul - yay. But it's also interacting with experts, interacting with content, and interacting with others.

So it kind of meets those criteria. And the content, hopefully, in a podcast can be very timely. We also always talk about choosing your own adventure.

I think the content is really connected to them. So, Kristie, I think you mean that if I'm an educator and I get to use a podcast for my PD, I get to look at this long list of options and say, "Today, I need more information about challenging behavior." They get to pick and choose what makes sense for them on that day instead of, "It's March 10, and today we're talking about safety drills."

And so, we get to be a lot more interest-driven when we allow for choice. I think people are always telling us, "Well, we've got all these initiatives going." We keep telling people that inclusion is the plate upon which all other initiatives are served.

But until they're ready for that, they're like, "Well, will your PD be aligned with our other initiatives? Will you be confusing our staff?" The great thing about a podcast is that leaders can look at the show notes and the transcript and, particularly with ours, have a sense of what we're going to share before they offer it as PD. So, when we talk about one district in particular, they already had what Julie and I call Inclusion Bytes. It's part of our on-demand PD.

They wanted people to go deeper into Inclusion Bytes. That was their initiative: to roll out this PD that talked about co-teaching, differentiation, and behavior. But they were having trouble helping people see the alignment or the entry point - the buy-in.

And so, they started with podcasts, which were about 15 minutes on a particular topic. Then we showed the alignment to Inclusion Bytes so that they could go deeper. Yeah, that's great.

And I wonder, too, if we can give an example of that in the show notes. If you already have Inclusion Bytes in your district, as so many people do, we've already done the alignment for you. It would be a smart and useful way to give more options to those brilliant educators who love choice and will take on the challenge of learning through podcasts. Yeah, I can take it.

It was called the Behavior Breakthrough Listening Lab, and they called it The Inclusion Podcast PD Series: From Behavior to Belonging. We actually took the behavior Bytes from Inclusion Bytes and aligned them with various Inclusion Podcast episodes. And so, yeah, I'll de-identify all of that, and I'll put it in our show notes, Julie, just to show people how we set it up.

And to your point about choice, options, and autonomy, sometimes you pick which episode you want to listen to, knowing that the same message or theme is being covered. Yeah, and I just want to share what one of the administrators said after doing this. They said, "Actually, professional development is becoming a habit in our district."

It's just becoming a habit, and people are saying, "Oh, on my way home, I listened to that podcast, and then I listened to this podcast." A couple of things to note are that professional development shouldn't be an event. It shouldn't be like, "Here we are, once a year, and we're learning."

No, no, no. We want those curious, creative educators to have a library at the ready so they can find what they want, when they want it. They can even decide to do

professional development on their own time if they so choose. Well, as you said that, I was thinking about the list we made as we were preparing for this podcast about the benefits of using a podcast. One was, "No expensive consultant required." And I thought that was a hilarious one.

So this is a terrible business decision for us. Terrible, terrible ad. Yeah, this is a terrible business decision for us because, as you know, our day job is presenting and providing professional development to schools all around the world.

And we think it's a really lovely complement to that, too. Just know that sometimes it's useful to have our on-demand series and then add the podcast as a way to have a much more relaxed conversation about something that will take the learning deeper. Yeah, because the other part of the research asks whether educators, leaders, paraprofessionals - whoever is changing their practice - have sufficient support, practice, and real-time examples. The nice thing is that, let's say you have our on-demand PD. Julie and I recorded it, and we gave you three examples per grade or per major age group, but maybe a fourth, fifth, or sixth idea comes to us later in a podcast.

So it gives you multiple real examples. It also helps you think, "Okay, I had 15 minutes to listen. Now I still have 15 minutes to discuss, reflect, or change a lesson where I actually apply what I learned." With a sit-and-get, we might use up our three hours of PD in one day.

Yeah, yeah, that's really good. So this is just an episode to tell you how to use something that already exists for districts that are struggling with their budgets. We would love to be part of this process with you.

One of our favorite things is getting emails from leaders saying, "I have a podcast episode idea," and that usually turns into a real podcast for you all. So feel free to reach out to us. It's a two-way street.

Let us know what you need more information about. And Julie, I just remembered: we told them we're going to make that download about the one district, but we didn't tell them what the download was for this episode. Okay, tell them what it is.

Let's do that quickly. First, let me give you the URL: inclusiveschooling.com/download78. It's a more general handout that Julie and I put together about how to do a Walk & Talk as your PD or PLC.

And then we gave you examples: What is a Walk & Talk? Why is movement important? Why would we go outside? We also gave you an example using five or six different episodes. They happen to be about behavior, but in case you don't have Inclusion Bytes, this tells you, "Okay, let's say our focus for this PLC or this year is behavior." You could also choose differentiation.

