Agenda
Detroit, MI • August 6–8

Tuesday, August 6

6:30–8:00 a.m.	Registration	
	Continental Breakfast	
8:00–9:45 a.m.	**Keynote**—Tim Brown *Setting the Stage: Understanding the Big Ideas and Foundational Blocks of the PLC at Work Process*	
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**—*Presenters provide practical answers to your most pressing questions.*	

Wednesday, August 7

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Registration	
	Continental Breakfast	
8:00–9:45 a.m.	**Keynote**—Mike Mattos *Challenging Educational Mythology: Proven Practices and Brutal Facts in Creating Great Schools*	
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**—*Presenters are available to aid in your collaborative team discussions.*	

Thursday, August 8

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Continental Breakfast	
8:00–9:30 a.m.	**Breakout Sessions**	
9:30–9:45 a.m.	Break	
9:45–11:45 a.m.	**Keynote**—Anthony Muhammad *Moving Beyond "PLC Lite": Nurturing Full Commitment to the PLC Process*	

Agenda is subject to change.

Breakouts at a Glance

Presenters & Titles	Tuesday, August 6		Wednesday, August 7		Thursday, August 8
	10:15–11:45 a.m.	1:15–2:45 p.m.	10:15–11:45 a.m.	1:15–2:45 p.m.	8:00–9:30 a.m.
Tim Brown					
Student Data Notebooks: Developing Ownership, Motivation, and a Growth Mindset	X			X	
Raising Questions and Finding Answers in Our Grading Practices		X			
Getting on the Same Page: Establishing Collective Commitments About Learning and Collaboration			X		
Brian K. Butler					
What About Us? The PLC at Work Process in Early Childhood	X				
Collaborating in the Core in Elementary Schools		X		X	
Ensuring Teams Engage in the Right Work			X		X
Scott Carr					
Learning Leaders: Creating a Personalized Professional Development Program	X				
Earning Doesn't Always Equal Learning in Secondary Schools		X		X	
Innovation That Leads to Learning			X		X

Luis F. Cruz					
English Learners and PLCs	X				
I Like What I'm Hearing! So How Do We Initiate Our PLC Journey?		X			
Remembering Rick DuFour: Embracing the"Tight and Loose" of the PLC Process			X		
Taping Before Painting: Taking the Critical Steps to Respond Collectively When Students Don't Learn				X	
Marc Johnson					
Okay, So We're a Team. Now What?	X			X	
So Who's Leading This Thing? I Guess We All Are!		X			X
Collaboration Rocks!			X		
Timothy D. Kanold					
Heartprint: Living a Fully Engaged, High-Energy, Well-Balanced Professional Life!	X				X
The PLC Life Adventure of Central Office and School-Site Leadership!		X			
Your K–12 PLC Mathematics Focus: Great Instruction and Tasks!			X		
Your K–12 PLC Mathematics Focus: Assessment, Homework, and Grading!				X	
Janel Keating					
Aligning the Work of a Professional Learning Community: Central Office, Schools, Teams	X				
Bumps in the Road: Getting More Kids to Learn More at Higher Levels		X			

This Is Where It All Fits! The Well-Designed Unit Plan: From Standards to Assessments, Unit by Unit			X		
Are Kids Learning and How Do We Know? Data-Based Decision Making in High-Performing Teams				X	
The Institute Is Over. Now What Do I Do? School and Team Life After a PLC Institute					X
Brig Leane					
KISS (Keep It Simple, Schools): Six Steps for Team Success	X				
Team Interdependence: Binding Us Together Without Tying Us Up		X		X	
It's Not Your Fault, but It Is Your Problem			X		X
Mike Mattos					
The Essential Work of Teacher Teams in a Professional Learning Community	X				
The Power of One: Creating High-Performing Teams for Singleton Staff		X			
Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Elementary Schools			X		
Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Secondary Schools				X	
Guiding Principles for Principals: Tips and Tools for Leading the PLC Process					X
Anthony Muhammad					
Bringing the Four PLC Questions to Life: Systems That Ensure All Students Learn	X				
Overcoming the Achievement Gap Trap: Liberating Mindsets to Effect Change		X			

