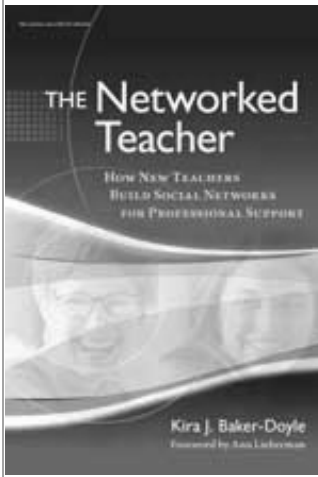


The Networked Teacher: How New Teachers Build Social Networks for Professional Support

March 2013 - Volume 16, Number 4

The Networked Teacher: How New Teachers Build Social Networks for Professional Support		
Author:	Kira J. Baker-Doyle (August 2011)	
Publisher:	New York, NY: Teachers College Press	
Pages	ISBN	Price
105 pages	978-0-8077-5251-7	\$27.95



The Networked Teacher: How New Teachers Build Social Networks for Professional Support is written by Kira J. Baker-Doyle, an assistant professor at Pennsylvania State University Berks. The author's global objective is to analyze and uncover the ways that new teachers receive support from social networks (face-to-face and online). The author describes the theory of social networks, research, what effective social networking looks like, and the obstacles that new teachers have when developing these support networks. The book has seven short chapters: 1-Teaching in the Network Society, 2- Networking for Support: Framework for Understanding Teacher Support and Social Networks, 3- Looking at Networks: Network Types and the Networking practices of New Teachers, 4- Inside Schools: School Culture Shaping Teachers' Networks, 5- Building Intentional Professional Networks, 6- Seeking Diverse Professional Allies, and 7- Social Networking for Teachers, Teacher Educators, and School Leaders. The book's appendix includes an outline of the strategies, two mapping tools/diagrams, and a brief description of multiple collaborative technologies. The book also has a companion website: <http://www.thenetworkedteacher.com>.

Doyle begins by explaining the different research and theories behind social networking. The author does a great job educating the reader about the current research and theories. Doyle continues by outlining different trends of new teacher support and comparisons between the traditional methods and the new reform methods. Next, the author describes a framework for understanding teachers' social networks: Intentional Professional Networks and Diverse Professional Allies. Doyle compares and contrasts these two networks throughout the rest of the book. Next, the author begins to analyze four different teachers' own networks. The author uses the stories to give the reader perspective and allows the reader to relate the topics to their own experiences. During the descriptions of each teacher's experience, the author outlines the development, use, and challenges of each teacher's network. Doyle offers many suggestions for developing the networks, and constantly refers back to one of the teacher's specific situations to further explain and relate to the reader. The stories provide concrete examples of the types of networks, development of the networks, the obstacles involved, and the tremendous results of the implemented networks or the lack thereof. Doyle ends the book with a chapter that identifies the actions that teacher leaders, teacher educators, school administrators, and mentors can take to help new teachers develop their networks.

I am a sixth year high school math teacher in a US public urban school district. I have been teaching at the same school for my entire career. When I began teaching, I developed my own teacher network by accident. My outgoing personality made it easy for me to develop my networks. I was also very fortunate to be surrounded by great colleagues my first year. However, not all new teachers have had the same experiences as me. I witnessed new teachers fail to be successful and ultimately leave the teaching profession (some after their first year, and some after a few years). New teacher success became interesting to me when I realized that I developed my networks by accident, because of my personality. I want to help support new teachers and help them build their networks. I chose to read this book because I want more research based background and information about the success of new teachers. Throughout the past few years I have assumed the role of a leader in my school, both formally as an appointed mentor, and informally as a member of others' networks. This book met my goal of learning more about the theory of social networks. This book also helped me gain perspective of different teachers' situations and stories. I enjoyed reading the stories and I liked how the author continued to use them as examples when she explained the different aspects of each type of network. The author broke down specific examples, and described broader ideas. I feel that I am more able to assist and support new teachers. In the last chapter of the book, the author gave some suggestions for teacher leaders and administrators. However, I would have liked more suggestions for mentors and non-administrative leaders. That being said, I feel that Doyle wrote the book in such a way that allowed me to constantly reflect and develop my own ideas while reading. I recommend this book for new teachers to identify the ways that they can develop their networks and the importance of doing so. I also recommend this book for any teacher leader (formal and informal) to develop insight on network theory and the implementation among new teachers.

Every country has new teachers. *The Networked Teacher* would be beneficial for an educator in any country to read. The four teachers' stories in the book are American teachers; however, their stories are not U.S. culture-specific. The obstacles they face are the same obstacles new teachers outside of the U.S. face. They are from different types of schools (both urban and not). Two were from a program that offers an alternative teacher licensure process that places teachers in urban schools, and two were graduates from a college or university degree program. The stories are relatable to any new teacher, regardless of the country of origin. The author also describes different types of school management and the differences in fostering the development of the teachers' networks. This allows the author's ideas to be applicable in all countries and cultures.

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