

Agenda

Salt Lake City, UT • October 8–10

Monday, October 8

6:30–8:00 a.m.	Registration	South Foyer
	Continental Breakfast	
8:00–9:45 a.m.	Keynote —Tim Brown <i>Setting the Stage: Understanding the Big Ideas and Foundational Blocks of the PLC at Work Process</i>	Grand Ballroom
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:30 a.m.	Breakout Sessions	
11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)	
1:00–2:30 p.m.	Breakout Sessions	
2:30–2:45 p.m.	Break	
2:45–3:45 p.m.	Panel Discussion <i>Presenters provide practical answers to your most pressing questions.</i>	Grand Ballroom
	Brainstorming Session —Timothy D. Kanold <i>Spotlight on the PLC Work of Central Office Leaders</i>	251DEF
	Brainstorming Session —Brian K. Butler <i>Celebrating Learning for All on AllThingsPLC</i>	150

Tuesday, October 9

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Registration	South Foyer
	Continental Breakfast	
8:00–9:45 a.m.	Keynote —Mike Mattos <i>Challenging Educational Mythology: Proven Practices and Brutal Facts in Creating Great Schools</i>	Grand Ballroom
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:30 a.m.	Breakout Sessions	
11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)	
1:00–2:30 p.m.	Breakout Sessions	
2:30–2:45 p.m.	Break	
2:45–3:45 p.m.	Team Time	Grand Ballroom

	<i>Presenters are available to aid in your collaborative team discussions.</i>	
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Wednesday, October 10

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Continental Breakfast	South Foyer
8:00–9:30 a.m.	Breakout Sessions	
9:30–9:45 a.m.	Break	
9:45–11:45 a.m.	Keynote —Robert Eaker <i>What Commitments Are You Prepared to Make—and More Importantly, Keep?</i>	Grand Ballroom

Agenda is subject to change.

Breakouts at a Glance

Presenter & Title	Monday, October 8		Tuesday, October 9		Friday, October 10
	10:00–11:30 a.m.	1:00–2:30 p.m.	10:00–11:30 a.m.	1:00–2:30 p.m.	8:00–9:30 a.m.
Tim Brown					
Student Data Notebooks: Developing Ownership, Motivation, and a Growth Mindset	Grand Ballroom			250ABC	
Raising Questions and Finding Answers in Our Grading Practices		Grand Ballroom			250ABC
Getting on the Same Page: Establishing Collective Commitments About Learning and Collaboration			250ABC		
Brian K. Butler					
What About Us? The PLC at Work Process in Early Childhood	151G			151G	
Collaborating in the Core in Elementary Schools		151G			
Ensuring Teams Engage in the Right Work			151G		151G
Luis F. Cruz					
English Learners and PLCs	251ABC				
I Like What I'm Hearing! So How Do We Initiate Our PLC Journey?		251ABC			
Remembering Rick DuFour: Embracing the "Tight and Loose" of the PLC Process			251ABC		
Taping Before Painting: Taking the Critical Steps to Respond Collectively When Students Don't Learn				251ABC	
I Am Sold on PLCs: Practical Tools and Directions to Be Successful					Grand Ballroom

Robert Eaker					
Friday Night in America: A Commonsense Approach to Improving Student Achievement	253AB				
A Focus on Learning: What Would It Look Like If We Really Meant It?		253AB			
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Unpack and Make Yourself Comfortable: Answering Critical Question One				250DEF	
Timothy D. Kanold					
HEARTPRINT: Living a Fully Engaged, High-Energy, Well-Balanced Professional Life!	251DEF				251DEF

