

# Agenda

## Edmond, OK • May 30–June 1

### Wednesday, May 30

6:30–7:45 a.m.	Registration	Freshman Academy Cafeteria
	Continental Breakfast	Main Cafeteria
7:45–8:00 a.m.	<b>Host Introduction</b>	Auditorium
8:00–9:45 a.m.	<b>Keynote</b> —Tim Brown <i>Setting the Stage: Understanding the Big Ideas and Foundational Blocks of the PLC at Work Process</i>	Auditorium
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:30 a.m.	<b>Breakout Sessions</b>	
11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	Lunch (provided)	North Gym / Main Cafeteria
12:30–2:00 p.m.	<b>Breakout Sessions</b>	
2:00–2:15 p.m.	Break	
2:15–3:15 p.m.	<b>Panel Discussion</b>	Auditorium

### Thursday, May 31

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Registration	Freshman Academy Cafeteria
	Continental Breakfast	Main Cafeteria
8:00–9:45 a.m.	<b>Keynote</b> —Mike Mattos <i>Challenging Educational Mythology: Proven Practices and Brutal Facts in Creating Great Schools</i>	Auditorium
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:30 a.m.	<b>Breakout Sessions</b>	
11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	Lunch (provided)	North Gym / Main Cafeteria
12:30–2:00 p.m.	<b>Breakout Sessions</b>	
2:00–2:15 p.m.	Break	
2:15–3:15 p.m.	<b>Team Time</b>	Cafeterias / North Gym

### Friday, June 1

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Continental Breakfast	Main Cafeteria
8:00–9:30 a.m.	<b>Breakout Sessions</b>	
9:30–9:45 a.m.	Break	
9:45–11:45 a.m.	<b>Keynote</b> —Anthony Muhammad <i>The Will to Lead: Working Together to Create a PLC Culture</i>	Auditorium

**Agenda is subject to change.**

## Breakouts at a Glance

Presenter & Title	Wednesday, May 30		Thursday, May 31		Friday, June 1
	10:00–11:30 a.m.	12:30–2:00 p.m.	10:00–11:30 a.m.	12:30–2:00 p.m.	8:00–9:30 a.m.
<b>Tim Brown</b>					
Student Data Notebooks: Developing Ownership, Motivation, and a Growth Mindset	Auditorium				
Raising Questions and Finding Answers in Our Grading Practices		Auditorium			
<b>Scott Carr</b>					
Learning Leaders: Creating a Personalized Professional Development Program	E190/Vocal				
Earning Doesn't Always Equal Learning in Secondary Schools		F116		E191	
Innovation That Leads to Learning			E191		Pom
<b>Luis F. Cruz</b>					
English Learners and PLCs	Cheer				
I Like What I'm Hearing! So How Do We Initiate Our PLC Journey?		Cheer			
Remembering Rick DuFour: Embracing the "Tight and Loose" of the PLC Process			Cheer		
Taping Before Painting: Taking the Critical Steps to Respond Collectively When Students Don't Learn				Cheer	
I Am Sold on PLCs: Practical Tools and Directions to Be Successful					Auditorium
<b>Joe Cuddemi</b>					
Protocols: Powerful Tools in a Professional Learning Community	F116			F116	
PLC Principals: What They Do Differently to Achieve Great Schools		E190/Vocal			

Personal Dynamics of the Collaborative Team			F116		F116
<b>Sharon V. Kramer</b>					
How to Leverage PLCs to Improve Your School	E191				
Yes We Can! General and Special Educators Collaborating in a PLC		E191			
Learning for <i>All</i> Requires Differentiation			E191		E191
Learning Is Not a Spectator Sport. So How Do We Involve Students?				E191	
<b>Paula Maeker</b>					
It Only Takes a Spark! Fanning the Flames of the PLC Process	F120			F120	
Enjoy the Ride! Celebrating and Finding Joy in the PLC Process		F120			F120
Leveling Up: Taking Teams From Good to Great			F120		
<b>Mike Mattos</b>					
Building the Collaborative Culture of a Professional Learning Community at Work (Part 1)	Pom				
Building the Collaborative Culture of a Professional Learning Community at Work (Part 2)		Pom			
Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Secondary Schools			Band		
Simplifying Response to Intervention: How to Create a Highly Effective, Multitiered System of Supports				Band	
Guiding Principles for Principals: Tips and Tools for Leading the PLC Process					Orchestra
<b>Anthony Muhammad</b>					
Bringing the Four PLC Questions to Life: Systems That Ensure All Students Learn	Band				

