

Agenda

Little Rock, AR • July 8–10

Wednesday, July 8

6:30–7:55 a.m.	Registration	x
	Continental Breakfast	x
7:55–9:45 a.m.	Keynote —Tim Brown <i>Setting the Stage: Understanding the Big Ideas and Foundational Blocks of the PLC at Work Process</i>	x
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:30 a.m.	Breakouts	
11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)	x
1:00–2:30 p.m.	Breakouts	
2:30–2:45 p.m.	Break	
2:45–3:45 p.m.	Panel Discussion —Presenters provide practical answers to your most pressing questions.	x

Thursday, July 9

7:00–7:55 a.m.	Registration	x
	Continental Breakfast	x
7:55–9:45 a.m.	Keynote —Mike Mattos <i>The Litmus Test of a PLC: Making Decisions Through the Lens of Learning</i>	x
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:30 a.m.	Breakouts	
11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)	x
1:00–2:30 p.m.	Breakouts	
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.	x

Friday, July 10

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Continental Breakfast	x
8:00–9:30 a.m.	Breakouts	
9:30–9:45 a.m.	Break	
9:45–11:45 a.m.	Keynote —Anthony Muhammad <i>Moving Beyond “PLC Lite”: Nurturing Full Commitment to the PLC Process</i>	x

Agenda is subject to change.

Breakouts at a Glance

Presenters & Titles	Wednesday, July 8		Thursday, July 9		Friday, July 10
	10:00–11:30 a.m.	1:00–2:30 p.m.	10:00–11:30 a.m.	1:00–2:30 p.m.	8:00–9:30 a.m.
Tim Brown					
Student Data Notebooks: Developing Ownership, Motivation, and a Growth Mindset	x			x	
Raising Questions and Finding Answers in Our Grading Practices		x			x
Getting on the Same Page: Establishing Collective Commitments About Learning and Collaboration			x		
Timothy D. Kanold					
Heart and Soul: Living a Fully Engaged, High-Energy, Well-Balanced Professional Life!	x				x
The PLC Life 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					
Are Kids Learning and How Do We Know? Data-Based Decision Making in High-Performing Teams	x				
This Is Where It All Fits! The Well-Designed Unit Plan: From Standards to Assessments, Unit by Unit		x			
Aligning the Work of Teams: From the Boardroom to the Classroom			x		
The Institute Is Almost Over: School and Team Life After a PLC Institute				x	
Stomping Out PLC Lite					x

Diane Kerr					
The Misunderstood and Often Forgotten Pillar: Collective Commitments	x			x	
Answering Question One Through the Eyes of an English Learner		x			
Let's Celebrate!			x		x
Michelle Marrillia					
Do Your Common Formative Assessments Really Change Your Practice? Turning Data into Successful Secondary Classroom Instruction	x				
The Case for Coaches in Professional Learning Communities		x		x	
How to Do Great Work in an Imperfect School			x		x
Mike Mattos					
Are We a Group or a Team?	x				
Simplifying Response to Intervention: How to Create a Highly Effective, Multitiered System of Supports		x			
Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Secondary Schools			x		
Personalized Learning in a PLC at Work: Developing Student Agency Through the Four Critical Questions				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			
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			
Help Your Team: Overcoming Common Collaborative Challenges in a PLC			x		
Common Assessments: The Key to Uncommon Results for Student and Teacher Learning				x	
Regina Stephens Owens					
The Why Effect: Intentional Systems Drive Inspirational Cultures	x				
Personify Your Mission, Vision, and Values		x			
Data Discussion for Instructional Leaders: From Data to Design to Demonstration of Learning			x		
Teams and Technology				x	
Collective Efficacy at Work					x
Julie A. Schmidt					
Yes We Can! An Unprecedented Opportunity to Improve Special Education Outcomes	x				
Question One in an All-Means-All Culture		x			
Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Elementary Schools			x		
Capacity and Change				x	
Differentiation for Teams: Taking It to the Next Level					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 for 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* (2005), 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

Timothy D. Kanold

Heart and Soul: 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 HEART: their relational happiness and how to become fully engaged in their work life.
- Discover ways to improve their relational intelligence and impact (heartprint) on others as part of the PLC culture.
- 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 of Central Office and School-Site Leadership!

School-site, guiding coalition, or central office leaders face the challenge of leading others into the great adventure of the PLC life. Yet, they also must overcome obstacles that prevent full, ongoing, and sustained implementation of the PLC life in their programs, schools, or districts.