Getting to the HEART of Central Office and School-Site PLC Leadership and Coaching!		251DEF			
Your K–12 PLC Mathematics Focus: Great Instruction and Tasks!			251DEF		
Your K–12 PLC Mathematics Focus: Assessment, Homework, and Grading!				251DEF	
Mike Mattos					
Building the Collaborative Culture of a Professional Learning Community at Work (Part 1)	250ABC				
Building the Collaborative Culture of a Professional Learning Community at Work (Part 2)		250ABC			
Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Secondary Schools			Grand Ballroom		
Simplifying Response to Intervention: How to Create a Highly Effective, Multitiered System of Supports				Grand Ballroom	
Guiding Principles for Principals: Tips and Tools for Leading the PLC Process					251ABC
Rebecca Nicolas					
Activity or Productivity? What Product Monitoring Reveals About Your Teacher Teams	151ABC				
Team Dysfunction? A Leadership Rx		151ABC		151ABC	
Intentionality in Recovery and Extensions: The Answer for “But I Have to Move On!”			151ABC		250DEF
Maria Nielsen					
The 15-Day Challenge: Win Quick, Win Often!	150		150		

Show Me What Ya Got: Student Engagement Strategies to Keep the Pulse on Learning		150			150
Common Assessments: The Key to Uncommon Results for Student and Teacher Learning				150	

Agenda is subject to change.

Session Descriptions

Tim Brown

[KEYNOTE] Setting the Stage: Understanding the Big Ideas and Foundational Blocks of the PLC at Work Process

This keynote is a call to action to energize individual and collective efforts to create schools of high expectations through the PLC process. In 1997, University of Tennessee researchers S. Paul Wright, Sandra P. Horn, and William L. Sanders reported, “As a result of analyzing the achievement scores of more than 100,000 students across hundreds of schools, the conclusion is that the most important factor affecting student learning is the teacher.” More recent studies by Dr. John Hattie have concluded that not only are teachers the key contributors to student learning, but their impact is most profound when they work together to evaluate their effect on student learning. To attain high achievement in every classroom, unsurpassed collaboration must become a school’s priority.

Tim Brown sets the stage for the next two and a half days of learning by discussing the three big ideas of the PLC at Work process, their connection to beliefs and practices, and what it means to commit to a focus on learning, to work collaboratively, and to be accountable to a school’s mission, vision, values, and goals.

Student Data Notebooks: Developing Ownership, Motivation, and a Growth Mindset

Educators in schools with a focus on learning promote a strong sense of self-efficacy in their students. Several recent studies show this is one of the greatest factors of student motivation and engagement. Participants examine the essential characteristics for building student self-efficacy and a growth mindset through data notebooks. Tim Brown shares products teams have developed to engage and empower students in self-reporting and reflection.

This session addresses these questions:

- What are the key components of a highly motivated and engaged classroom?
- What products do teams create to improve student learning and ensure self-efficacy in the PLC process?
- How can teachers effectively use these products to help students own their learning?

Raising Questions and Finding Answers in Our Grading Practices

Talking about grading practices is often a touchy subject, full of emotions, opinions, and personal beliefs. However, when schools make the shift from a focus on teaching to a focus on learning, they must be willing to examine policies, practices, and guidelines to see if they support the principles of learning. Tim Brown shows how a staff can engage educators in a collaborative process committed to grading practices that are aligned with learning outcomes.

Participants discuss these essential questions:

- What do principles of learning, student motivation, and grading have in common?
- What are the reasons and rationale behind changes in grading practices?
- What grading practices and guidelines do successful teams and schools implement?

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 teams can take toward becoming exemplary. Developing a common vision of instruction, assessment, and interventions at the classroom, team, and schoolwide levels are critical steps in the PLC process. Tim Brown shares strategies and provides helpful examples for developing collective commitments and common vision.

Outcomes include:

- Understanding the importance of developing explicit commitments with members of a team
- Participating in strategies for developing collective commitments as a team
- Exploring processes and protocols that make values more than a one-time event

Brian K. Butler

What About Us? The PLC at Work Process in Early Childhood

For years, schools have focused on implementing the PLC at Work process in the K–12 system. However, many preschool programs want to know how to make this process work for their schools and children, too. 2016 DuFour Award recipient Mason Crest Elementary addresses this and goes deeper. Through the powerfully collaborative and data-driven process of PLCs, the school combined a preschool special education class with a general education preschool Head Start class and dispelled the myth that students with early learning challenges could not achieve developmental milestones. Indeed, they could even exceed them.

