

# Agenda

## Orlando, FL . September 16–18

### Wednesday, September 16

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| 6:30–8:00 a.m.       | Registration  |
|                      | Continental Breakfast   |
| 8:00–9:45 a.m.       | <b>Keynote</b> —Tim Brown<br><i>Setting the Stage: Understanding the Big Ideas and Foundational Blocks of the PLC at Work Process</i> |
| 9:45–10:15 a.m.      | Break   |
| 10:15–11:45 a.m.     | <b>Breakout Sessions</b>  |
| 11:45 a.m.–1:15 p.m. | Lunch (on your own)   |
| 1:15–2:45 p.m.       | <b>Breakout Sessions</b>  |
| 2:45–3:15 p.m.       | Break   |
| 3:15–4:15 p.m.       | <b>Panel Discussion</b> — <i>Presenters provide practical answers to your most pressing questions.</i>                                |

### Thursday, September 17

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| 7:00–8:00 a.m.       | Registration  |
|                      | Continental Breakfast   |
| 8:00–9:45 a.m.       | <b>Keynote</b> —Timothy D. Kanold<br><i>Coherence and Culture: Embracing the Why and How of the PLC Life!</i> |
| 9:45–10:15 a.m.      | Break   |
| 10:15–11:45 a.m.     | <b>Breakout Sessions</b>  |
| 11:45 a.m.–1:15 p.m. | Lunch (on your own)   |
| 1:15–2:45 p.m.       | <b>Breakout Sessions</b>  |
| 2:45–3:15 p.m.       | Break   |
| 3:15–4:15 p.m.       | <b>Team Time</b> — <i>Presenters are available to aid in your collaborative team discussions.</i>             |

### Friday, September 18

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| 7:00–8:00 a.m.        | Continental Breakfast   |
| 8:00–9:30 a.m.        | <b>Breakout Sessions</b>  |
| 9:30–10:00 a.m.       | Break   |
| 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. | <b>Keynote</b> —Anthony Muhammad<br><i>Moving Beyond “PLC Lite”: Nurturing Full Commitment to the PLC Process</i> |

**Agenda is subject to change.**

## Breakouts at a Glance

| Presenters & Session Titles  | Wednesday,<br>September 16 |                | Thursday,<br>September 17 |                | Friday,<br>September 18 |
|--|----------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|
|  | 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.          |
| <b>Tim Brown</b>   |                            |                |                           |                |                         |
| 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                         |                |                         |
| <b>Marc Johnson</b>  |                            |                |                           |                |                         |
| So Who’s Leading This Thing? I Guess We All Are!   | X                          |                |                           | X              |                         |
| Collaboration Rocks!   |                            | X              |                           |                |                         |
| Okay, So We’re a Team. Now What?   |                            |                | X                         |                | X                       |
| <b>Timothy D. Kanold</b>   |                            |                |                           |                |                         |
| 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              |                         |
| <b>Anthony Muhammad</b>  |                            |                |                           |                |                         |
| 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              |                           |                |                         |
| Getting Started: Building Consensus and Responding to Resisters                                |                            |                |                           |                | X                       |
| <b>Steve Pearce</b>  |                            |                |                           |                |                         |
| PLC Scheduling 101: Taking Control of Your Schedule  | X                          |                |                           |                | X                       |

