

# Agenda

## November 13–15 • Las Vegas, NV

### Monday, November 13

<b>Times TBD</b>	Registration	<b>Locations TBD</b>
	Continental Breakfast	
	<b>Keynote</b> —Douglas Reeves <i>Leading Through Uncertainty: Enduring Values, Principles, and Practices</i>	
	Break	
	<b>Breakouts</b>	
	Lunch (on your own)	
	<b>Breakouts</b>	
	Break	
	<b>Panel Discussion</b>	

### Tuesday, November 14

	Registration	
	Continental Breakfast	
	<b>Keynote</b> —Peter Noonan <i>What Are the Imperatives That Drive Our Leadership? Unpacking the Moral, Ethical, and Personal Imperatives to Support PLCs</i>	
	Break	
	<b>Breakouts</b>	
	Lunch (on your own)	
	<b>Breakouts</b>	
	Break	
	<b>Role-Alike Team Time</b>	

### Wednesday, November 15

	Continental Breakfast	
	<b>Keynote</b> —Cassandra Erkens <i>Modeling What Matters</i>	
	Break	
	<b>Keynote</b> —Anthony Muhammad <i>All Means All: The Rebirth of Egalitarianism</i>	

**Agenda is subject to change.**

## Breakouts at a Glance

Presenter & Title	Monday, November 13		Tuesday, November 14	
<b>Justin Baeder</b>				
Making Time for Classroom Conversations	X			
The Inbox Overhaul: How to End Email Overload Forever		X		
Improvement Mapping: Hypothesis-Driven Strategic Planning			X	
Beyond the Feedback Sandwich: Evidence-Based Classroom Conversations for Instructional Improvement				X
<b>Cassandra Erkens</b>				
Leading by Design	X			
Creating and Sustaining Healthy and Productive Teams		X		
Navigating Conflict and Feeling Good About It			X	
Developing a Guiding Coalition for School Improvement				X
<b>Brandon Jones</b>				
Abandoning Archaic Practices: Motivating and Preparing Generation Z Students	X			
Facing the Giants: Overcoming the RTI Odds in Secondary Schools		X		
Built to Last: Selecting, Supporting, and Empowering Your Most Valuable Asset			X	
The Tipping Point: Creating an Epidemic of Excellence in Schools				X
<b>Anthony Muhammad</b>				
The Four Skills of a Transformational Leader	X			
Collaboration Is a Lifestyle, Not a Meeting!		X		
Transforming School Culture			X	
Overcoming the Achievement Gap Trap: Liberating Mindsets to Effect Change				X

<b>Peter Noonan</b>				
10 Things I Wish I Knew Before Taking on a Leadership Role	X			
The Leadership Challenge: What Is Your Personal Best and How Does It Mirror What the Experts Say?		X		
Defining, Developing, and Defending Rigor: How Teams Can Support High Levels of Learning for All			X	
Protocols, Protocols, and More Protocols: Tools Teams Can Use to Do the Work of Collaboration				X
<b>Regina Stephens Owens</b>				
Building Systems and Structures to Support Your PLC	X			
A Data Discussion for Instructional Leaders: From Data to Design and Demonstration of Learning		X		
The Why Effect: Intentional Systems Drive Inspirational Cultures			X	
Great Leaders in Small Schools Rock				X
<b>Douglas Reeves</b>				
Next-Generation Accountability	X			
How Great Leaders Model Critical Thinking		X		
The Daily Disciplines of Leadership			X	
The Change Readiness Assessment: Are You Really Ready to Change?				X

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# Session Descriptions

## Justin Baeder

### **Making Time for Classroom Conversations**

How can school leaders make time to visit classrooms and talk with teachers on a daily basis? Overwhelming workloads and frequent interruptions are par for the course, but they don't have to keep administrators away from their most important instructional leadership work. Participants learn how to schedule the right number of classroom visits at the right times, set expectations, create systems to handle interruptions, and make time to have meaningful, growth-producing conversations with teachers every day.