Outcomes include:

- Learning the administrative team's role in supporting the preschool collaborative team
- Experiencing the power of common assessments and acquiring the preschool team data analysis protocol used to assess effective practices and to flexibly and seamlessly group students during their play activities to give appropriate support and challenge
- Understanding how shifting teacher mindsets and teacher talk ensures high expectations for all
- Exploring how children still learn through play and how teachers can change their approach to that time

Collaborating in the Core in Elementary Schools

It is critical that every student receive high-quality instruction from the outset to meet the goal of academic achievement for all. To ensure initial high-quality Tier 1 instruction for students, adult learning in a school needs to be intentional and inclusive. How is professional development viewed at the school? Is it a one-shot, sit-and-get lecture; a one-time workshop; or is it seen as a multifaceted approach? The overriding question for teachers and administrators is, How do we ensure high-quality, Tier 1 core instruction and learning for all students through focused, collective, ongoing, job-embedded professional development?

Participants at this session can expect to:

- Begin to think differently about professional development.

- Understand the importance of building a common language, common knowledge, and common expectations around job-embedded professional development through structured, whole-staff learning opportunities.
- View the process and purpose of involving all staff (culture) in building (structure) common collaborative time into the master schedule.
- Understand the purpose and importance of planning grade-level team meetings and having the opportunity to see some of these teams in action.
- Examine a lesson plan model that focuses on differentiation in Tier 1.
- Be introduced to the idea of co-teaching and the four models that allow staff to continue learning and reflecting together in real time.

Ensuring Teams Engage in the Right Work

Taking a page from *School Improvement for All: A How-To Guide for Doing the Right Work* (Solution Tree Press, 2017) by Sharon Kramer and Sarah Schuhl, participants delve deep into the *right work* of teacher teams. Kramer and Schuhl state, “The best way to describe, clarify, and monitor the task of teams is to delineate the products that they would create from answering the four questions of learning” which drive the work of collaborative teams (p. 22). Participants gain absolute clarity on what this looks, feels, and sounds like at the team level.

Outcomes include:

- Gaining an understanding of the impact that doing the right work can make on culture and student achievement
- Acquiring a team protocol for complementing defined tasks, products, and artifacts that come out of answering the four critical questions of learning
- Assessing where teams are regarding each task
- Observing a team using artifacts and products to complete a task

Brainstorming Session: Celebrating Learning for All on AllThingsPLC

Has your organization demonstrated a commitment to PLC concepts? Is the evidence of student learning the pride of your teams? Do you want the world to celebrate your community’s dedication to ensuring high levels of learning for *all*?

Discover how to shine the spotlight on your organization’s PLC journey. This brainstorming session provides information, guidance, and support to school and district leaders and leadership teams who want the right work they engage in every day to be widely recognized and for their schools to be seen as models of the PLC at Work process. After a brief overview of the guidelines, criteria, and application process for official recognition, PLC associates and Solution Tree staff answer participants’ questions. Attendees are provided time to begin the application process and have access to other practitioners whose organizations have received this honor.

Schools recognized as models of the PLC process are eligible to apply for the 2019 DuFour Award, a \$25,000 cash award to be presented during a ceremony at the 2019 Summit on Professional Learning Communities at Work in Phoenix, Arizona.

Luis F. Cruz

English Learners and PLCs

Luis F. Cruz shares how schools use PLC strategies to help English learner populations flourish. This session details PLC components administrative and teacher leaders use to close the achievement gap for students learning English as a second language. Dr. Cruz shows how taskforce leadership can reculture and restructure, while introducing best practices to increase learning outcomes for all students. Learn the seven steps an EL taskforce can initiate to ensure students learning English as a second language are included in the "all means all" mantra defining a school's fundamental purpose of learning for every student.

Participants discover how:

- Teacher-led taskforces increase academic performance for English learners.
- PLC practices can highlight stark realities when English learners are not learning.
- Adults change their expectations and behaviors when listening to the needs of English learners, resulting in significant improvements in student achievement.

I Like What I'm Hearing! So How Do We Initiate Our PLC Journey?

