Agenda
Denver, CO • August 1–3

Tuesday, August 1

Times TBD	Registration	Locations TBD
	Continental Breakfast	
	Keynote—Tom Schimmer *Essential Assessment: Building Hope, Efficacy, and Achievement*	
	Break	
	Breakouts	
	Lunch (on your own)	
	Breakouts	
	Break	
	Open-Space Technology Conversations	

Wednesday, August 2

	Registration	
	Continental Breakfast	
	Keynote—Nicole Dimich Vagle *Instructional Agility: Power and Possibility to Inspire Learning and Confidence*	
	Break	
	Breakouts	
	Lunch (on your own)	
	Breakouts	
	Break	
	Ask an Expert and Team Time	

Thursday, August 3

	Continental Breakfast	
	Breakouts	
	Break	
	Keynote—Cassandra Erkens *Getting to the Good Stuff: Resiliency and Investment*	

Agenda is subject to change.

Breakouts at a Glance

Presenter & Session Title	Tuesday, August 1		Wednesday, August 2		Thursday, August 3
Cassandra Erkens					
Designing Assessments for 21st Century Skills	X				
Collaborative Common Assessments		X			
Engineering Engaging Conversations			X		
Making Homework Count					X
Angela Freese					
Analyzing Standards for Assessment Planning	X				
Assess-O-Mania: Moving From Chaos to Clarity on What, When, and How Much		X			
Engaging the 3Rs to Leverage Student Achievement			X		
A Leader's Guide to Assessment Literacy				X	
Unstoppable Assessment: Using Evidence-Based Practices to Champion Student Achievement					X
Anthony Reibel					
Proficiency-Based Assessment: Process, Not Product	X				
Co-Constructed Rubrics – How Involved Are Your Students in the Feedback Process?		X			
What Does Data Tell Us? Effective Data Discussions in a Professional Learning Community			X		
All Mindset, All Commitment: Exploring Standards-Based Grading				X	

Are You a Learner or a Student? Promoting Self-Service Learning					X
Tom Schimmer					
Grading From the Inside Out	X				
Quality Assessment Items		X			
Effective Leadership in Assessment and Grading			X		
Redefining Student Accountability				X	
Nicole Dimich Vagle					
Design in Five: A Process for Effectively Creating Assessments	X				
Developing Culturally Relevant Performance Tasks		X			
Using Collaboration in Assessment				X	
Changing Assessment Practices Through Student Voice					X
Katie White					
Softening the Edges: Refining Our Assessment Practices	X				
Softening the Edges: Making Assessment Decisions That Honor Teacher and Student Needs		X			
How Changing One Thing Can Change Everything: The Power of Learning Continuums			X		
Using Formative Assessment and Feedback to Nurture Sound Thinking				X	
Building Strong Self-Assessment Skills in Young Learners					X

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Session Descriptions

Cassandra Erkens

[KEYNOTE] Getting to the Good Stuff: Resiliency and Investment

In the ideal classroom, all learners would be deeply invested in their learning, demonstrating motivation, persistence, passion, and high levels of intellectual risk taking and engagement. Is that realistic? Yes! But changes to current assessment practices and systems must be made if learners will ever be able to self-regulate as they engage in the work of deep learning. This keynote explores the mental mindset and practical strategies educators must employ to support learners in *getting to the good stuff*.

Participants in this session:
- Identify the barriers that block learners from truly investing in their own learning.
- Explore the educator's mindset that is required to support deep learning at the classroom level.
- Identify the strategies and tools that teachers can use to support learners in self-regulation.

Designing Assessments for 21st Century Skills

We are preparing learners today for a world we have not experienced and may even have difficulty comprehending. How can we create and use assessments that tap into a global and technological realm? How can we ensure assessment move us beyond the practice of regurgitating information to the practice of co-creating new insights and new solutions for a complex and rapidly changing world? This session explores the integration of rigor, relevance, and 21st century skills in assessment design.

Participants in this session:
- Explore widely accepted 21st century skills.
- Identify the criteria for, and non-negotiables of, quality assessment design.
- Identify quality–non-quality assessment options.
- Explore designing a 21st century skill-based assessment.

Collaborative Common Assessments

In recent years, an explosion of information has proved the power and need behind more formative assessments and fewer summative assessments. It seems odd then to add having teams use common assessments in an already test-heavy culture. However, when managed properly, the development and use of common formative assessments can support a culture of learning for students and teachers. Through the process, participants collectively step back and examine assessment practices through the lenses of *where we are going*, *where we are now*, and *what we could do to address the gap*. In teams— with experience behind us, research beside us, and a vision of learning before us—we develop assessment literacy and promote learning for all.