Overcoming the Achievement Gap Trap: Liberating Mindsets to Effect Change		Band			
Building Culture, Creating Purpose, and Overcoming Frustration on Your PLC Journey			Auditorium		
Collaboration Is a Lifestyle, Not a Meeting!				Auditorium	
Getting Started: Building Consensus and Responding to Resisters					Band
<b>Maria Nielsen</b>					
The 15-Day Challenge: Win Quick, Win Often!	Orchestra				
Show Me What Ya Got: Student Engagement Strategies to Keep the Pulse on Learning		Orchestra			E190/Vocal
Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Elementary Schools			Orchestra		
Common Assessments: The Key to Uncommon Results for Student and Teacher Learning				Orchestra	
<b>Regina Stephens Owens</b>					
What Do We Want Students to Learn? Critical Thinking, Cool Technologies, and Global Competencies	F112				
All for One: Singletons Wired by Relevance and Results		F112			E191
Data Discussion for Instructional Leaders: From Data to Design to Demonstration of Learning			Pom		
The Why Effect: Intentional Systems Drive Inspirational Cultures				Pom	
<b>Clara Sale-Davis</b>					
Closing the Achievement Gap: It's a Process!	F119				F119

From Hysterical to Historical: Creating a Safe, Orderly, and Fun Environment		F119		F119	
Training the Troops			F119		
<b>Jonathan Vander Els</b>					
It's About What Students Learn, Not What They Earn	F118			F118	
Maximizing DOK to Increase Rigor in Classrooms: Five Steps to Success		F118			F118
Do They <i>Really</i> Know It? Why Performance Assessments Provide the Evidence			F118		

**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?

## **Scott Carr**

### **Learning Leaders: Creating a Personalized Professional Development Program**

In order to lead learning, educators must first commit to being learning leaders. Teachers and administrators need to constantly grow their craft to have the greatest impact on student learning. Scott Carr provides creative ways to design job-embedded professional learning opportunities for all staff. Participants look at systems such as micro-credentialing, walkthroughs, externships, and co-teaching to support ongoing learning and developing teacher leaders in their schools. The power of collaboration and a focus on learning allow educators to escape from one-size-fits-all professional development and shift to personalized professional learning.

Outcomes include:

- Reviewing research on the impact professional learning has on student achievement
- Discovering various ways to develop a culture of personalized professional learning in schools
- Exploring various programs that can be used to create job-embedded opportunities for professional learning

### **Earning Doesn't Always Equal Learning in Secondary Schools**

Like Mario running through your Nintendo, students spend a great deal of their time in school chasing points and prizes. How many times have teachers heard, "How much is this worth?" or "What extra credit do you offer?" Are points the currency for learning in your classroom? Do your grades truly reflect what students have learned, or do your grades show what they have completed? Participants look at alternative ways to motivate students to be learners and creators rather than point gatherers and explore how PLC teams can support true growth and learning through the use of evidence-based grading and effective feedback strategies.

Outcomes include:

- Reflecting on current practices and comparing them to the research behind best practices
- Exploring how great feedback can promote learning and student success
- Learning how an evidence-based approach can engage students in their learning

### **Innovation That Leads to Learning**

Often the term *innovation* is synonymous with technology and digital tools. True innovation comes when we enhance an experience by thinking differently and believing differently. To improve students' learning experiences we have to think and believe differently about the learning process. Participants in this session look at two specific strategies—project-based learning and design thinking—to create engaging experiences that challenge and motivate students to create and discover. Participants also make connections between these methods and the context of collaborative practices in a PLC to create a powerful learning experience for all students.

Outcomes include:

- Exploring the basic structures of project-based learning experiences and design thinking frameworks
- Brainstorming project ideas that tie into essential content outcomes
- Using the leverage of PLC collaboration to support the creation of project-based learning and innovative teaching ideas

## **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

### **Joe Cuddemi**

#### **Protocols: Powerful Tools in a Professional Learning Community**

Protocols are powerful tools for building a collaborative culture. Teachers use protocols in the classroom, teams use protocols to accomplish collaborative tasks, and principals use protocols to facilitate meetings. When participants agree to guidelines for a conversation, it can make it safe for participants to explore critically important issues. By having a common language, participants can more easily find common ground.