Research from academia and accounts from educators worldwide confirm that PLCs, when implemented effectively, increase high levels of learning for every student. However, questions indeed remain. Who is responsible for initiating a PLC? How does a team establish the foundational pillars of a PLC? How does this process take shape? Is it normal to expect staff resistance to this process and is there a difference between rational and irrational forms of resistance? Luis F. Cruz explains in practical terms the *who*, *why*, and *how* associated with the PLC process.

Participants learn:

- How to initiate a PLC process
- The role of a guiding coalition
- How to establish the foundation of a PLC

Remembering Rick DuFour: Embracing the "Tight and Loose" of the PLC Process

Throughout his professional life Dr. Richard DuFour shared important insights aimed at guiding educators in their quest to continuously strengthen implementation of the PLC process. One of his most notable keynotes captured the essence of which aspects of the PLC process must be "tight" and which could be "loose." Join Luis F. Cruz as he celebrates the life of Rick DuFour by reminding audiences of Rick's message and his purpose of ensuring learning for ALL students.

Outcomes include:

- Understanding why teams adopting a collaborative culture is a "must do" in the PLC process
- Learning why ensuring a "guaranteed and viable" curriculum is essential to the PLC process
- Exploring why allowing teachers the "defined autonomy" to teach in the manner they feel most effective is a "loose" aspect of the PLC process

Taping Before Painting: Taking the Critical Steps to Respond Collectively When Students Don't Learn

The third critical question of a PLC, What do we do when students don't learn? often stumps teachers and administrators. Luis F. Cruz showcases methods that schools across the country use to guarantee effective collaboration (taping the room) to ensure an effective collective response when students do not learn (painting the room). Participants learn how the PLC and RTI processes complement each other in increasing academic achievement for all students.

Participants learn:

- How teacher teams effectively collaborate and respond when students do not learn
- Ways to ensure a guaranteed and viable curriculum
- The critical role of common assessments

I Am Sold on PLCs: Practical Tools and Directions to Be Successful

As educators initiate an effective PLC process, they need practical tools to begin and enhance their journey. After leaving this institute, educators may discover that staff back at their site need to be convinced that the PLC process is the most practical path to take in the collective quest to accelerate learning for all students. Luis F. Cruz shares articles, templates, activities, and videos to provide administrative and teacher leaders the necessary tools to amplify improvement at their site.

Participants learn:

- The difference between rational and irrational forms of adult resistance and how to address each
- That effective leadership is an art *and* a science and how to maneuver in both directions
- Practical actions to accelerate the PLC process

Robert Eaker

[KEYNOTE] 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 question, "What commitments are we prepared to make?" forms the framework for action within a PLC culture. 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.

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 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.

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.

Aligning the Work of a Professional Learning Community: Central Office, Schools, and Teams

A districtwide professional learning community is more than a sum of individual parts. A high-performing school district that functions as a PLC reflects a thoughtful alignment and integration of work at the central office level, in individual schools, and in teacher teams. While highlighting the efforts of highly successful school districts, Robert Eaker describes how these districts organize and align at each level to implement professional learning community concepts and practices districtwide.

Developing a Stretch Culture

If the goal of achieving high levels of learning for all students is to be realized, then schools must develop a culture that stretches the aspirations and performance levels of students and adults alike. Robert Eaker focuses on cultural shifts PLCs make while developing a *stretch culture*. He pays particular attention to assessment and providing students with additional time and support.

William M. Ferriter

Digital Tools That Make Differentiation Doable

If schools are truly working to ensure success for every student, learning experiences need to be customized and aligned to student needs. The challenge, however, is in making differentiated learning experiences manageable. While few teachers doubt the importance of differentiating, many struggle to make customized learning spaces a reality. William M. Ferriter introduces participants to a range of digital tools that can be used to: 1) track progress by student and standard, 2) provide structure for differentiated classrooms, and 3) facilitate initial attempts at remediation and enrichment.

Participants learn how digital tools can:

- Provide quick checks for understanding and tracking progress by student and standard.
- Deliver content and free up class time for individualized instruction.
- Facilitate classroom observations as evidence of student progress.