Timothy D. Kanold bases this session on chapters 21–25 from his best-selling, award-winning book *HEART! Fully Forming Your Professional Life as a Teacher and Leader* (2018). He reveals how administrators, program leaders, and instructional coaches can become dynamic decision makers that others follow. As participants identify primary barriers to the PLC life, Dr. Kanold facilitates dialogue to find meaningful solutions based on what is “loose” and “tight” in a PLC at Work culture.

Dr. Kanold indicates, “As we become professionals, we tie our workplace heartprint and decision making to the *vision* for our work life actions and the results of our leadership wisdom, in order to promote coherence—and celebrate the difficult daily actions of others.”

Participants learn how to:

- Use vision to lead, create, and inspire a sustainable, successful PLC life.
- Help others eliminate districtwide barriers to PLC process implementation by connecting daily actions to measurable outcomes.
- Commit to a simple leadership heuristic to avoid randomness, chaos, and incoherence when implementing 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 math quizzes and tests.
- Consider using a protocol for the accurate scoring (grading) of all quizzes and tests.
- Develop formative strategies for student response, intervention, and ownership of learning during and at the end of a mathematics 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: From the Boardroom to the Classroom

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.

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 Almost Over: 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

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.

Stomping Out PLC Lite

Description coming soon!

Diane Kerr

Collective Commitments: The Misunderstood and Often Forgotten Pillar

The foundation of a school that operates as a Professional Learning Community at Work rests on four pillars: mission, vision, collective commitments (values), and goals. We find that the foundation of many schools is shaky because they have not clearly understood the purpose and power of developing schoolwide collective commitments. Is your school on shaky ground because staff has not committed to specific behaviors to which they hold each other accountable? This session focuses on this pillar and provides a structure for school teams to refine or develop critical values. Participants will leave with tools and resources to support this important work.

Outcomes for this session include:

- Building common understanding of collective commitments and how they ensure the school's mission and vision are realized
- Learning and practicing a process for creating and committing to schoolwide collective commitments

Let's Celebrate!

"Recognition provides opportunities to say, 'Let us all be reminded and let us all know again what is important, what we value, and what we are committed to do'" (DuFour, DuFour, Eaker et al., *Learning by Doing*, 2016). In this session, Diane Kerr focuses on how celebrations are an important tool for sustaining the PLC at Work process and how celebrations build and maintain a positive school culture. She shares her own experiences of celebrating at Mason Crest Elementary School and explores various ways schools can recognize and celebrate improvement, effort, and achievement. Additionally, participants share their ideas and learn from one another.

Participants in this session:

- Examine the vital importance of celebrations.
- Explore various ways to make celebrations everyone's responsibility and ensure that there are many winners.
- Gain practical and enjoyable ideas for celebrations in their schools.

Answering Question One Through the Eyes of an English Learner

What do we want students to learn and be able to do? This question is more complex when we consider the needs of learners who are simultaneously learning academic content *while* acquiring English language skills. When teams clarify what students must learn and dig deeper into each essential standard, it is important to have a process in place that ensures teams are routinely identifying and planning for the instruction of academic vocabulary and language. When teams focus on the language of the standard, it not only benefits English learners but their classmates as well.

Participants in this session:

- Gain experience recognizing and appreciating the important difference between academic and content vocabulary.
- Learn a process for unpacking standards to understand what we want students to learn and to identify the academic vocabulary and language of the standard.
- Explore instructional supports for developing academic language.

Michelle Marrillia

The Case for Coaches in Professional Learning Communities

Successful instructional coaches understand the balancing act of working with teams to help ensure the fidelity of the three big ideas of a PLC while also providing the time and support to individual teachers who need it. Learn how a tiered instructional coaching model can help drive the collaborative culture in your school. Participants will leave with sample coaching plans for training team leaders, specific support systems for struggling teams, and instructional leadership team protocols.

Learning outcomes from this session include:

- Defining the role of coaches in professional learning communities
- Applying practical coaching strategies to develop and support team leaders in a PLC
- Determining next steps in building and sustaining an effective coaching model to support collaborative teams

Do Common Formative Assessments Change Your Practice? Turning Data Into Successful Secondary Classroom Instruction

School systems are increasingly data-rich, but educators often struggle to use this data to differentiate instruction and provide timely feedback to meet the needs of every student. This session details practical approaches for effective and easy-to-implement reteaching strategies in multiple content areas in secondary classrooms. Michelle Marrillia provides specific examples of creating a system of regrouping and differentiated instruction based on assessment data.