Participants in this session:

- Calculate their "interruption ratio" and identify specific times throughout the day to visit classrooms and talk with teachers.
- Define specific types of interrupting and non-interrupting emergencies, and set expectations with office staff about how to handle each type.
- Develop systems for ensuring effective follow-up with each teacher after every classroom visit.

### **The Inbox Overhaul: How to End Email Overload Forever**

How can we transform email from a source of overwhelm into a powerful leadership tool? Most administrators receive hundreds of emails a week and feel like they'll never be able to keep up with it all. Participants learn how to get to "inbox zero" every day, so email can serve its intended purpose as a communication tool rather than a source of distraction and stress. Justin Baeder shows how to quickly triage emails, manage ever-changing task backlogs, and ensure that an important message is never again missed.

Participants in this session:

- Develop a simple and expedient workflow for processing every message.
- Learn three essential tools to manage, document, and follow up on tasks from any device.
- Set clear expectations for staff communication to minimize interruptions and ensure consistent follow-through.

### **Improvement Mapping: Hypothesis-Driven Strategic Planning**

How can schools truly become learning organizations? Too often, strategic plans include far too many overlapping and conflicting strategies that inhibit organizational learning. Participants learn how to develop improvement maps to articulate testable, cause-and-effect hypotheses to discern which improvement efforts are actually producing desired results. Justin Baeder shows how to connect a school's mission and vision to achievable milestones, verifiable measures of progress, and specific actions.

Participants in this session:

- Develop an improvement map for an existing initiative in their organizations.
- Distinguish between testable and non-testable hypotheses to develop clearer, more focused strategic plans.
- Learn how to turn big-picture goals into results for students with the HEAT (Hypothesize, Experiment, Analyze, Talk) inquiry cycle.

## **Beyond the Feedback Sandwich: Evidence-Based Classroom Conversations for Instructional Improvement**

How can we engage in meaningful instructional conversations that are professionally rewarding for leaders and teachers? Too often, post-observation discussions are either administrator-driven "feedback sandwiches" or unpleasant interrogations. Participants discover how to have evidence-based conversations about teacher practices that result in less defensiveness, greater trust, and dramatically higher levels of learning.

Participants in this session:

- Understand the role teacher autonomy and decision making play in professional learning.
- Learn ways to restructure their post-observation conferences to maximize learning while minimizing directive feedback.
- Shift the focus of post-observation discussions from judgment and evaluation to evidence and shared expectations.

## **Cassandra Erkens**

### **[KEYNOTE] Modeling What Matters**

Quality leadership *is* the work of formative assessment. This keynote explores formative assessment practices as quality leadership strategies and provides tools and resources for teacher leaders and administrators to begin modeling the process of *using assessment practices to develop assessment literacy among staff*. Systemic change happens when leaders model the way and then engage staff in exploring transparent practices over time.

As a result of this session, participants:

- Understand the role of leadership in supporting significant change efforts.
- Identify leadership practices that align with quality formative assessment.
- Explore options for engaging staff in the quality formative assessment process.

## **Leading by Design**

In a collaborative culture, leadership occurs at all levels of the organization, and it cannot be left to chance that the work will be done well. Remarkable leaders are intentional and transparent in their leadership work. They *design* for leadership to be explored, practiced, and mastered in micro and macro moments. This session explores the consistent practices that we found leaders at every level of successful PLC organizations use to create meaningful change.

Participants in this session:

- Identify the practices of successful leaders in collaborative cultures.
- Explore processes and strategies for developing leadership capacity.
- Identify strategies and actions to use to shift culture and address conflict.

## **Creating and Sustaining Healthy and Productive Teams**

While the concept of teaming implies working *smarter*, the truth of collaboration sometimes feels like working *harder*. The work of collaboration requires that teams not only be productive, but also *healthy*. Effective leaders must monitor for both in their teams. In addition, they must be willing to provide team leaders with the necessary supports to manage emotion and become self-sufficient.