Participants in this session:
- Explore current assessment fallacies that can prohibit learning.
- Identify the rationale for the use of common formative assessments.
- Understand the process and products of common formative assessments.

Engineering Engaging Conversations
The quality of formative data a teacher can generate during instruction is directly related to the quality of questions the teacher asks and the classroom conversations that result. This session provides a rationale for using conversation as an instructional foundation and explores options for creating engaging conversations and criteria for monitoring student engagement and learning.

Participants are called on to:
- Understand the rationale and role of engineering conversation as an instructional foundation.
- Explore frameworks for generating engaging conversations.
- Apply a criteria for monitoring student engagement and learning.

Making Homework Count
We use homework for three primary purposes: practice, preparation, and extension of classroom learning. According to some research, homework is one of the most powerful instructional strategies we can employ to impact student achievement. Yet, other research indicates there is little to no correlation between our use of homework and current achievement results. How might we leverage homework to increase student productivity and achievement? This session explores necessary considerations for the design and use of homework as a formative assessment tool to positively impact student learning.

Participants in this session:
- Align the intent of homework with promising practices in homework design and use.
- Identify formative assessment tools and processes to support the use of homework as an opportunity for safe practice.
- Explore errors as a means to develop instructionally agile responses to data from practice opportunities to maximize learning.

Angela Freese
Analyzing Standards for Assessment Planning
This session digs deeper into analyzing standards for accurate assessment design. Participants work through a process of determining what the standards are actually asking students to do—to what cognitive level—as well as determining how to prioritize and map out those standards across academic learning action plans.

Participants in this session:
- Dig deep to collaboratively determine the level of rigor the standard requires.
- Explore what evidence is needed from students to ensure the appropriate depth of knowledge and understanding of the standard.
- Understand how to design assessment tools or tasks that accurately represent the learning progression toward mastery of the standard.

Assess-O-Mania: Moving From Chaos to Clarity on What, When, and How Much
Summative or formative? Rubric or checklist? Before, during, or after instruction? These are a few of the various questions teachers and teams grapple with as they prepare to design their units of study and gather information on what students know and can do. The uncertainty and dissonance that may plague a system's approach to assessment design and delivery is not uncommon. This session helps participants navigate their current realities in order to achieve clarity and cohesion for intentional, effective assessment practices to thrive in classrooms, schools, and districts.

Participants in this session:
- Differentiate instructional intentions from what is actually being implemented to support student achievement.
- Utilize collaborative team structures to determine what to assess, when to assess it, and how to gather evidence of student learning.
- Learn strategies that support evidence of learning to intentionally impact next steps in instructional practice.

Engaging the 3Rs to Leverage Student Achievement
Relationships in the classroom are an essential gateway for promoting investment, ownership, and efficacy for students. We rely on our ability to leverage those relationships in order to engage students on their learning pathway. How do we create and utilize assessments that promote the expected levels of rigor and also engage students in seeing the relevance of the content in their own lives? Participants explore the harmony of relationships, rigor, and relevance in assessment design.

Learning outcomes include:
- Exploring the content and context of standards relative to assessment design
- Discussing and determining approaches to assessment design that heighten rigor and relevance
- Planning for student investment in learning through integration of 21st century skills

A Leader's Guide to Assessment Literacy
The demands of building and district leaders are extraordinary. In an attempt to maintain balance of the varied, demanding roles of educational leaders, how can diligence to the responsibility of ensuring high levels of learning for every child be sustained? The best way to leverage the efforts of building and district leaders is to create a balanced system of assessment and embed time for teachers to collaborate

around this critical work. Participants gain tips and perspectives on how to set up teachers (and themselves!) for student success.

Participants also:
- Explore the components of culture, competence, and commitment in developing assessment literacy.
- Understand the balance of assessment to provide a comprehensive picture of what students know and to what level they know it.
- Discuss the shift from using assessment to sort and categorize students to using assessment to motivate and engage students to exhibit a growth mindset and be active partners in their own learning.

Unstoppable Assessment: Using Evidence-Based Practices to Champion Student Achievement
Assessment is often underutilized in driving a teaching–learning cycle because the focus on measurement and ranking takes away its true capacity to leverage student achievement and teacher development. Using assessment as a tool to focus on students' strengths and uncover misconceptions or gaps provides the opportunity to build students' sense of efficacy, hope, and possibility to move forward in their learning. Participants receive templates and tools to enhance this work with their teams.

Participants also:
- Explore methods and tools to seek, gather, discuss, and respond to evidence obtained from students about what they can do with what they've been taught.
- Practice using templates and processes for collaboratively engaging teams and students in this work.
- Enhance the "systems design" approach to harmonize the curricular, instructional, and assessment practices in teams, buildings, and districts.

