

Agenda

Phoenix, AZ • February 20–22

Tuesday, February 20

6:30–8:00 a.m.	Registration	121–123 Foyer
	Continental Breakfast	North Ballroom Foyer
8:00–9:30 a.m.	Keynote —Rebecca DuFour <i>PLCs at Work: Lessons Learned and Next Steps</i>	North Ballroom
9:30–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:15 a.m.	Concurrent Keynotes	
11:15 a.m.–12:45 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)	
12:45–2:15 p.m.	Breakouts	
2:15–2:45 p.m.	Break	
2:45–4:00 p.m.	Keynote —Douglas Fisher <i>Assessment-Capable Learners: Inviting Students Into the Process</i>	North Ballroom

Wednesday, February 21

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Registration	North Ballroom Foyer
	Continental Breakfast	
8:00–9:30 a.m.	Keynote —Mike Mattos <i>Challenging Educational Mythology: Proven Practices and Brutal Facts in Creating Great Schools</i>	North Ballroom
9:30–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:15 a.m.	Concurrent Keynotes	
11:15 a.m.–12:45 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)	
12:45–2:15 p.m.	Breakouts	
2:15–2:45 p.m.	Break	
2:45–3:45 p.m.	Panel Discussion <i>Q&A with keynote presenters who provide practical answers to your most pressing questions</i>	North Ballroom

Thursday, February 22

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Continental Breakfast	North Ballroom Foyer
8:00–9:30 a.m.	Keynote —Robert J. Marzano <i>How the PLC Process Changes at Different Levels of School Reform</i>	North Ballroom
9:30–9:45 a.m.	Break	
9:45 a.m.–12:00 p.m.	Keynote —Anthony Muhammad <i>Leadership Matters: Moving Beyond "PLC Lite" and Nurturing Full Commitment</i>	North Ballroom

Agenda is subject to change.

Day 1 Sessions at a Glance

Tuesday, February 20

Concurrent Keynotes (10:00–11:15 a.m.)

Robert Eaker

What Commitments Are You Prepared to Make—and More Importantly, Keep?

Sharroky Hollie

Six Ways to Know If You Are Linguistically Responsive

Timothy D. Kanold

Your PLC Heartprint: Living a Fully Engaged, High-Energy, and Well-Balanced Professional Life!

Breakouts (12:45–2:15 p.m.)

Tim Brown

Getting on the Same Page: Establishing Collective Commitments About Learning and Collaboration

Rebecca DuFour

The Right Work of Collaborative Teams in a PLC at Work

Robert Eaker

Friday Night in America: A Commonsense Approach to Improving Student Achievement

Douglas Fisher

Engagement by Design: Mobilizing Relationships, Clarity, and Challenge

Sharroky Hollie

Culturally Responsive Classroom Management

Timothy D. Kanold

Your K–12 PLC Mathematics Focus: The Six Essential Choices of Effective Instruction

Mike Mattos

Taking Action: Connecting PLCs and RTI

Anthony Muhammad

Overcoming the Achievement Gap Trap: Liberating Mindsets to Effect Change

Agenda is subject to change.

Day 2 Sessions at a Glance

Wednesday, February 21

Concurrent Keynotes (10:00–11:15 a.m.)

Tim Brown

Enhancing Self-Efficacy and Motivation Through Reflection and Goal Setting

Regina Stephens Owens

The Genius of *And*: Inspirational Cultures Sustained by Intentional Systems

Douglas Reeves

Busting Myths About Professional Learning Communities

Breakouts (12:45–2:15 p.m.)

Tim Brown

Doubling the Speed of Learning: Activating Five Important Keys of Formative Assessment

Rebecca DuFour

Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Elementary Schools

Robert Eaker

A Focus on Learning: What Would It Look Like If We Really Meant It?

Mike Mattos

Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Secondary Schools

Anthony Muhammad

Building Culture, Creating Purpose, and Overcoming Frustration on Your PLC Journey

Regina Stephens Owens

What Do You Want Students to Learn? Critical Thinking, Cool Technologies, and Global Competencies

Douglas Reeves

Great to Greater: How the Best Schools and Systems Keep Getting Better

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Session Descriptions

DAY 1

MORNING KEYNOTE

Rebecca DuFour

PLCs at Work: Lessons Learned and Next Steps

The year 2018 marks the 20th anniversary of the publication of *Professional Learning Communities at Work: Best Practices for Enhancing Student Achievement* (Solution Tree Press, 1998) by Richard DuFour and Robert Eaker. This seminal work culminated from years of research and implementation of the PLC process in numerous school settings.