Participants in this session:

- Examine characteristics of healthy, productive teams.
- Identify tools and protocols to successfully monitor collaboration.
- Explore strategies, skills, and guidelines to safely and directly address conflict.

### **Navigating Conflict and Feeling Good About It**

Many leaders avoid addressing conflict because the work feels awful and the fear of residual negative effects can be paralyzing. However, a leader's willingness and ability to address conflict directly and safely makes all the difference in his or her overall impact as a leader and in building and sustaining rapport with staff. While the challenge of navigating conflict is always nerve-wracking at the outset, leaders can do specific things to address and resolve conflict in a manner that consistently elicits respect, improves relationships, and enables progress.

Participants in this session:

- Understand the role of leadership in addressing conflict.
- Identify the value in *having* conflict.
- Explore effective strategies, skills, and guidelines to address conflict.

### **Developing a Guiding Coalition for School Improvement**

School improvement never happens on the back of a single leader. Wise leaders build guiding coalitions to support schoolwide efforts and then invest in building the leadership capacity of their coalition leaders. This session outlines the characteristics and work of strong guiding coalitions and provides strategies and tools leaders can use to develop leadership capacity at their sites.

Participants in this session identify the composition and work of a guiding coalition and explore processes and strategies for developing leadership capacity.

## **Brandon Jones**

### **Abandoning Archaic Practices: Motivating and Preparing Generation Z Students**

Educators are challenged to prepare students for jobs that don't yet exist, using technologies not yet invented, to solve problems no one yet recognizes. So, what happens when all the available tricks fail to motivate and engage students dependent on the immediacy of their world? The problem lies in the fact that their system of thinking, from the neural level to the practical, is instant and problem based—the opposite of preceding generations! In this session, participants compare traditional and 21st century learning practices that have significant impact on student motivation and learning.

Learning outcomes include:

- Exploring the significant differences between Generation Z and past generations
- Identifying traditional practices that demotivate students
- Examining 21st century learning practices that motivate and prepare students for the future

### **Facing the Giants: Overcoming the RTI Odds in Secondary Schools**

The primary mission of a PLC is to ensure high levels of learning for all students. Do the systems of support in schools truly align with this mission? Despite a teacher's best efforts in class, some students will not be successful without additional time and support. Creating a system in which all students are guaranteed to receive directed, specific, and timely intervention is essential to their success. Based on RTI research and action research from several model PLC schools, this session focuses on common barriers secondary schools face when attempting to provide additional help for students, solutions to those challenges, and the proven enrichment plan of a model PLC secondary school.

Participants in this session:

- Examine their current reality and challenges of systematic interventions in secondary schools.
- Determine how a PLC addresses common challenges and helps sustain a tiered system of support for students.
- Investigate the enrichment and intervention plan of an exemplary secondary school PLC.

### **Built to Last: Selecting, Supporting and Empowering Your Most Valuable Asset**

Hiring and retaining outstanding staff is a key component of any excellent school. Yet, the percentage of college freshmen who say they will seek a degree in education dropped to an all-time low of 4.2% in 2016. In fact, that percentage has steadily fallen every year since 2004. With fewer trained educators entering the field, the need to support, coach, and retain quality individuals has never been greater. In this session, Brandon Jones discusses key priorities to consider in the hiring process, identifies common areas of difficulty for staff, and leads an examination of a practical system of support for all educators.

Participants in this session:

- Examine proven methods for hiring quality individuals.
- Identify common areas in which teachers and administrators need additional support.
- Study a systematic approach to providing staff support that leads to increased effectiveness and self-efficacy.