Anthony Reibel

Proficiency-Based Assessment: Process, Not Product
Should assessments promote mastery of skills and content, or do they simply verify it? Participants explore the nature of formative assessments and see how formative assessments, when used properly, can simultaneously support, develop, and evaluate a student's proficiency. Anthony Reibel demonstrates the important role learning targets play in the assessment process and highlights the impact assessment has when it is used to support a "conversation of learning" between teacher and student.

Participants in this session:
- Explore the importance of learning objectives or targets in the assessment process.
- Engage with examples of quality formative assessment.
- Reflect on how a teacher can use assessments as a process for developing proficiency.

Co-Constructed Rubrics – How Involved Are Your Students in the Feedback Process?
While all teachers know that feedback is essential to learning, many students are still not asked to be active participants in the feedback process. To ensure that students are not simply passive feedback recipients, students must be involved in giving themselves feedback as much as their teachers do. This session shows participants how to involve students in the feedback process through the creation and implementation of highly effective rubrics that promote student accountability. This student-centered rubric can be a game changer in instruction and grading!

As a result of this session, participants:
- Learn the concept of co-constructed feedback.
- Engage with co-constructed rubric examples.
- Learn how to apply the co-constructed rubric to learning scenarios.

What Does Data Tell Us? Effective Data Discussions in a Professional Learning Community
Student achievement data is the oil in the education machine but, unfortunately, some teams become overwhelmed when exploring and analyzing data and results. This presentation explores how the right data analysis strategies can support the learning conversations of academic teams as well as provide key information in adapting instruction to meet students' needs. Anthony Reibel highlights several data protocols that promote purposeful engagement with student achievement data and ultimately lead to a clearer vision for student intervention.

Participants in this session:
- Learn the purpose and essential structure of a data team meeting.
- Learn effective protocols and strategies to promote action-oriented inquiry and collaboration.
- Apply the protocols to several example data scenarios to enhance understanding of quality data collaboration.

All Mindset, All Commitment: Exploring Standards-Based Grading
Leaders and teachers alike need strategies on how to lead conversations about grading practices. These conversations evolve so quickly that it is often tough to stay on track and produce any action or change. This session provides a simple way to start conversations about grading reform related to a standards-based grading system. Participants receive templates and strategies to keep these conversations on track and promote actionable inquiry that leads to successful implementation of new grading practices.

Participants in this session:
- Learn about mindsets and strategies that promote conversations that lead to lasting changes in grading practice.
- Discover the essential commitments they must make to ensure a healthy transition to standards-based grading.
- Reflect on their current needs in grading reform and explore conversation tools to help manage those needs.

Are You a Learner or a Student? Promoting Self-Service Learning
Research continues to show that student accountability for their learning increases engagement and ultimately leads to better quality work. Therefore, it is important to view students as active learners and not merely passive students. This session explores pre- and post-assessment reflection cycles that promote reflective thought and evidence-based student action. Participants examine their current assessment practices and learn new strategies to create student-led cycles of inquiry that lead to a deeper engagement with assessments and increased learning.

Participants in this session:
- Identify the difference between learner and student.
- Explore a process of reflective inquiry that occurs before and after assessment.
- Engage with the pre- and post-assessment reflective inquiry model to examine how it works and how it can be applied in the classroom.

Tom Schimmer

[KEYNOTE] Essential Assessment: Building Hope, Efficacy, and Achievement
To maximize its impact, assessment must build hope, efficacy, and achievement. Based on his book *Essential Assessment: Six Tenets for Bringing Hope, Efficacy, and Achievement to the Classroom* (Solution Tree Press, 2017), Tom Schimmer emphasizes why, more than ever, assessment fluency and capacity are the most important professional investments teachers can make. This session outlines the six tenets that allow teachers to create a culture of assessment that leaves learners optimistic about their success. It also focuses on how these tenets transfer seamlessly to assessing student attributes and cross-curricular competencies.

Objectives of this session include:
- Understanding the importance of assessment literacy for teachers
- Recognizing the interconnectedness of the six essential assessment tenets
- Exploring how the assessment tenets align with student traits and cross-curricular competencies

Grading From the Inside Out
Developing a standards-based mindset is the oft overlooked, but essential, first step of long-term grading reform. Based on his book *Grading From the Inside Out: Bringing Accuracy to Student Assessment Through a Standards-Based Mindset* (Solution Tree Press, 2016), Tom Schimmer outlines how to take a standards-based approach to grading, even when a traditional grading and reporting paradigm exists. He discusses the non-negotiable, true north of grading for accuracy and with confidence and the three essential practices that are the cornerstones for developing a standards-based mindset.