Session					
Building Culture, Creating Purpose, and Overcoming Frustration on Your PLC Journey			X		
Collaboration Is a Lifestyle, Not a Meeting!				X	
Getting Started: Building Consensus and Responding to Resisters					X
Maria Nielsen					
The 15-Day Challenge: Win Quick, Win Often!	X		X		
Show Me What Ya Got: Student Engagement Strategies to Keep the Pulse on Learning		X			X
Common Assessments: The Key to Uncommon Results for Student and Teacher Learning				X	
Michael Roberts					
Perfection Is Not Required; Relentlessness Is: Seeing PLCs Through Difficult Times	X				
Extending the Learning: Supporting Question Four Kids		X		X	
Doing Education *With* Students, Not *To* Them in a PLC			X		X

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 from this session 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 their K–12 systems, and many preschool programs want to know how to make this process work for their schools and children, too. Brian K. Butler, former principal of the 2016 DuFour Award-winning Mason Crest Elementary, discusses how his former school adapted the PLC model for its preschool students. By implementing collaborative and data-driven processes of PLCs, Mason Crest Elementary 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 only achieve developmental milestones, but even exceed them.

Outcomes from this session 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 provide 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 maximize their use of 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 high-quality Tier 1 instruction for students, adult learning in a school needs to be intentional and inclusive. How is professional development viewed in your school? Is it a one-shot, sit-and-get lecture, a one-time workshop, or 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, and job-embedded professional development?

Participants in this session can expect to:
- 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.
- Explore 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 write, "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" that drive the work of collaborative teams. Participants gain absolute clarity on what this looks, feels, and sounds like at the team level.

Outcomes for this session include:
- Gaining an understanding of the impact that doing the right work has 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 a PLC
- Assessing team progress on each task
- Observing a team using artifacts and products to complete a task

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 must 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 for this session 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 a Nintendo game, 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 for this session 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 for this session 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 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 that defines a school's fundamental purpose of learning for every student.

Participants discover how:
- Teacher-led task forces 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 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 in this session 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 from this session 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 in this session 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

Marc Johnson
Okay, So We're a Team. Now What?
Focused collaboration is the key to high-performing teams. Rebecca DuFour states, "It's not, 'Did we spend time together?' but rather, 'Did the time we spent together impact our work?'" The aim is to ensure that teams stay focused on learning in a collaborative culture driven by results rather than intentions. This session explores ways to develop clarity on collaborative work and the flow of work required for teams to respond to the four critical questions of a PLC through their actions.

Participants in this session:
- Develop clarity in their work through team actions in response to the four critical questions of a PLC.
- Explore tools that help teams stay focused.
- Engage in the work of a collaborative team that connects adult actions to student outcomes.

So Who's Leading This Thing? I Guess We All Are!
Every high-performing team has a leader who influences and inspires it, but in systems where high-performing teams exist, leadership roles are also dispersed at all levels throughout the organization. No one person leads alone. Rather, team leaders exist at multiple levels of the organization. Understanding the role of leaders and having clarity around what is expected in that role are essential. As Mike Schmoker writes, "Clarity precedes competence." Marc Johnson helps clarify the leadership role in teams, how to develop a systemwide view of leadership, and how to develop leadership capacity.

Participants in this session:
- Discuss leadership characteristics and challenges.
- Explore the role of leadership at the district, site, and team level.
- Discover tools and strategies to strengthen teams and develop leadership capacity.

Collaboration Rocks!
Cultivating a culture of collaboration is the second big idea of a PLC at Work. All too often, educators treat shaping culture as little more than a feel-good moment at the start of a new school year. Guiding the development of an organization's culture requires deliberate, purposeful, ongoing action by leaders and team members at all levels. Marc Johnson provides an overview of elements that impact culture and essential contributions at all levels of the organization in shaping and guiding a collaborative culture.

Participants in this session:
- Develop an understanding of what most influences culture.
- Focus on the development of common intent through shared mission, vision, values, and goals.
- Experience a hands-on collaborative activity to help process the learning.