### **The Tipping Point: Creating an Epidemic of Excellence in Schools**

What do Adlai Stevenson High School, Sesame Street, and Paul Revere have in common? They each experienced a successful epidemic that led to extraordinary results. There is a notion that these success stories exist due to a perfectly timed idea, wild luck, or having had a charismatic leader. But each of these success stories, and others like them, exist because of a finite and predictable set of rules. In this session, participants examine Malcolm Gladwell's three principles of epidemics and determine how they can be applied to improve schools.

Participants in this session:

- Examine the rules of "the tipping point," including the Law of the Few, the Stickiness Factor, and the Power of Context.
- Learn how creating a successful epidemic is connected to the PLC process.
- Explore practical ways to apply these principles to improve school leadership and culture.

## **Anthony Muhammad**

### **[KEYNOTE] All Means All: The Rebirth of Egalitarianism**

Equality is the cornerstone of a public school system and behavior is a product of thinking. In this session, Anthony Muhammad facilitates an examination of the root causes for the achievement gap and the leader's responsibility to create equitable learning environments. Participants also examine the mindsets of schools that work to liberate all students versus schools content with historical inequality. Leaders must guide their staffs through the process of tough and honest reflection, and this session models that important process.

As a result of this session, participants understand that:

- The achievement gap is a product of collective thinking.
- Systemic change requires self-examination and tough personal and professional commitments.
- Change requires abandoning old assumptions and comforts.

### **The Four Skills of a Transformational Leader**

This session addresses the importance of transformational leadership. School and an understanding that culture provides the context for all good strategies. Leaders who understand how to motivate, develop, and build consensus are invaluable to their organizations. This era of constant change requires leadership that understands the development of human capital. Dr. Muhammad leads an examination of four leadership competencies: communication, trust building, professional support, and accountability.

Participants in this session:

- Understand the true meaning and value of school culture.
- Understand the importance of developing consensus.
- Acquire practical skills that inspire others to embrace change.

### **Collaboration Is a Lifestyle, Not a Meeting!**

How can a culture of collaboration be created? How can an environment where people embrace collective responsibility be implemented? This session addresses the collaborative characteristics of a high-performing PLC. Participants learn how teachers, support staff, school administrators, and central office work together to improve school performance. Dr. Muhammad also discusses the issues of staff resistance to change and the leader's role in building consensus.

As a result of this session, participants can:

- Construct and protect productive collaborative relationships.
- Create organizational coherence and ensure collaboration at all levels of the school community.
- Understand the balance between support and accountability.

### **Transforming School Culture**

This session addresses the issue of conflicting agendas within schools. A high-performing school has a very clear purpose: high levels of learning for all students. Participants examine the barriers to aligning individual agendas with the organization's agenda, and what *all* parties must do to develop the synergy necessary to guarantee learning. They also examine the theoretical framework developed by Anthony Muhammad in his book *Transforming School Culture: How to Overcome Staff Division* (Solution Tree Press, 2009) as the basis for developing a collaborative culture.

Participants learn:

- How staff division develops and how to prevent it
- Strategies that heal old social and professional wounds
- Ways to create an environment where every professional can thrive

### **Overcoming the Achievement Gap Trap: Liberating Mindsets to Effect Change**

This session explores the connection among personal and institutional mindsets and academic achievement gaps. The issue of inequality in student learning outcomes has been studied and debated for years and commonly holds that the primary culprit in the fight to overcome the achievement gap is our own individual and collective thinking.

As a result of this session, participants understand:

- The true meaning and value of school culture
- The power of mindsets and their influence on educator effectiveness
- How to shift from damaging mindsets (superiority and inferiority) to high levels of efficacy (liberation mindset)

### **Peter Noonan**

#### **[KEYNOTE] What Are the Imperatives That Drive Our Leadership? Unpacking the Moral, Ethical, and Personal Imperatives to Support PLCs**

Peter Noonan shares three imperatives that support the work of school leaders and how these imperatives promote the work of PLCs and team processes. He illustrates ways to create a potentially new layer of thinking, learning, and understanding about why we do the work we do for our schools and districts every day.