Many books and resources, hundreds of events, and thousands of professional development days later, what have we learned from schools and districts around the world that have become high-performing PLCs? What are the next steps for educators who are committed to implementing and sustaining this powerful, continuous improvement process in their own schools and districts? In this keynote, Rebecca DuFour elaborates on lessons learned and provides recommendations for high-leverage next steps on the PLC at Work journey.

Outcomes include:

- Developing and reinforcing the common language of the PLC process
- Identifying characteristics of the PLC process that have remained constant over the decades
- Gaining new insights from practitioners who are implementing the PLC process
- Planning for high-leverage next steps on the PLC at Work journey

CONCURRENT KEYNOTES

Robert Eaker

What Commitments Are You Prepared to Make—and More Importantly, Keep?

Leaders of high-performing professional learning communities recognize that developing shared beliefs representing a district's or school's mission and vision is not enough. They move beyond building consensus around shared *beliefs* to leading a process that results in shared *commitments* to specific behaviors. The framework for action within a PLC culture is formed by the question: What commitments are we prepared to make? Learn how shared commitments drive collaboration, planning, monitoring, celebrating, and decision making in PLCs to improve learning levels for every student, skill by skill, name by name.

Sharroky Hollie

Six Ways to Know If You Are Linguistically Responsive

The phrase "linguistically responsive" has become cliché—a death knell in education. Linguistic responsiveness benefits all students, particularly those who have been traditionally underserved in schools. Given the importance of linguistic responsiveness and its connection to academic success for students, how do we ensure that mindsets and skillsets are linguistically responsive? Sharroky Hollie addresses the question: Am I linguistically responsive to the students who most need it?

Outcomes include:

- Knowing what is meant by *culture* and *language* in the context of culturally responsive pedagogy—theoretically and pragmatically
- Focusing on common strategies used responsively in classroom management, academic literacy, academic language, and academic vocabulary
- Seeing connections between standard educational initiatives, such as Common Core State Standards, and the relevance of being culturally and linguistically responsive (CLR)
- Understanding more poignantly how implicit biases negatively impact good intentions

Timothy D. Kanold

Your PLC Heartprint: Living a Fully Engaged, High-Energy, and Well-Balanced Professional Life!

Timothy D. Kanold draws from his newest book *HEART! Fully Forming Your Professional Life as a Teacher and Leader* (Solution Tree Press, 2017) to offer research, insights, and tools from thought leaders inside and outside education. Dr. Kanold examines how to live a more high-energy, well-balanced, relationally intelligent, and fully formed professional life every day.

The give and take of collaborative relationships and the chaotic noise of daily PLC school life can sometimes be overwhelming and exhausting. Understanding one's educational heartprint on others results in becoming more inspiring, more fully engaged in work, and enjoying a magnified relational impact on students and colleagues season after season!

Outcomes include:

- Examining elements of your HEART: your relational happiness and the reasons for educators' lack of full engagement at work
- Discovering how to improve relational intelligence and impact (one's heartprint) on colleagues and students
- Discovering ways to pursue and sustain balance, energy, and changes that positively affect others

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Tim Brown

Getting on the Same Page: Establishing Collective Commitments About Learning and Collaboration

Daniel Goleman, author of *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ*, argues that explicitly stated values are one of the most powerful steps we can take toward helping a team become exemplary. Developing a common vision of instruction, assessment, and interventions at the classroom, team, and schoolwide levels are critical steps in the PLC process. This breakout is designed to share strategies and provide examples that educators have found helpful for developing their collective commitments and common vision.

Outcomes include:

- Understanding the importance of developing explicit commitments within a team
- Learning strategies to develop collective commitments as a team
- Exploring processes and protocols that make values more than a one-time event

Rebecca DuFour

The Right Work of Collaborative Teams in a PLC at Work

Powerful collaborative teams are the fundamental building blocks of a professional learning community and a critical component in building a collaborative culture. Organizing people into teams and providing time for collaboration are necessary steps on the journey, but unless teams use that time to focus on the right work, collaboration will not lead to higher levels of student learning. In this session, Rebecca DuFour elaborates on the team learning process and the specific work high-performing collaborative teams undertake to drive cycles of continuous improvement.