You could choose co-teaching. You could choose fading support. You could choose whatever your theme is - improving Tier 1, for example - and figure out which episodes fit.

Then we gave you the link to the show notes and the link to the download with practical resources. We also gave you discussion questions.

Oh, Kristie, when I was a teacher, I used to be in charge of the PLC for our fourth- and fifth-grade team. And as you know, I'm a Type B kind of person. So I didn't usually have things planned with really big ideas until, I don't know, the 11th hour.

And so, if any of you are running PLCs or know someone who is, this would be so great because you could get ahead of yourself and say, "We're kind of set for this entire PLC about behavior just by using this one resource." Yeah, and then we'll wrap this one up. But sometimes people don't think about paraprofessionals when they're designing their PD.

Or they're like, "We forgot to think about early childhood." Or, "We forgot to think about choir, debate, and orchestra." There might be something in our 70-some episodes that would be for those groups. And so it can be helpful in that way as well.

I love it. Okay, as you think about your next staff meeting, your PLC, or your leadership team, here's a challenge: Don't just ask, "What are we going to cover?" Ask, "How are we going to create a conversation that actually changes practice?" Professional learning isn't about finishing an agenda, checking a box, or getting through an entire PowerPoint. It's about building a shared language, a shared understanding, and the confidence to try something different.

So we hope you'll download this companion guide, grab a few colleagues, take a walk, and see where the conversation leads. Thanks for listening. Find every episode, show notes, and free resources at <https://inclusiveschooling.com/inclusion-podcast>.

SHOW NOTES

What if your next PLC didn't involve sitting around a table, working through another PowerPoint, or trying to squeeze meaningful professional learning into an already packed agenda?

In this episode, Julie and Kristie share a simple way to turn podcasts into professional development through a Walk & Talk PLC. It gives educators movement, choice, conversation, and practical ideas they can actually use.

If you lead PLCs, staff meetings, professional development, or educator teams, this episode may have just planned your next few meetings for you.

Key Takeaways

- Effective professional development should leave educators thinking differently, talking with colleagues, and ready to try something new.
- Adults benefit from autonomy and choice in how, when, and where they learn.
- Podcasts can create interaction with experts, content, and colleagues without requiring another sit-and-get training.
- Short episodes leave time for the part PD often misses: discussion, reflection, and application.

- Professional learning is more powerful when it becomes an ongoing habit rather than a once-a-year event.

Episode Download / Handout

Turn a Podcast Into Your Next Walk & Talk PLC

The free Episode 78 companion guide gives you a practical structure for using The Inclusion Podcast as professional development—without having to build your next PLC from scratch.

You'll find:

- Guidance for setting up a Walk & Talk
- An explanation of why movement can strengthen the PD experience
- A ready-made example centered on challenging behavior
- Podcast episodes and resources already organized around the topic
- Discussion questions to move teams from listening to application
- A structure you can adapt for other priorities such as co-teaching, differentiation, Tier 1 instruction, or fading adult support
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Why download it?

Because finding good PD content is only half the job. You still have to turn it into meaningful professional learning. This guide does that part for you, giving you a structure you can use for one PLC or build into an ongoing professional learning series.

👉 Get the handout at: [inclusiveschooling.com/download78](https://www.inclusiveschooling.com/download78)

Practical Moves for Your Next PLC

- Choose a topic connected to something your team is already working on.
- Let educators listen while walking rather than requiring everyone to sit together.
- Keep the content short enough to protect time for discussion and application.
- Offer episode choices when different staff members have different needs or levels of readiness.
- Include paraprofessionals, specialists, early childhood educators, and others who are often overlooked when PD is planned.
- End by asking what educators want to try, change, or explore next.

Additional Resources

[Sample District Walk and Talk- 🎧 The Inclusion Podcast PD Series: From Behavior to Belonging](#): See how one district turned *The Inclusion Podcast* into an ongoing professional learning experience focused on behavior and belonging. This real-world example provides a flexible model for pairing podcast episodes with practical resources, Inclusion-Bytes, collaborative reflection, and exit tickets.

Use the complete series as inspiration or adapt individual pieces to create meaningful, connection-centered professional learning for your own school or district.

[Inclusion-Bytes: Professional Learning for Inclusive Schools](#): Build a shared understanding of inclusion — and the practical skills to make it happen. Inclusion-Bytes offers flexible, on-demand professional learning designed for PreK–12 educators, with expert-led learning, downloadable resources, reflection opportunities, and implementation tools that help teams move inclusive practices from ideas into everyday classrooms.