As a result of this session, participants:
- Understand how to audit any grading practice with accuracy and confidence.
- Explore the faulty logic behind many traditional grading practices.
- Identify the replacement routines and practices that establish a standards-based mindset and an approach to grading, independent of any changes to school or district policy.

Quality Assessment Items

The quality of our assessment *information* depends on the quality of our assessment *items*. This session focuses on developing quality assessment items that increase accuracy for teachers interpreting their results. How do we design high-quality, multiple-choice questions? How do we ensure our extended written response questions address the appropriate cognitive complexity? What are the keys to eliciting evidence through nontraditional assessment methods? Tom Schimmer addresses these questions and shares the latest research and best practices for designing selected response, constructed response, and performance assessments that allow teachers to best discover evidence of learning.

Participants gain an understanding of:
- The effective and efficient structure of selected-response questions
- How to ensure constructed response items address the appropriate and applicable cognitive complexity
- Ways in which performance assessment allows teachers to assess content, cognitive processes, and cross-curricular competencies

Effective Leadership in Assessment and Grading

Solid leadership is key to any change effort. Tom Schimmer illustrates the steps leaders can take to transform grading and assessment practices within any context. He discusses effective leadership strategies, mindsets, and practices that maximize the success of any implementation effort, the natural evolution of new ideas, ways to plan for short-term wins, and ideas for handling inevitable challenges and roadblocks. Whether a leader by title or influence, this session brings together ideas to make assessment transformations possible and sustainable.

Participants in this session:
- Identify ways for leaders to cultivate the conditions that support grading reform.
- Examine the natural evolution of new ideas in any organization.
- Explore ways for leaders to manage inevitable hurdles to implementation.

Redefining Student Accountability

The need for students to be held accountable is often cited as a reason why some hesitate to implement more sound grading practices. Tom Schimmer focuses on the systems, structures, and routines that redefine accountability and reshape a school's culture. Rather than using zeros, late penalties, or other

traditional punitive grading practice, participants see how real accountability can be achieved without compromising the integrity of a student's proficiency grade.

Participants in this session:
- Identify the perils of punitive grading and subsequent inaccuracies to reporting that undermine student proficiency results.
- Understand an alternative, more productive definition of *accountability* within the context of learning.
- Explore the multiple systems required to create a culture of true accountability that leave student optimism and confidence intact.

Nicole Dimich Vagle

[KEYNOTE] Instructional Agility: Power and Possibility to Inspire Learning and Confidence
There is power and possibility in the moment teachers recognize students' confusion or understanding. What they do with this information can push students to gain more confidence or shut them down. A single move can have an "a-ha" or an "ugh" outcome. This keynote explores ways for teachers—individually and collaboratively—to pivot toward intentionally using assessment to inspire students to achieve at high levels and gain confidence.

Design in Five: A Process for Effectively Creating Assessments
Assessments, when designed well, reflect student learning in meaningful ways. This session introduces an assessment design process called *Design in 5* (Vagle, 2014). Participants dig into the five phases to designing high-quality formative or summative assessments. They discover how to choose standards, create learning goals, plan assessment methods, and communicate learning to accurately describe proficiency levels. Nicole Dimich Vagle provides tools and templates to focus this work. Administrators and others who support teachers can use these resources to facilitate quality assessment design in their own contexts.

Outcomes include:
- Learning a five-phase protocol to design and revise quality assessments
- Applying tools to review and revise assessments to effectively guide instruction, involve students, and communicate learning

Developing Culturally Relevant Performance Tasks
Meaningful assessment work engages students and helps them learn at higher levels. Culturally relevant performance tasks capitalize on the strengths of our diversity with regard to gender, race, ethnicity, culture, interests, experiences, and communities. Nicole Dimich Vagle discusses Geneva Gay's five elements of culturally responsive teaching (Teacher's College Press, 2010) and applies them to designing performance tasks that are engaging and meaningful. (Gay, a professor of education

at the University of Washington–Seattle, teaches and writes about multicultural education and general curriculum theory.)

Participants in this session:
- Review and design a performance task relevant to their grade level, content area, and context.
- Discover Dr. Gay's five elements of culturally responsive teaching.
- Apply a process for designing culturally relevant performance tasks.
- Critique performance tasks through the lens of relevance, rigor, and grade-level standards.