Small Schools and Singletons: Structuring Meaningful Professional Learning Teams for Every Teacher

The PLC concept resonates with most educators, but making collaborative learning work in small schools or for singleton teachers can be challenging. Participants explore four models for building meaningful professional learning teams for singletons and teachers in small schools: 1) creating vertical teams to study skills that cross content areas, 2) using interdisciplinary teams to address the engagement levels of at-risk students, 3) designing class loads that allow teachers to teach the same subjects, and 4) using electronic tools to pair teachers with peers working in the same subject area.

Participants in this session:

- Discuss common structural barriers that prevent singletons from working on collaborative teams.
- Examine four potential models for creating meaningful professional learning teams for teachers.
- Develop the beginnings of an action plan for incorporating singletons into the PLC process.

Our Students *Can* Assess Themselves

In the spring of 2012, Canadian educational change expert Dean Shareski issued a simple challenge on his blog: “I’m wondering if you’re ready to let your students assess themselves. Not as some experiment where you end up grading them apart but where you really give the reins over to them?” Shareski’s challenge resonates with William M. Ferriter, who has always been dissatisfied with the grade-driven work in his classroom. He introduces participants to the tangible steps he has taken in response to Shareski’s challenge to integrate opportunities for self-assessment into classrooms.

Participants in this session:

- Discuss the important role self-assessment plays in learning.
- Explore simple self-assessment behaviors that can be integrated into any classroom.
- Learn common challenges in integrating student self-assessment into the classroom.
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Heather Friziellie

Yes We Can! An Unprecedented Opportunity to Improve Special Education Outcomes (Parts 1 & 2)

Warning: This work is not for the faint of heart! When teams commit to the PLC process and decide to engage in a cycle of continuous improvement, the first critical step is to examine their personal and systemic beliefs about students, themselves, and learning. Only then can they exclaim with confidence that “All really does mean all!” Once team members collectively make that commitment and understand how we got here, they must then define what improvement looks like and how to get there. Heather Friziellie challenges participants to examine their professional beliefs before delving into collaborative structures, the importance of scaffolding, what tailored instruction does and does not look like, and ideas and examples that have resulted in improved outcomes for all students.

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. After examining the key ingredients of systematic intervention and enrichment, 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 collaboratively:

- Examine core beliefs.
- Respond to each student's learning needs in a timely, directive, and systematic way.
- Utilize resources (human, material, and temporal) in different ways.
- Utilize data to drive intervention.
- Examine the most common RTI mistakes.

- Make celebrations part of school culture.

Unpack and Make Yourself Comfortable: Answering Critical Question One

This session briefly lays the groundwork for committing to a guaranteed and viable curriculum before delving into a process of prioritizing and unpacking. Participants first examine the “why” of establishing a guaranteed and viable curriculum. Then, the process—starting at the standards level—for teams to work through a protocol to deeply understand, prioritize, and pace the learning standards into a meaningful learning progression of activities that lead to student mastery via scaffolding to assess student progress. Time will be allocated for participants to engage in the work and reflect on ways to take the process back to their collaborative teams.

Timothy D. Kanold

HEARTPRINT: Living a Fully Engaged, High Energy, Well-Balanced Professional Life!

Timothy D. Kanold draws from his bestselling book *HEART! Fully Forming Your Professional Life as a Teacher and Leader* to provide research, insights, and tools from thought leaders inside and outside education. He examines ways for educators to live an energetic and well-balanced professional life every day.

The relational expectations, give and take, and daily chaos of a PLC school culture can sometimes be overwhelming. By understanding the impact of their heartprint on others, participants can become more inspiring, more fully engaged in their work, and experience a magnified impact on students and colleagues—season after season!

Participants can expect to:

- Examine the H and the E elements of their HEART: their relational Happiness and how to become fully Engaged in their work.
- Discover ways to improve their relational intelligence and impact (heartprint) on others.
- Learn ways to pursue and sustain a well-balanced, high-energy personal and professional PLC life and the positive effects this can have on others.

Getting to the HEART of Central Office and School-Site PLC Leadership and Coaching!

PLC leaders affect risk-taking and change success and inspire others. Drawing from chapters in part 4: “R is for Risk” of his bestselling book *HEART!*, Timothy D. Kanold reveals the practical work of school leadership. He begins with the power of emotionally connecting others to the results of their effort, explores the risk-vision interdependency, and ends with the secret to entropy avoidance in leading the PLC culture.