Timothy D. Kanold
Heartprint: Living a Fully Engaged, High-Energy, Well-Balanced Professional Life!
Within the culture of a PLC school, the relational expectations, give and take, and sometimes chaotic noise of daily interactions can be overwhelming and exhausting. By understanding one's daily heartprint, educators are better able to inspire, engage with, and influence students and colleagues season after season.

Timothy D. Kanold draws from the wisdom of his book *HEART! Fully Forming Your Professional Life as a Teacher and Leader* (2018 IPPY Gold Medal winner) to provide research, insights, and tools from thought leaders inside and outside education. He examines ways for all educators to lead high-energy, happy, and well-balanced PLC professional lives each and every day.

Participants can expect to:
- Examine the H and the E elements of their HEARTs: 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 reflect upon, pursue, and sustain a well-balanced, high-energy personal and professional life that can positively affect students and colleagues.

The PLC Life Adventure of Central Office and School-Site Leadership!
School-site or central office PLC leaders face the challenge of leading others into the great adventure of the PLC life. Yet, they also must weave through and around obstacles that prevent full, ongoing implementation of the PLC life in their programs, schools, or districts.

Timothy D. Kanold bases this session on chapter 29, "The Great Adventure," from his best-selling, award-winning book *HEART! Fully forming Your Professional Life as a Teacher and Leader* (2018). He reveals the practical nature of school leadership and how administrators can become heroes within their own PLC adventures.

Dr. Kanold invites participants to identify primary barriers that prevent full implementation of the PLC life. He then facilitates dialogue to help them find meaningful solutions.

Dr. Kanold indicates, "As we become fully formed professionals, we tie our workplace heartprint to the vision and results of our effort in order to promote coherence—and celebrate the difficult daily work of others."

Participants learn how to:
- Lead, create, and inspire the great adventure of the PLC life.
- Help others eliminate barriers and then measure the impact of their daily actions on the PLC life.
- Avoid chaos, disorganization, and randomness that can prevent the coherence needed for full implementation of the PLC culture.

Your K–12 PLC Mathematics Focus: Great Instruction and Tasks!
Timothy D. Kanold explores how collaborative teams can improve student achievement in mathematics through the balanced use of lower-level- and higher-level-cognitive-demand tasks and classroom discourse combined with meaningful formative feedback during instruction. This session is based on his book *Mathematics Instruction and Tasks in a PLC at Work* from Solution Tree's *Every Student Can Learn Mathematics* series (2018).

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

Participants use the PLC mathematics lesson-design model to:
- Define the difference between relevant and meaningful mathematics.
- Consider the effective use of prior knowledge and academic vocabulary activities.
- Examine the balanced use of lower-level- and higher-level-cognitive-demand tasks during class.
- Consider the balanced use of in-class student discourse as part of formative assessment feedback when students get stuck during the lesson.

Your K–12 PLC Mathematics Focus: Assessment, Homework, and Grading!
Timothy D. Kanold explores how mathematics assessment and grading can either inspire or destroy student learning. This session is based on *Mathematics Assessment and Intervention in a PLC at Work* and *Mathematics Homework and Grading in a PLC at Work* (2018). Both are from Solution Tree's *Every Student Can Learn Mathematics* series.

Dr. Kanold reveals eight research-affirmed criteria for creating high-quality unit assessments (quizzes and tests) and the accurate scoring of those assessments. Participants also reflect on and answer the formative question "Now what?" when an assessment is returned to students. The session ends with a brief discussion about research-affirmed criteria for high-quality mathematics homework routines and practices.

Participants in this session:
- Use high-quality mathematics assessment-design criteria for evaluating the quality of current quizzes and tests.
- Develop a protocol for the accurate scoring of all quizzes and tests.
- 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.

Janel Keating
Aligning the Work of a PLC: 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 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, Janel Keating describes how districts organize and align at each level to implement PLC concepts and practices systemwide. This session provides many practical examples and useful templates to assist any school or district in doing the work of a PLC.

Bumps in the Road: Getting More Kids to Learn More at Higher Levels
The road to becoming a professional learning community is never smooth. There are bumps along the way. The issue is not how to avoid the inevitable bumps, but rather how to deal with them. Janel Keating shares some challenges to implementing PLCs and provides participants with a process for overcoming these challenges.