Outcomes include:

- Exploring a variety of protocols and their purposes
- Engaging in the use of protocols
- Having discussions about professional practice, issues, and readings

#### **PLC Principals: What They Do Differently to Achieve Great Schools**

While a principalship is certainly complex, principals can use specific high-impact strategies to improve student learning and professional practice. Principals need to create clarity regarding decision-making processes and need to create the conditions necessary for continuous improvement.

Outcomes include:

- Exploring strategies that shape the culture of a school
- Examining tight and loose leadership
- Distinguishing between monitoring and micro-managing teams

### **Personal Dynamics on the Collaborative Team**

In a PLC, teachers are organized into collaborative teams in order to improve student learning and improve professional practice. The personal dynamics of the collaborative team can have an impact on the productivity and the performance of the team. High-performing teams have clear expectations and the skills needed to build trust, manage conflict, and hold each other accountable to commitments.

Outcomes include:

- Exploring the difference between teams that have clear expectations and teams that don't
- Examining the personal dynamics of teams with clear expectations
- Discovering tools and resources that support the personal dynamics of a high-performing team

### **Sharon V. Kramer**

#### **How to Leverage PLCs to Improve Your School**

This session outlines strategies that ensure learning for all. Sharon V. Kramer uses the PLC model to highlight and deconstruct the five challenges, or greatest opportunities, to successful and sustainable school-improvement results. Educators who face the unique challenges of serving at-risk youth gain practical solutions to these real-world issues.

Participants examine ways to:

- Support a culture of success.
- Engage everyone in the right work.
- Establish a shift from what *all* students need to what *each* student needs.
- Develop leadership for learning.
- Engage students in owning their learning.

#### **Yes We Can! General and Special Educators Collaborating in a PLC**

This session focuses on an unprecedented opportunity to improve outcomes for *all* students and underscores that all really does mean *all* in a PLC! Sharon V. Kramer facilitates an examination of the mindset, structures, and roles in a PLC that support high levels of general and special education collaboration and the shifts necessary to make this collaboration a reality. Participants delve into ways to improve access to a guaranteed and viable curriculum. They examine a process for prioritizing and unpacking standards with a focus on the long-term implications of writing IEP goals.

Learning outcomes include:

- Exploring ways to develop a culture of shared learning expectations through a collaborative teaming process
- Examining a process for collaboratively prioritizing and unpacking standards to ensure a guaranteed and viable curriculum for every student
- Connecting planning goals and monitoring progress for all learners

### **Learning for All Requires Differentiation**

To ensure all students learn at high levels, teachers need to respond to the needs of *each* student. Differentiation is a way to reach all students, but it is difficult for any teacher to do alone. Sharon V. Kramer demonstrates a collaborative team process for meeting the needs of all learners in a proactive, rather than reactive, manner.

Participants in this session:

- Learn the difference between *proactive* and *reactive* differentiation.
- Understand how a team develops a learning plan that includes differentiation *before, during,* and *after* instruction.
- Identify tools and strategies for differentiation.

### **Learning Is Not a Spectator Sport. So How Do We Involve Students?**

The research is clear: When students are engaged in the assessment process, they become more motivated and focused on learning. Students today are poised to take ownership of their learning. However, in some classrooms, student involvement in the learning process is limited. Using practical examples of student work, Sharon V. Kramer illustrates ways to engage students in learning and assessment.

Outcomes include:

- Examining research related to student involvement in the assessment process
- Reviewing best practices that motivate and empower students to improve their learning
- Identifying strategies that engage students in understanding targets, monitoring their own learning, and communicating progress

### **Paula Maeker**

#### **It Only Takes a Spark! Fanning the Flames of the PLC Process**

Rally the troops! Building a culture of collaboration requires more than enthusiasm. Cultures that last are built around a compelling *why* and unwavering purpose. This session focuses on how to build a solid foundation that shifts the focus from *doing* PLC to *becoming* a PLC. Participants actively and reflectively engage in the practice of creating mindsets that provide opportunity for student success, reframe evidence-based instructional practices, share celebrations, address roadblocks, and collectively discuss the impact of believing in the promise of every child they serve.