As Dr. Kanold indicates, “As we become fully formed professionals, we tie our workplace heartprint to the results of our effort and seek to avoid entropy—chaos, disorganization, and randomness—in our daily work.”

Participants learn how to:

- Use goal setting and results to help others measure the impact of their daily actions.

- Lead and create a vision for risk-taking and action interdependent with the measurable results of their work.
- Avoid the signs of entropy—chaos, disorganization, and randomness—for their area of PLC school leadership.

Brainstorming Session: Spotlight on the PLC Work of Central Office Leaders

Central office personnel are invited to share with colleagues their biggest obstacles toward full implementation of the PLC process in their districts. Timothy D. Kanold, a former school superintendent, facilitates this focused session and provides an opportunity to brainstorm solutions using an engaging, meaningful dialogue process.

Your K–12 PLC Mathematics Focus: Great Instruction and Tasks!

Based on the 2018 Solution Tree series *Mathematics in a PLC at Work: Every Student Can Learn Mathematics*, lead author Timothy D. Kanold explores how collaborative teams can achieve a level of improved student achievement through a balanced use of lower-level and higher-level-cognitive-demand tasks with meaningful and formative feedback to students during instruction.

Dr. Kanold shares six research-affirmed lesson design criteria essential to inspiring student perseverance and sustained effort in mathematics class every day. He also shares sample mathematics tasks and online resources for teacher support.

Participants use the PLC mathematics lesson design model to:

- Examine the difference between relevant and meaningful mathematics content and vocabulary.
- Examine the effective and balanced use of lower-level and higher-level-cognitive-demand tasks during class.
- Consider the effective and balanced use of in-class student discourse for formative assessment feedback when students get stuck during the lesson.

Your K–12 PLC Mathematics Focus: Assessment, Homework, and Grading

Mathematics assessment can either inspire or destroy student learning. Based on the 2018 Solution Tree series *Mathematics in a PLC at Work: Every Student Can Learn Mathematics*, lead author Timothy Kanold explores the inspiring assessment, scoring, intervention, and grading routines of collaborative teams in a PLC culture.

Dr. Kanold reveals the criteria for creating high-quality unit assessments (quizzes and tests) and helps participants reflect upon and answer the formative question “Now what?” when an assessment is returned to the students. The session ends with a discussion about the research-affirmed criteria for high-quality mathematics homework routines and practices.

Participants in this session:

- Use high-quality mathematics unit-assessment-design protocols and discussion tools for evaluating the quality of current mathematics assessments.
- Develop formative strategies for student response, intervention, and ownership of learning during and at the end of a unit of study.

- Explore research and discussion tools to design highly effective mathematics homework routines and practices.

Mike Mattos

[KEYNOTE] 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

Building the Collaborative Culture of a Professional Learning Community at Work (Parts 1 & 2)

Collaborative teacher teams are the engines that drive a professional learning community. In this two-part breakout, participants learn about the specific work of teacher teams, including the use of SMART goals, team norms, and the four critical questions that guide team collaboration. This breakout is highly recommended for participants new to the PLC process and for returning participants who want to evaluate and improve team collaboration.

Participants in this session:

- Study the specific work of teacher teams in the PLC at Work process.
- Define key vocabulary.
- Evaluate their current team progress.
- Learn how to use the book *Learning by Doing* as an ongoing resource.
- Acquire tools and sample products.

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 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.

Simplifying Response to Intervention: How to Create a Highly Effective, Multitiered System of Supports

How does your school respond when students don't learn? Compelling evidence shows that response to intervention (RTI)—also known as a multitiered system of supports (MTSS)—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 characteristics of the three tiers of the RTI process
- Connecting the work of teacher teams in a PLC to effective supplemental interventions
- Clearly defining the roles of classroom teachers, administration, and support staff in the RTI process

Guiding Principles for Principals: Tips and Tools for Leading the PLC Process

The principal has an essential role in creating a PLC. Without effective support and leadership, achieving this outcome is virtually impossible. Specifically targeted to site administrators, this session provides proven practices and examples of how to lead and support the work of collaborative teacher teams.