Participants in this session discover:

- How a collaborative team can use data to implement reteaching strategies for students who do not learn the first time
- A stoplight regrouping method for differentiated instruction
- How to incorporate embedded academic advising for timely feedback

How to Do Great Work in an Imperfect School

Every school faces unique challenges, from ever-changing student populations to teacher shortages and high-stakes accountability systems. Michelle Marrillia discusses ways to quiet the distractions and focus on the right work by adhering to the tenets of a PLC. Participants in this session examine the differences between “PLC lite” and a true professional learning community and discuss methods to bring meaningful change to any school.

Participants gain insights into:

- How schools move away from adult-centered behavior to student-centered learning
- The conditions necessary for a collaborative culture to exist
- The ongoing support teachers need to maintain a thriving PLC

Mike Mattos

[KEYNOTE] The Litmus Test of a PLC: Making Decisions Through the Lens of Learning

The fundamental purpose of a professional learning community is to ensure high levels of learning for all students. To best achieve this mission, educators within the organization commit to making

decisions based on a critical question: Will doing this lead to higher levels of learning? Practices and policies that improve learning are embraced and those that fall short are abandoned. In this keynote, Mike Mattos examines how professionals would apply this “learning litmus test” and identifies the actions proven to best serve our students.

Are We a Group or a Team?

Collaborative teacher teams are the engine that drives a professional learning community. When these teams are highly engaged in the right work, student learning accelerates ... and when they are not, learning sputters and stalls. Because teachers have traditionally been required to attend grade-level or departmental team meetings, schools often mistakenly assume that merely renaming these gatherings “PLC time” represents teacher collaboration. The act of meeting together does not make a team, but instead, merely a group.

Participants in this session:

- Assess if they are currently part of a group or a team.
- Review the essential work of teacher teams in a PLC.
- Learn how to successfully navigate team disagreements.
- Leave with specific action steps to improve your teacher team.

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 from this session 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, administrators, and support staff in the RTI process

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.

Personalized Learning in a PLC at Work: Developing Student Agency Through the Four Critical Questions

Many schools and districts state in their mission the objective of creating lifelong learners. Because today's average high school graduate will change careers at least four times by the age of 40, ensuring that all students master the skills and behaviors needed to guide their future learning is essential to ensuring their future success. A study of highly effective, learning-progressive schools across the world has found that these schools share two common elements: they operate as high-functioning professional learning communities with well-implemented RTI structures, and they promote student agency in the learning process.

Mike Mattos discusses how to build a highly effective school where students are engaged in personalized learning experiences and empowered to take ownership of the four critical questions of the PLC at Work process.

Outcomes from this session include:

- Discussing the essential knowledge, skills, and behaviors required to “future proof” our students
- Defining how to create collaborative teacher teams within the PLC at Work framework and foster teacher transdisciplinary skills and behaviors
- Discovering how to use the four critical questions of a PLC to form pathways and progressions for personalized learning in the classroom
- Learning how schools utilize the RTI process to ensure every student develops agency and personalized learning opportunities required to thrive in a global economy

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

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

Outcomes from this session include:

- Understanding leadership challenges and lessons learned from more than 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 offices 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.

Help Your Team: Overcoming Common Collaborative Challenges in a PLC

What should happen when a team starts to struggle? As teachers move toward becoming interdependent teams, challenges inevitably arise. Ensuring high levels of learning for every student requires a change in thinking and practice. Participants briefly review the work of highly effective teams, consider scenarios showing common team challenges, and work collaboratively to identify strategies for moving a team forward. This session is based on a book of the same title (Solution Tree Press, 2019), coauthored by Maria Nielsen and other educators who possess a wide range of backgrounds and experiences in all levels of education.

Participants in this session:

- Identify common challenges that limit a team’s efficacy.
- Collaboratively resolve specific challenges and share strategies to help teams progress.
- Practice specific coaching strategies designed to assist teams in their critical work.

Regina Stephens Owens

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 to move from a deficit mindset to a growth mindset.

Participants in this session discover ways to create a culture of collaboration, use various types of data protocols, and increase team capacity and student learning.

Outcomes from this session include:

- Examining ways to focus on results through the lens of data
- Obtaining tools, tips, and templates proven to impact team and student learning
- Learning strategies to move from data to demonstration of learning

The Why Effect: Intentional Systems Drive Inspirational Cultures

Organizational purpose, collective beliefs, and commitments affect building systems at all levels. How can we ensure that all practices and procedures are intentional and personify organizational beliefs? It all begins with the *why*. Regina Stephens Owens shares strategies to design cultures that move from compliance, coercion, and fear to cultures that are respectful, responsive, and reflective.