Participants can expect to:

- Explore the *why* behind the work: mission, vision, values and goals.
- Reframe beliefs and behaviors that can derail the PLC process.
- Share in conversations about the impact of believing all students can learn at high levels.

#### **Enjoy the Ride! Celebrating and Finding Joy in the PLC Process**

The journey of building a culture of collaboration that ensures high levels of learning for all isn't easy! How do educators keep the joy of this work at the core of their mission, vision, values and goals? To sustain the momentum of the PLC process, educational communities must celebrate small wins early

and often. Participants share ideas, tools, and stories of being in relentless pursuit of what is going right.

Participants can expect to:

- Discover how to build a culture of intentional celebration.
- Look at celebrating specific wins and milestones from the lens of the four critical questions.
- Explore ideas and tools for schoolwide celebrations in learning.

### **Leveling Up: Taking Teams From Good to Great**

Why should districts, schools, and teams that already see good results in student achievement invest in the PLC process? How does the conversation about the need for change when everything is “just fine” even start? Regardless of where it begins, the journey of continuous improvement never ends. This session focuses on the power behind building shared knowledge, engaging in collective inquiry, and discovering the impact of collaboration. Participants explore how to take their districts, campuses, and teams to new levels with outstanding results!

Participants can expect to:

- Explore the characteristics of high-performing collaborative teams.
- Learn how the PLC process and four critical questions can drive even greater student achievement.
- Gain tools and strategies to take teams to the next level.

### **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.

## **Anthony Muhammad**

### **[KEYNOTE] The Will to Lead: Working Together to Create a PLC Culture**

This keynote explores the connection between school culture and successful PLC implementation. The collective belief systems, values, and behaviors of educators have a major impact on the success or failure of a PLC journey. Effective leadership is the catalyst to developing high-performing PLCs. Anthony Muhammad explores strategies that inspire, enlighten, and push people to do great things for students and, contrarily, exposes ill-conceived strategies and behaviors that inhibit momentum and productivity.

Participants gain insight into:

- What current research teaches us about human motivation
- Which leadership behaviors undermine the purpose of a PLC
- Practical strategies to improve their ability to lead others to higher levels of performance

### **Bringing the Four PLC Questions to Life: Systems That Ensure All Students Learn**

This session focuses on systemic implementation of the four critical questions of a PLC. Participants gain a powerful understanding of what it takes to move from theory to practical, systemic implementation. The strategies Anthony Muhammad presents can be immediately applied when participants return to their schools.

Participants in this session:

- Practice developing essential standards and student outcomes.
- Learn the process for creating useful and valid common assessments.
- Discover how to methodically create an effective academic intervention system that meets each student's needs.

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

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

As a result of this session, participants understand:

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

### **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 reluctance to change. Anthony Muhammad leads an exploration of the theories linking school culture and student learning, and participants leave with practical strategies to start the process of transforming the culture at their schools and districts.

Learning targets include:

- Addressing counterproductive belief systems and forming a cohesive team of student advocates
- Analyzing and managing staff frustration
- Understanding the balance between support and accountability

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

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

Participants in this session:

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

### **Getting Started: Building Consensus and Responding to Resisters**

Privatizing practice, isolation, and individual autonomy that have traditionally characterized teaching are the most significant barriers to building a school culture focused on continuous improvement. Anthony Muhammad addresses the questions: How can a faculty build consensus to effect significant change? and What are the most effective ways to respond to the concerns of those who resist even when the staff has decided to move forward?

Outcomes include:

- Defining consensus
- Applying the most effective strategies for building consensus
- Learning seven research-based strategies for addressing resistance

### **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.

### **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.

Participants examine strategies to collectively:

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

After examining different models 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.

### **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.

## **Regina Stephens Owens**

### **What Do We 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 in this session:

- 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.

### **All for One: Singletons Wired by Relevance and Results**

Singleton teachers are accustomed to seeking solutions and understanding unique opportunities.

Operating efficiently and effectively as contributing members of a PLC can be a challenge. Team members must collaborate around common denominators, work with peers to improve professional practices and student learning, leverage technology, and authentically engage in the PLC process. Regina Stephens Owens discusses collaboration around best practices and coaches the designing action plans that support the work of schools and singleton teachers in a PLC.