Outcomes include:

- Clarifying key terms in the PLC at Work process
- Learning the steps of the team learning process
- Experiencing the right work of collaborative teams

Robert Eaker

Friday Night in America: A Commonsense Approach to Improving Student Achievement

Teachers already know more about how to ensure student learning than they may realize. Band directors, art teachers, and coaches regularly employ successful strategies in nonacademic school settings. In particular, tactics that football coaches use to win on the gridiron on Friday nights are similar to efforts school teams use in the academic arena. Robert Eaker reviews practices that lead to improved student learning across the board. He shows how teacher teams can “suit up” with powerful strategies to triumph every school day.

Douglas Fisher

Engagement by Design: Mobilizing Relationships, Clarity, and Challenge

Teachers and leaders are always searching for “what works.” We want to know what we can do to engage students and ensure that they learn more and learn better. Participants in this session focus on student–teacher relationships and teacher clarity in guiding students through challenging tasks, which have high impact on literacy learning. Participants explore ways in which leaders can help teachers build and maintain healthy, growth-oriented relationships with their students.

Teacher clarity ensures that teachers 1) know what students need to learn, 2) communicate learning expectations to students, and 3) reach agreements on what learning success looks like. Finally, participants explore the role of challenging learning tasks, understanding the role that difficulty and complexity play in students learning. Douglas Fisher shows a range of tasks that build students’ academic fluency, stamina, strategic thinking, and expertise.

Outcomes include:

- Identifying high-yield approaches to improving student learning
- Describing ways in which relationships, clarity, and challenge can impact student learning
- Summarizing the impact that engagement by design can have on student achievement and growth

Sharroky Hollie

Culturally Responsive Classroom Management

Situational appropriateness is the concept of determining what cultural or linguistic behavior is most appropriate for the situation. Students are allowed to make choices around cultural and linguistic behaviors, dependent on the situation, without sacrificing what they consider to be their base cultures or languages. Participants will learn to use situational appropriateness and acquire a toolkit of culturally responsive classroom management techniques that will lead to a stronger classroom community and increased achievement.

Outcomes include:

- Learning how to strategically use attention signals and how to use protocols for responding
- Acquiring protocols for meaningful discussions
- Gaining a toolbox of movement activities
- Experiencing the use of extended collaboration activities

Timothy D. Kanold

Your K–12 PLC Mathematics Focus: The Six Essential Choices of Effective Instruction

This research-affirmed session is based on the book *Mathematics Instruction and Tasks* in the series *Every Student Can Learn Mathematics* (Solution Tree Press, 2018). Series editor, author, and national mathematics education leader Timothy D. Kanold explores how collaborative teams can achieve a level of improved student achievement based on a vision for student perseverance through a balance of daily teacher choices for mathematics lesson design.

Discussion tools and actions include creating ways to connect students to prior knowledge, considering the vocabulary for the lesson, using a balance of high- and low-cognitive demand tasks to help students via productive perseverance, and implementing critical elements of closure for the lesson. Dr. Kanold shares tools for effectively choosing mathematics lesson designs and tasks in collaboration with colleagues to motivate student learning and sustained effort every day.

Outcomes include:

- Examining the impact of a relevant (why learn the standard) and meaningful (student point of view) mathematics lesson design on student learning
- Determining how to balance the daily use of lower-level and higher-level cognitive demand mathematical tasks and problems each day
- Exploring protocols for balanced and effective small-group and whole-group classroom discourse for student perseverance
- Examining the research and the role students play in leading and closing every mathematics lesson

Mike Mattos

Taking Action: Connecting PLCs and RTI

How does your school respond when students don't learn? Compelling evidence shows that response to intervention can successfully engage a school's staff in a collective process to provide every student with the additional time and support needed to learn at high levels. Yet, at many schools, this potential lies dormant, buried under layers of state regulations, district protocols, misguided priorities, and traditional school practices that are misaligned to the essential elements of RTI. This session shows

how the PLC at Work process creates the larger, schoolwide framework required to successfully create a multitiered system of supports.

Outcomes include:

- Understanding the guiding principles behind a multitiered system of interventions
- Learning the essential actions that collaborative teams must complete at Tier 1 to effectively respond when students don't learn
- Prioritizing resources to address academic and behavior interventions
- Beginning to create a pyramid of interventions for your school

Anthony Muhammad

Overcoming the Achievement Gap Trap: Liberating Mindsets to Effect Change

Explore the connection between personal and institutional mindsets and academic achievement gaps. The issue of inequality in student learning outcomes has been studied and debated for many years, but this session seeks to establish that the primary culprit in the fight to overcome the achievement gap is our thinking.