Outcomes from this session include:

- Understanding how to promote high standards of achievement for all
- Discovering how to create a collective, rather than individual, leadership focus
- Designing and developing cultures that are respectful, responsive, and reflective

Collective Efficacy at Work

Leveraging the strengths of all community members can be challenging. Where do we start? How can we monitor and measure to ensure growth for staff and students? How do we work interdependently to accomplish goals? Regina Stephens Owens facilitates a collaborative discussion as participants discover ways to increase results through collective responsibility.

Participants in this session explore how to:

- Build a community of compassion where all stakeholders work interdependently to ensure students are ready for college, career, and life.
- Develop experiences where staff and students learn and grow, resulting in the alignment and achievement of individual and organizational goals.
- Invest in personal mastery that results in increased capacity, collective responsibility, and increased achievement.

Personify Your Mission, Vision, and Values

Mission, vision, and values are much more than statements placed on a wall; they are the foundation of a learning community. They clarify a school's purpose, sustain its culture, and propel it toward future achievements. This session focuses on ways to ensure a community of learning is built on a solid foundation that sustains staff efforts and goes deeper into the PLC process.

Outcomes from this session include:

- Understanding how to leverage mission, vision, and values in development of a successful learning community
- Learning the initial steps of the PLC process
- Utilizing PLC continuums to go deeper into the work and sustain improvements

Leveraging Technology to Strengthen Teams

Effective teams are essential to the professional learning community process and continuous improvement. Participants in this session learn strategies to leverage technology in support of teamwork and ensure growth through collective inquiry and action research.

Outcomes from this session include:

- Understanding ways to use technology as a motivator to advance the work of teams
- Discovering ways to leverage web resources to address the four essential questions of a PLC
- Considering the proven advantages of using technology to build collective capacity and ensure continuous improvement

Julie A. Schmidt

Yes We Can! An Unprecedented Opportunity to Improve Special Education Outcomes

Warning: This work is not for the faint of heart! When teams commit to the PLC process and decide to engage in a cycle of continuous improvement, the first critical step is to examine their personal and systemic beliefs about students, themselves, and learning. Only then can they exclaim with confidence that “all really does mean all!” Once team members collectively make that commitment and understand how we got here, they must then define what improvement looks like and how to get there. Julie A. Schmidt challenges participants to examine their professional beliefs before delving into collaborative structures, the importance of scaffolding, what tailored instruction does and does not look like, and where local practices may or may not align to the belief that all kids can learn at high levels.

Outcomes from this session include:

- Understanding past realities regarding special education
- Learning strategies to build a school and district culture with a belief that all students can learn at high levels
- Examining collaborative structures to support high levels of learning for all
- Identifying instructional practices that lead to high levels of learning for all
- Reflecting on local current practices and policies that do and do not align with the belief that all students can learn at high levels

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.

Question One in an All-Means-All Culture

Participants first examine the what and why of establishing a guaranteed and viable curriculum. Then, they use a protocol any collaborative team could employ to deeply understand how standards drive the team conversation to plan for instruction and formative assessment to support all learners in reaching proficiency. Finally, participants use a data set and protocol to analyze and discuss formative assessment data to plan for instruction, intervention, and extension.

Outcomes from this session include:

- Exploring essential elements of a guaranteed and viable curriculum for all
- Becoming familiar with a protocol that facilitates deep learning around standards and targets
- Using the protocol for robust pre-instruction planning
- Using the protocol to analyze and discuss common formative assessment data to drive instruction and intervention

Capacity and Change

Participants dig into the important work of a guiding coalition in a PLC and explore the teacher leader's role. Understanding the change process and knowing what to expect is paramount to the success of any school-improvement plan, and it is especially critical as an organization develops into a deeply embedded professional learning community.

Participants in this session:

- Consider leadership through the lens of their current roles.
- Examine what it takes to develop a guiding coalition.
- Understand the change process and what to expect along the way.

Differentiation for Teams: Taking It to the Next Level

Highly effective PLC practices are built on the foundation of high-functioning collaborative teams. These teams recognize that each team member brings different perspectives to the table. This session focuses on the dynamics of collaborative teams, understanding those dynamics, and various tools available to assess stages of development.

Objectives for this session include:

- Defining the characteristics of high-performing teams
- Engaging in an activity to help build understanding for team members
- Exploring tools to assess a team's efficacy