Outcomes include:

- Discovering ways to overcome the specific challenges that face singleton teachers in small schools
- Exploring solutions that leverage success for educators and learners
- Creating a plan of action that supports singletons functioning effectively in the PLC process

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

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

Participants in this session:

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

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

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

Outcomes include:

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

## **Clara Sale-Davis**

### **Closing the Achievement Gap: It's a Process!**

Clara Sale-Davis illustrates the journey of a school that was transformed from low-performing to exemplary. Freeport Intermediate School in Texas was one of four schools in the country named a "School to Watch" by the National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform. It was also chosen by the National Association of Secondary School Principals to be featured in *Breaking Ranks in the Middle: Strategies for Leading Middle Level Reform*.

Clara describes how implementing an instructional process resulted in high performance with no significant difference among student groups. This process continues to yield high results as Clara and her district team work to ensure that *all* students learn at high levels. Participants experience how a PLC can make learning relevant and enjoyable through interdisciplinary teaming, block scheduling, and the school-within-a-school concept.

### **From Hysterical to Historical: Creating a Safe, Orderly, and Fun Environment**

Homework takes on a new meaning when students are unsure about the homes they'll return to after school. Clara Sale-Davis leads a lively discussion about strategies to even the playing field among students while creating a safe and respectful environment where all students can, and do, learn.

This session calls on participants to:

- Examine ways to create a dynamic, schoolwide disciplinary plan that involves community leaders working as a PLC.
- Discover ways to celebrate student success using techniques that are developmentally responsive to all ages.
- Start a journey toward creating new school traditions by implementing rituals that result in student success.

## **Training the Troops**

Teachers can facilitate student learning in every subject area through the use of certain generally accepted practices, but the real magic occurs when a system is in place to link direct instruction, cooperative learning, and individual student projects. Further, disaggregating and discussing school

data is an effective tool for teachers and administrators. Clara Sale-Davis describes how these components along with establishing strong *guiding coalitions* work in concert to result in increased and sustained student achievement.

Participants in this session:

- Learn organizational structures of interdisciplinary teams and cadres that work collaboratively toward student success and professional development.
- Explore best practices to become dynamic learning teams.
- Experience the value of collaborative planning to ensure students learn at high levels.

## **Jonathan Vander Els**

### **It's About What Students Learn, Not What They Earn**

Competency-based learning is gaining significant traction throughout the U.S. and worldwide. Jonathan Vander Els facilitated a change process as a building principal over the past decade. Currently directing competency-based and personalized systems in schools, he supports educators across the country in transitioning to a model of learning based on what students know and are able to demonstrate. Participants learn how the four questions of a PLC provide the foundation to transition to a competency-based model and the structure to reflect on their school's progress.

Participants leave this session with:

- A clear understanding of how each of the four guiding questions of a PLC support competency-based learning
- Practical ideas and strategies to guide their school's transition to a competency-based learning system
- Useful tools and resources to assess their journey as they begin their own transition

### **Maximizing DOK to Increase Rigor in Classrooms: Five Steps to Success**

Critical thinking is an imperative skill for learners. The world students will enter requires problem solving and creative thinking. The days of recall and regurgitation have passed. Jonathan Vander Els led his school through a process of increased rigor to impact student learning, and in this session he shares the step-by-step processes and resources needed to engage students with instruction and assessment practices that result in meaningful learning and mastery.

Outcomes include:

- Clearly understanding how integration of depth of knowledge increases rigor and, ultimately, student learning
- Gaining practical ideas and strategies to guide changes in teachers' instructional and assessment practices and increase rigor
- Discovering useful tools and resources to assess these practices in schools and classrooms

### **Do They Really Know It? Why Performance Assessments Provide the Evidence**

Many traditional assessments rely on students' ability to memorize and regurgitate facts. So, how do collaborative teams develop performance assessments that actually measure students' competency or ability to transfer their learning in and across subject areas? Jonathan Vander Els led his own school to rethink assessment practices and develop performance assessments to determine which students were

truly proficient. His district's success resulted in its designation as one of the original four districts nationwide to be granted a waiver by the USDE to use teacher-created performance assessments as an integral component of its accountability model.

Participants leave this session with:

- A clear understanding of the steps involved in creating a performance assessment
- Practical ideas and strategies to guide their efforts in using collaborative structures and processes to create, validate, administer, and refine performance assessments
- Useful tools and resources to guide their journey in changing assessment practices to accurately reflect what students know and are able to do