Outcomes include understanding:

- 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)

AFTERNOON KEYNOTE

Douglas Fisher

Assessment-Capable Learners: Inviting Students Into the Process

We all know that collective efficacy is the number one influence on students' learning. And there is good reason for that. In part, efficacious teachers ensure that their students are assessment-capable, aware of their current level of performance compared with the desired level of learning.

Assessment-capable learners and their teachers select direct, dialogic, and independent learning approaches they know will help them attain their shared learning goals. They also seek feedback from others, provide others with feedback, and monitor their learning from acquisition through consolidation to mastery.

Outcomes include:

- Identifying aspects that make learners assessment-capable
- Analyzing teacher actions that result in assessment-capable learners
- Summarizing the impact that assessment-capable learners can have on student achievement and growth

Session Descriptions

DAY 2

MORNING KEYNOTE

Mike Mattos

Challenging Educational Mythology: Proven Practices and Brutal Facts in Creating Great Schools

Becoming a professional learning community requires more than committing to the collaborative practices proven to best ensure learning. A PLC must also be willing to discontinue policies and procedures that are counterproductive to student success. Unfortunately, many schools stubbornly hold on to myths—widely held beliefs that are false—that justify teacher isolation and student failure. Mike Mattos discusses essential practices that are required to ensure high levels of learning for every student and challenges the educational mythology that is holding us back.

Outcomes include:

- Learning the five essential practices of the PLC at Work process
- Identifying school myths and inaccurate beliefs that are counterproductive to collaboration and student learning
- Understanding how these myths lead to practices, policies, and procedures that inhibit student learning
- Beginning a “stop-doing” list for schools and districts
- Embracing a commitment and assurance that the academic success of every student is possible

CONCURRENT KEYNOTES

Tim Brown

Enhancing Self-Efficacy and Motivation Through Reflection and Goal Setting

Educators in a school with a focus on learning promote a strong sense of self-efficacy in their students. Studies show this may be one of the greatest factors for student motivation and engagement. Participants examine essential characteristics for building student self-efficacy and a growth mindset and explore team-developed products and strategies for how to use them.

Outcomes include:

- Examining, exploring, and discussing key components that enhance self-efficacy
- Analyzing strategies for goal setting with students
- Exploring products teams create to help students track their learning progress

Regina Stephens Owens

The Genius of *And*: Inspirational Cultures Sustained by Intentional Systems

Your beliefs and organizational purpose affect building systems at all levels of your organization. How do you ensure that all practices and procedures are intentional and personify organizational beliefs? Moving from compliance, coercion, and fear to cultures that are respectful, responsive, and reflective all begin with the *why*. This session dives into frameworks of intentionality—promoting leadership that encourages global dispositions, ensuring that students are prepared and that systems spur readiness 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
- Understanding the essential role of diversity in decision making
- Utilizing global dispositions to encourage cultural responsiveness

Douglas Reeves

Busting Myths About Professional Learning Communities

Although professional learning communities have the potential to be the central organizing principle for effective educational organizations, from classroom teams through district leadership, there continues to be deeply entrenched myths that threaten effective PLC implementation. This interactive session calls out these myths and provides practical ways for educators and school leaders to replace mythology with effective practices.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Tim Brown

Doubling the Speed of Learning: Activating Five Important Keys of Formative Assessment

Formative assessment enhances learning for all students, especially those who struggle. Assessment expert Dylan Wiliam notes that formative assessment can double the speed of learning when it is effectively applied. The Assessment Reform Group in the United Kingdom identified five keys for improving assessment. Tim Brown explores each key and shares examples of how teachers activate and use the five keys in their classrooms, in teams, and schoolwide.

Outcomes include:

- Exploring the relationship between formative assessment and student achievement
- Examining ways in which teams align their assessment practices to increase student achievement
- Evaluating important considerations in the assessment process

Rebecca DuFour

Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Elementary Schools

Schools that function as PLCs must ultimately do two things: 1) build a collaborative culture to promote continuous adult learning and 2) create structures and systems that provide students with additional time and support for learning at high levels.

After examining different models of systematic interventions and extensions, participants receive criteria to assess their own schools' responses and an action-planning template for next steps in raising the bar and closing the gap.

Participants examine strategies to collectively:

- Respond to the learning needs of each student in a timely, directive, and systematic way.
- Create and sustain strong parent partnerships to enhance student learning.
- Make celebrations part of the school culture.