#### **10 Things I Wish I Knew Before Taking on a Leadership Role**

This session focuses on 10 ways that leaders support schools, teams, students, and communities. Peter Noonan shares the core principles of leadership, and participants reflect on how implementing these principles can close the “knowing–doing” gap between current practice and best practice. Dr. Noonan also discusses ways to build leadership capacity in your leaders. Participants are encouraged to interact by sharing and discussing ideas.

Outcomes for this session include:

- Learning and discussing best leadership practices
- Applying best practices to current leadership roles
- Discovering new ways to think about and promote leadership behaviors among coworkers and team members

#### **The Leadership Challenge: What Is Your Personal Best and How Does It Mirror What the Experts Say?**

The research of leadership experts James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner influences and drives this interactive session. Through the lens of leadership characteristics, participants reflect on their current reality and areas of strength and growth. Through the use of short video clips, Peter Noonan illustrates a particular structure of leadership and specific actions needed to frame such a structure.

Participants are called on to:

- Discover the five leadership strands borne from the research of Kouzes and Posner.
- Discuss and understand the connection between these strands and their own leadership positions.
- Consider their best personal leadership experiences and ways to recognize and replicate those characteristics and qualities.

### **Defining, Developing, and Defending Rigor: How Teams Can Support High Levels of Learning for All**

Peter Noonan debunks the myths around who can be part of a rigorous classroom experience and facilitates a discussion on defining *rigor*. Participants engage in ways to promote a growth mindset for students at all levels. After seeing an example of a rigorous instructional program in action, participants discuss and plan for how to implement similar practices at their sites and districts.

Participants in this session:

- Consider common myths about rigor and how to discredit them.
- Examine cultural barriers to supporting rigor for all and strategies to make shifts in instructional practice.
- Learn ways to work within PLC teams to institute rigorous strategies.

### **Protocols, Protocols, and More Protocols: Tools Teams Can Use to Do the Work of Collaboration**

This interactive session teaches team leaders and members specific strategies to support meaningful dialogue that promotes interdependence. Examples include problem solving, lesson planning, assessing student work, and building team consensus.

Participants in this interactive session:

- Learn several defined strategies to support the collaborative process.
- Engage in activities that support personal and professional leadership in a collaborative culture.
- Learn from others how they overcame issues that can bog teams down.

## **Regina Stephens Owens**

### **Building Systems and Structures to Support Your PLC**

In a world of education that spans brick and mortar, blended learning, and virtual worlds, teachers are faced with numerous questions: How can we ensure high levels of achievement in all learning environments? How do we bring clarity of the PLC process to all stakeholders and ensure continuous improvement? Where do we begin? Educators must address these questions to improve student achievement through 21st century learning and teaching. Regina Stephens Owens examines the processes, protocols, and potential pitfalls of a PLC, and brings clarity to the journey. She shows how PLC components are used in a systemic process to sustain student and teacher success.

Dr. Owens calls on participants to:

- Examine the three big ideas of a PLC and their impact on blended learning environments and virtual schools.
- Learn strategies that ensure high levels of learning for students and teachers by creating a more efficient and effective system.

## **A Data Discussion for Instructional Leaders: From Data to Design and Demonstration of Learning**

In a time of tremendous focus on data, it is imperative to develop a rich culture of collaboration through dialogue and data protocols to move from a deficit mindset to a growth mindset. Participants learn ways to create a culture of collaboration, use different types of data protocols, and write and manage SMART goals to ensure capacity building and increased student achievement.

Participants in this session:

- Examine ways to focus on results through the lens of data.
- Obtain tools, tips, and templates proven to impact team and student learning.
- Learn strategies to support SMART goals that promote and enhance learning while focusing on a growth mindset.