This Is Where It All Fits! The Well-Designed Unit Plan—From Standards to Assessments, Unit by Unit
Unit planning is one of the most important activities in which collaborative teams engage. While there is no "right" way for teams to plan instructional units, there are a number of things teams must pay attention to in the process. Participants discuss examples and see video clips of teacher teams effectively planning units of instruction—from standards and learning targets to end-of-unit common formative assessments.

Janel Keating walks participants through each step of the PLC process. Teams learn to plan a unit of instruction from beginning to end and understand how a unit-of-instruction plan is tied to analyzing the data at the end of the unit. This session illustrates the continuous improvement cycle in action.

Are Kids Learning and How Do We Know? Data-Based Decision Making in High-Performing Teams
The two important reasons to look at data in a PLC are to determine whether kids are learning and to improve professional practice. This interactive session highlights how high-performing teams quickly examine their data to make decisions that impact kids in the classroom. Participants are provided an effective, user-friendly data analysis tool to facilitate this work.

The Institute Is Over. Now What Do I Do? School and Team Life After a PLC Institute
Award-winning teams that get more students to learn at high levels often start by attending a PLC at Work institute. Janel Keating shares essential next steps for participants to take back to their districts, schools, and teams to effectively do the work of a PLC. She highlights an effective team's daily work and illustrates how all work relates to the four critical questions of a PLC.

Outcomes from this session include:
- Establishing and communicating a common vocabulary
- Reviewing a team monthly planner and feedback tool
- Examining essential standards, learning targets, and pacing guides
- Working with common assessments and quick checks for understanding
- Learning how to create additional time and support within the school day
- Exploring positive behavioral interventions, supports, and responses to intervention

Brig Leane
KISS (Keep It Simple, Schools): Six Steps for Team Success
Your collaborative teams believe in the PLC process. They may have tried a few things and are ready to follow the process with more structure. Teachers and administrators need clarity on what is expected, and this session answers the question: "What exactly should effective teams produce?" This session is for educators who could use more specifics on the tasks that guide effective collaborative teams through the simple, but not easy, PLC process, and provides administrators insight into what they should track to know which teams need more time and support.

Outcomes from this session include:
- Assessing the readiness of their collaborative teams to focus on the PLC process
- Exploring critical templates to guide highly effective collaborative teams
- Gaining guidance for administrators to know which teams need more support

Team Interdependence: Binding Us Together Without Tying Us Up
Wondering what to do with teams that are struggling? Most educators have seen team commitments that encourage everyone to start and end meetings on time and how to keep distractions to a minimum during a meeting. This session goes deeper into taking those commitments to the next level to drive highly effective collaborative teams toward true interdependence. Educators explore strategies for addressing problems that develop in nonconfrontational ways and learn how teams can work through conflict when it occurs.

Participants in this session learn:
- The difference between commitments to "be nice" and commitments that drive teams toward true interdependence
- Methods for reviewing commitments in nonconfrontational ways
- How collective commitments drive the PLC process

It's Not Your Fault, but It Is Your Problem
Kids come to school with all kinds of issues impacting their ability to learn. Hardworking educators are hired to ensure student learning in spite of those issues—and society is depending on it. There is no pointing fingers or laying blame in this session, just participants rolling up their sleeves and learning the best ways to solve problems. Participants explore assumptions we all make about students, proven practices to help struggling students, and how to best accomplish achieving high levels of student learning together.

Participants in this session learn:
- Fundamental assumptions about students, teachers, and schools that result in positive change
- How to maintain a steadfast focus on student learning
- How to lead a collaborative process of solving problems

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 educational myths that are holding us back.

Outcomes from this session 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

The Essential Work of Teacher Teams in a Professional Learning Community
Teacher teams are the engines that drive the PLC at Work process and student learning, but only if they focus on the right work. This session uses the book you've been given, *Learning by Doing: A Handbook for Professional Learning Communities at Work* (Solution Tree Press, 2016), to break down exactly what highly effective teacher teams do with their precious collaboration time. Mike Mattos, one of the book's coauthors, shares valuable tools and practical examples.