Participants are called on to:

- Learn how to create an effective site leadership team.
- Effectively address violations to a school's collective commitments.
- Monitor and support the work of collaborative teams.

Rebecca Nicolas

Activity or Productivity? What Product Monitoring Reveals About Your Teacher Teams

Monitoring agendas can help leadership teams understand the activity of their teams, but monitoring productivity allows school leadership to better understand the teacher work associated with each of the four critical questions. Participants examine each of the four critical questions and the products associated with them. Administrators and teachers in this session learn about a simple data collection

tool that helps leaders and teacher teams audit their productivity and ensures that teams are progressing appropriately through each of the four critical questions.

Outcomes include:

- Understanding the difference between activity- and productivity-focused teams
- Exploring the products that reflect a team's focus on each of the four critical questions
- Acquiring a data collection tool to monitor team productivity over time

Team Dysfunction? A Leadership Rx

While there is no panacea when things go wrong in a professional learning community, and plenty of ways to go wrong in attempting to “fix” a struggling team, data delivers the mandate for teachers to begin the process in earnest. When meaningful data drives teacher work, a truly collaborative team can realize its greatest potential. Participants in this session learn about the tempting “solutions” that many teams sample before arriving at the lynchpin of the PLC: common formative assessments.

Outcomes include:

- Diagnosing the myriad ways in which teams can engage in PLC-lite
- Exploring the temptations of the “easy fix” for dysfunctional teams
- Understanding the critical ways in which common data can move teams forward

Intentionality in Recovery and Extensions: The Answer for “But I Have to Move On!”

Some teams stall out when it comes to addressing critical questions 3 and 4 of the PLC process, becoming content with the collaborative conversations about what we want students to know or how we will know if they know it. Great teams consistently tackle the question: What will we do next? Opportunities for students to recover standards or extend their understanding after basic mastery must be embedded systemically into the collaborative rhythms of a team. Teams that schedule purposefully for critical questions 3 and 4 within their collaborative pacing systemically address what all teachers know: the formative assessment is just the beginning.

Outcomes include:

- Exploring the problematic impulse of teams to focus on content coverage over subject mastery
- Focusing on intentionality in pacing and planning for recovery and extension
- Understanding the power of teams to design innovative responses to student performance

Maria Nielsen

The 15-Day Challenge: Win Quick, Win Often!

This interactive session establishes, reboots, or re-energizes the work of collaborative teams. Schools across the country are using this simple learning–assessing process to connect the dots of a PLC. Maria Nielsen helps teams see the big picture of a PLC and put it all together in a recurring cycle of collective inquiry. The 15-day challenge is a practical way to bring the PLC process to life.

Participants in this session:

- Clarify the work of collaborative teams.
- Establish steps for a guaranteed and viable curriculum.

- Explore the learning–assessing cycle in a unit of study.

Show Me What Ya Got: Student Engagement Strategies to Keep the Pulse on Learning

Maria Nielsen helps teachers move past “sit and get” in the classroom to a place where all students actively participate in learning. She shares engagement strategies to assess student understanding throughout a lesson or unit of study.

Participants can expect to:

- Explore the *nifty nine* best teaching strategies.
- Learn how to assess student learning by implementing engagement strategies.
- Identify the differences among assessment questions, open questions, and engagement questions.

Common Assessments: The Key to Uncommon Results for Student and Teacher Learning

The secret is out: Common formative assessments are the key to improving student learning! Formative assessments are powerful when teams of teachers create common assessments then share and discuss the results. This collaborative process leads to a dramatic increase in student learning and improved teaching practices. Maria Nielsen provides proven tools and information to effectively use common assessments across grade levels and departments and illustrates practical strategies for implementing and using assessments to substantially improve student and adult learning.

Participants in this session:

- Examine the benefits of using common assessment as a grade level or department.
- Understand the balance between formative and summative assessments.
- Gain formative assessment tools to increase student and adult learning.
- Discover quick and easy ways to look at data and drill down to individual students.