Using Collaboration in Assessment
Ever have a disastrous group project experience or been dissatisfied with how students work in groups? Effective collaboration is among the skills employers identify as critical for success in the classroom, the workplace, and beyond. This session addresses important questions such as: How do we accurately and fairly assess collaboration? How do we use collaboration in our ongoing assessment and instruction? How do we ensure collaboration is effective for all our students? Nicole Dimich Vagle shares practical examples and tools to facilitate effective collaboration—as an outcome and as an instructional agility strategy.

Participants in this session:
- Explore what students say works and doesn't work in their collaboration experiences in school.
- Learn key design elements to accurately assess collaboration.
- Experience collaboration as an instructional strategy that leads to quality assessment practices.

Changing Assessment Practices Through Student Voice
Students are an untapped resource in creating assessment practices for teachers and learners to thrive. Tapping into this voice provides us with important insights into the student experience. Ideas generated from these insights have great potential to create sustainable change and rich learning cultures. How do students describe their classroom assessment experiences and how do those experiences affect their motivation and achievement? How do teachers use student perceptions to change or innovate their practice? This session provides rationale, tools, and templates to gather and leverage student voices for classroom and schoolwide gains.

Participants in this session:
- Identify the vital role students can play in developing quality assessment practices.
- Review examples of student inputs and analyze how their insights can contribute to effective assessment practices.
- Learn ways to collect student voices to build trust, effect sustainable change, and improve student investment.

Katie White
Softening the Edges: Refining Our Assessment Practices
Sometimes, despite best intentions and dedicated work, assessment practices provide challenges for students and educators. This session explores assessment in a new way, using the analogies of hard and soft edges. Participants reflect on ways the "edges" of assessment practices make or break relationships and understand that these relationships can provide support within a classroom setting. To refine assessment practices, participants explore how strong assessment design can "soften the edges" for educators and learners by attending to the needs of everyone involved in the assessment conversation.

Participants in this session:
- Identify and explore the needs of the whole person (teachers and students) in relation to assessment design.
- Reflect on examples of the "hard and soft edges" of assessment, the reasons these edges exist, and the impact they have on teaching and learning.
- Apply the concept of "softening the edges" to assessment scenarios.

Softening the Edges: Making Assessment Decisions That Honor Teacher and Student Needs
Grounded in the dual belief that all students can achieve, while maintaining emotional safety, and that their teachers deserve the opportunity to reflect and address their own needs, this session explores a process for refining five key assessment practices: pre-assessment, formative assessment, self-assessment, summative assessment, and reporting. Employing each of these practices ensures positive outcomes for educators and learners simultaneously.

Participants in this session:
- Identify and explore the needs of the whole person (teachers and students) in relation to assessment design.
- Clarify the purposes and methods by which teachers and systems engage in pre-assessment, formative assessment, self-assessment, summative assessment, reporting, and possible outcomes that reflect "hard edges."
- Explore a process for refining assessment approaches to "soften the edges."

How Changing One Thing Can Change Everything: The Power of Learning Continuums
When planning to enhance learning outcomes, it is often hard to know where to start. Learning is complex and each piece of the process has a vital role in the learner's success. However, sometimes changing a single aspect of how we approach the teaching–learning cycle affects everything else, resulting in positive outcomes for learners and educators.

Participants in this session:
- Explore the story of a young learner and her shifting investment in her own learning journey.
- Create a learning continuum in a practical and personal context.
- Use the continuum to enhance assessment design in personal teaching contexts.

Using Formative Assessment and Feedback to Nurture Sound Thinking
The partnership between formative assessment and feedback flourishes when it improves learning outcomes for students and increases their ability to apply sound thinking processes to future learning experiences. This is the sweet spot of assessment. When we connect strong assessment criteria to the thinking processes that develop stronger learning products, we ultimately invite students to accept responsibility for their continued growth.

Participants in this session:
- Explore observations, reflections, and thinking processes as critical pieces of the formative assessment and feedback cycle.
- Engage in a practical simulation, consider outcomes, and reflect on the implications for learners of various responses to formative assessment.
- Apply specific feedback criteria and thinking processes in personal contexts.

Building Strong Self-Assessment Skills in Young Learners
Strong self-assessment in classrooms leads to investment and growth for learners through co-constructed learning experiences that precisely address student needs. So, what do we do when our students are just beginning their learning journeys and may not yet have refined the skill of self-assessment? We build the sub-skills that provide the foundation for student ownership as they move through the system. This session explores the power of self-assessment to nurture learners' confidence and efficacy. By empowering students to take charge of their own learning stories, educators can support the development of these confident and capable learners.

Outcomes include:
- Discovering a language of self-assessment that honors the developmental nature of young learners
- Exploring sub-skills of self-assessment
- Building lessons that invite students to practice these skills in a safe, caring, and student-focused early learning environment