Robert Eaker

A Focus on Learning: What Would It Look Like If We Really Meant It?

There is a fundamental difference between schools that function as professional learning communities and their more traditional counterparts: a shift from a focus on teaching and covering content to a focus on learning for every student, skill by skill. While few would disagree with the importance of student learning, some schools struggle with exactly how to embed practices that promote student success in the classroom. This session focuses on specific strategies schools, teams, and teachers use to enhance student success in schools that *really mean it* when they proclaim they want all students to learn.

Mike Mattos

Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Secondary Schools

The biggest obstacle most secondary schools face in providing interventions is not identifying which students need help, but how to schedule the time needed to provide the help during the school day. This breakout provides real examples from a high-performing school on how it created time for supplemental and intensive interventions.

Participants will learn specific steps to implement a flexible secondary intervention period, including how to:

- Determine what interventions to offer each week.
- Require students to attend specific interventions.
- Monitor student attendance.
- Allocate staff.
- Extend student learning.
- Address potential obstacles.
- Do all this within current teachers' contractual obligations.

Anthony Muhammad

Building Culture, Creating Purpose, and Overcoming Frustration on Your PLC Journey

This session addresses two vital stages in the process of creating a PLC culture: 1) establishing philosophical agreement and building shared purpose and 2) addressing staff frustration and discomfort with change. Participants explore the theories that link the importance of school culture on student learning and leave with many practical strategies to start the process of transforming their culture when they return to their school.

Outcomes include:

- Learning how to address counterproductive belief systems and form a cohesive team of student advocates
- Understanding how to analyze and manage staff frustration
- Understanding the balance between support and accountability

Regina Stephens Owens

What Do You Want Students to Learn? Critical Thinking, Cool Technologies, and Global Competencies

How technology is used as a tool for learning may be significantly different in a professional learning community than in a traditional school. Using technologies alone does not ensure that 21st century learning skills are met, that students are authentically engaged, that critical thinking is occurring, or that global competencies are being exercised. Schools must ensure that teachers are equipped to effectively choose technologies and are empowered to facilitate and design learning that results in critical thinking and global competencies.

Participants will:

- Evaluate technologies using Bloom's taxonomy.
- Examine technologies that support critical thinking skills.
- Examine global competencies.
- Discuss various web resources and how to implement them effectively to ensure content knowledge and global competencies.

Douglas Reeves

Great to Greater: How the Best Schools and Systems Keep Getting Better

With compelling new research, Douglas Reeves explains the difference between schools that merely make progress and those that continue to improve far beyond their initial goals. The research includes schools from around the world that have in common the distinction of moving from great to greater.

Learning outcomes include:

- Understanding the characteristics of great-to-greater schools
- Applying the great-to-greater research to your school and educational system
- Developing next-generation accountability indicators for your school

Session Descriptions

DAY 3

KEYNOTE

Robert J. Marzano

How the PLC Process Changes at Different Levels of School Reform

This session begins with a discussion of different levels of school reform using the High Reliability Schools (HRS) model. This model includes five levels of initiatives:

- Level 1—a safe, supportive, and collaborative culture
- Level 2—effective instruction in every classroom
- Level 3—a guaranteed and viable curriculum
- Level 4—standards-referenced reporting
- Level 5—competency-based education

Each level produces its own particular effects on students, teachers, and parents. The PLC process, when executed in specific ways, can be the driving force behind reform at each level, but the PLC process must change and adapt to address the unique needs at each level. This presentation describes the similarities and differences of the PLC process across each of the five levels of reform.

KEYNOTE

Anthony Muhammad

Leadership Matters: Moving Beyond “PLC Lite” and Nurturing Full Commitment

Twenty years ago, the first book on PLC at Work was published by Richard DuFour and Robert Eaker. The PLC at Work model has been celebrated and validated as the most promising way to improve student learning, yet so many schools remain stalled at the beginning stages of implementation. Why does this reality of “PLC lite” still plague our profession 20 years later? Without exception, the schools that use this model to transform their practice have one thing in common: effective leadership. This session explores the keys to effectively transitioning a school or district into a model PLC.

Outcomes include:

- Understanding the leadership challenges and lessons learned from 20 years of PLC practice
- Learning the difference between leadership behaviors that undermine and promote the purpose of a PLC
- Learning practical strategies that will improve participants’ ability to lead others through the change process and build consensus