## **The Why Effect: Intentional Systems Drive Inspirational Cultures**

Organizational purpose and collective beliefs and commitments affect building systems at all levels of an organization. How do you ensure that all practices and procedures are intentional and personify organizational beliefs? It all begins with the *why*. Regina Stephens Owens discusses moving from compliance, coercion, and fear to cultures that are respectful, responsive, and reflective. Participants explore frameworks of intentionality—frameworks that promote leaders who advance global dispositions and ensure that students are prepared for college, career, and life.

Learning outcomes include:

- Understanding how to promote high standards of achievement for all
- Discovering how to create a collective, rather than individual, leadership focus
- Examining the essential role of diversity in decision making
- Utilizing global dispositions to promote cultural responsiveness

## **Great Leaders in Small Schools Rock**

Teachers and leaders in small schools understand the need to seek solutions and recognize unique opportunities. Operating efficiently and effectively as contributing members of a learning community in a small school can be a challenge. It requires 1) applying creative principles and a 21st century mindset in collaborating around common denominators, 2) working with peers to improve professional practices and student learning, and 3) authentically engaging in the continuous improvement process. Regina Stephens Owens leads a discussion on collaborating around best practices and coaching design action plans to support the work of small schools and ensure high levels of learning schoolwide.

Participants in this session:

- Acquire techniques for consensus building, strategic planning, and vision development.
- Expose the specific challenges that singleton teachers in small schools encounter, and explore solutions for overcoming these obstacles.
- Create a plan of action that supports small schools that function effectively as a PLC.

## **Douglas Reeves**

### **[KEYNOTE] Leading Through Uncertainty: Enduring Values, Principles, and Practices**

In times of economic and political upheaval, leaders face uncertainty and challenge. During this interactive keynote, Douglas Reeves provides practical advice for leaders and policymakers who support students and staff members during turbulent and uncertain times.

Dr. Reeves illustrates ways to:

- Synthesize the latest and best research on change leadership.
- Evaluate alternative strategies for leadership success.
- Apply the research to personal and professional responsibilities.

### **Next-Generation Accountability**

Educational accountability has fundamentally changed—from a system based on test scores to a new alternative based on teaching, leadership, and learning. This session covers three levels of accountability: 1) system-level indicators – the values that unite an entire state, province, or district; 2) school-level indicators – the specific actions of teachers and school administrators; and 3) qualitative reflections – the “story behind the numbers.”

Learning outcomes include:

- Creating new accountability indicators
- Synthesizing accountability research
- Understanding the impact of accountability on student results

### **How Great Leaders Model Critical Thinking**

Critical thinking is the foundation for every 21st century skill. Creativity, collaboration, communication, and every other 21st century skill depends on the ability of leaders to compare claims to evidence—the essence of critical thinking. Participants engage in an Oxford-style debate, a classic critical thinking exercise in which each participant chooses the role of advocate or researcher and then proposes and rebuts alternative points of view.

Learning outcomes include:

- Applying the essential elements of critical thinking
- Synthesizing different points of view on essential leadership issues
- Understanding the perspectives of opposing points of view

### **The Daily Disciplines of Leadership**

The root of the word *discipline* means learning. Because great leaders must be disciplined, they must also be great learners. Douglas Reeves conceived the “Daily Disciplines of Leadership” in 2001 and has updated the research and disciplines for 2017.

Participants in this session:

- Apply the Daily Disciplines to their personal and professional responsibilities.
- Create a “not-to-do” list based on their leadership priorities.
- Synthesize the latest and best research on leadership and its impact on student achievement.

## **The Change Readiness Assessment: Are You Really Ready to Change?**

Are you truly ready for change? The change readiness assessment invites participants to analyze their past successes with change at the individual and organizational levels. Based on these successes, each participant identifies which quadrant of “change readiness” is most appropriate for them.

Outcomes for this session include:

- Assessing personal and organizational change readiness
- Synthesizing past experiences with change and applying these to present and future challenges
- Identifying the quadrant of change readiness most applicable to participants and their organizations