Participants in this session:
- Understand how the four critical questions of the PLC at Work framework drives teacher team collaboration.
- Experience how teams use common assessment data to improve instruction and target interventions.
- Learn how to use specific tools to assist teams with the right work.
- Assess their current reality and leave with next steps.

The Power of One: Creating High-Performing Teams for Singleton Staff
High-performing collaborative teams are the foundation for any professional learning community—the engines that drive the entire process! Nearly every school or district has educators who are singletons (the only person who teaches a particular course or grade level); educators who support multiple grade levels, such as a special education teacher or reading coach; or educators who provide supplemental support, such as a school counselor, psychologist, or librarian. How do these individuals fit into collaborative teams? This session offers guiding principles and real-life examples of how to create meaningful, powerful, collaborative teams for educators looking to connect to the *power of one*.

This session calls on participants to:
- Learn multiple ways to create meaningful, job-embedded teams for singleton staff.
- Consider teaming options for elective or specials teachers, special education staff, and staff who oversee unique programs.
- Repurpose a site intervention team into a high-performing collaborative team.\

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 and structures to collaboratively:
- Examine core beliefs.
- Utilize resources (human, material, and temporal) to meet the needs of all learners, including developing a schedule to ensure that intervention is timely, systematic, and directive.
- Utilize data to drive intervention, with a focus on progress monitoring to drive actions.
- Examine the most common RTI mistakes.
- Review a tool for assessing the progress and opportunities for the district, school, or team in considering interventions.

Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Secondary Schools
Identifying which students need help is not the biggest obstacle most secondary schools face in providing interventions; it is how to schedule the time needed to provide that help during the school day. This session provides real examples from a high-performing school showing how it creates 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 teachers' contractual obligations.

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] Moving Beyond "PLC Lite": Nurturing Full Commitment to the PLC Process
Thirty 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, schools that use this model to transform their practice have one thing is common: effective leadership. This session explores the keys to effectively transitioning a school or district into a model PLC.

Outcomes from this session include:
- Understanding leadership challenges and lessons learned from 20 years of PLC practice
- Learning the difference between leadership behaviors that undermine and those that promote the purpose of a PLC
- Exploring practical strategies that improve participants' ability to lead others through the change process and build consensus

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 holds 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 these 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 have decided to move forward?

Outcomes from this session 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.

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 assessments in common 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 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.

Michael Roberts

Perfection Is Not Required, Relentlessness Is: Seeing PLCs Through Difficult Times
Becoming a true professional learning community is hard. It takes time. It takes commitment. The process, and the people who believe in the process, will be challenged. This session focuses on how to push through those challenges and to keep moving forward for the betterment of students. The journey to becoming interdependent, accountable teams is crucial. It is this journey that keeps a PLC growing and evolving to meet the needs of the students it serves.

Participants in this session:
- Discover how to create a long-term vision for their district or school and understand the skills it takes to make that vision a reality.
- Gain an understanding of the importance of developing interdependence among the staff in their district or school.

Extending the Learning: Supporting Question Four Kids
This session focuses on effectively answering question four of a PLC—the most neglected question: What do we do when students already know it? Michael Roberts provides participants ideas for creating meaningful extensions to build student skills, ways to take advantage of students' interests, and the means to support the social development of proficient students. Participants in this session also discuss pitfalls in building extensions and develop strategies to make the work of collaborative teams more efficient.

Outcomes from this session include:
- Exploring why teams fail to adequately address question four of a PLC
- Discovering ways to ensure teams effectively answer the fourth question by building effective extensions for students who have demonstrated proficiency
- Understanding the process for building skills and increasing interest through social extensions to ensure high levels of learning for all students

Doing Education *With* Students Not *To* Them in a PLC

The locus of control in the classroom needs to be shared with students. Students need to be involved in everything that takes place there. The student should collaborate with his or her peers and teacher about the learning process and the data that learning has produced. In this session, participants learn a process for empowering the student to take part in answering some of the essential questions of a professional learning community.

Participants in this session:
- Understand the role students play in developing a PLC.
- Learn ways to share control in the classroom with students to increase student achievement and decrease off-task behavior.