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|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| Flip My School: Keys to PLC Leadership and Change                              |   | X |   |   |   |
| Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Secondary Schools    |   |   | X |   |   |
| The Collaborative Team: The Engine That Drives the PLC Process                 |   |   |   | X |   |
| <b>Karen Power</b>   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Leading Your PLC With Intention: Eight Important Considerations                | X |   |   |   |   |
| Best Practice or First Practice in Improving Your School?                      |   | X |   |   |   |
| <b>CFA SESSION - TBD</b>   |   |   | X |   |   |
| Help Your Team: Overcoming Common Collaborative Challenges in a PLC            |   |   |   | X |   |
| Good to Great: SMART Goals to Move the Needle!                                 |   |   |   |   | X |
| <b>Michael Roberts</b>   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Shifting From Me to We   | X |   |   |   |   |
| Frontloading EL Students: Setting Them Up for Success                          |   | X |   |   |   |
| Enriching the Learning: Effectively Answering Question Four                    |   |   | X |   | X |
| Doing Education in a PLC With Students, Not To Them                            |   |   |   | X |   |
| <b>Julie A. Schmidt</b>  |   |   |   |   |   |
| The Essential Work of Teacher Teams in a PLC                                   | X |   |   |   |   |
| Yes We Can! An Unprecedented Opportunity to Improve Special Education Outcomes |   | X |   |   |   |
| Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Elementary Schools   |   |   | X |   |   |
| Question One in an All-Means-All Culture                                       |   |   |   | X |   |
| Differentiation for Teams: Taking It to the Next Level                         |   |   |   |   | X |
| <b>Kenneth C. Williams</b>   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Starting a Movement: Embracing the Blessed Burden of Leadership                | X |   |   | X |   |

|   |  |   |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|---|--|---|
| At Risk or Underserved? Focusing on What Really Matters in Student Learning |  | X |   |  |   |
| 12 Angry Men: The Power of Productive Conflict                              |  |   | X |  | X |

**Agenda subject to change.**

## Session Descriptions

### Tim Brown

#### **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 among team members
- Participating in strategies for developing collective team commitments
- Exploring processes and protocols that make values more than a one-time event

### **Marc Johnson**

#### **So Who's Leading This Thing? I Guess We All Are!**

Every high-performing team has a leader who influences and inspires its members, 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 this 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.

### **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.

### **Timothy D. Kanold**

#### **Coherence and Culture: Embracing the *Why* and *How* of the PLC Life!**

Timothy D. Kanold applies an explicit focus to the four critical questions of a PLC at Work and illustrates how answers to these questions can drive workplace coherence and transparency. He also examines the daily responsibility to contribute to the defined autonomy of the collaborative PLC culture.

This keynote is based on these assertions:

- All K–12 professionals work extremely hard to improve student learning.
- The general lack of coherence to and equity in our professional work has dire consequences for student learning.
- K–12 professional educators can create the PLC cultural conditions necessary to significantly influence adult and student learning. These cultural conditions are not yet the norm in most American schools.

#### **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.

### **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)

### **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

## **Steve Pearce**

### **PLC Scheduling 101: Taking Control of Your Schedule**

The statement "your schedule reveals your priorities" is irrefutable in a PLC. Steve Pearce shares ideas and tips on creating school schedules that focus on supporting the PLC framework. He shows how

making time for student intervention and staff collaboration during the school day positively impacts school culture and student results.

Participants in this interactive session share their positive scheduling ideas with other educators and examine collaborative processes that improve schools. Participants review examples and develop plans for creating a schedule and gain the tools and inspiration to implement proven practices in their own schools.

### **Flip My School: Keys to PLC Leadership and Change**

The research is clear: Change leadership matters. Steve Pearce shares research on leadership and change and illustrates practical strategies his staff implemented when he was principal of a successful PLC school. Steve shows how it is possible to flip a struggling school and make it a place where every student learns.

Participants learn the importance of:

- Employing best practice and research-based strategies on leadership and change
- Implementing ideas and methods proven to be effective and successful
- Becoming inspired to flip a school and transform it into a high-performing learning community

### **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.

### **The Collaborative Team: The Engine That Drives the PLC Process**

The PLC at Work framework is ultimately driven by the work of collaborative teams in each school. Participants in this session explore the *why* behind the impact of teams and practical strategies around the topics of:

- Focusing on the right work
- Meaningful protocols and products
- Dealing with conflict
- Becoming a model collaborative team

## **Karen Power**

### **Leading Your PLC With Intention: Eight Important Considerations**

Implementing and sustaining the PLC process requires diligent leaders who persist in ensuring that their school is a place in which leaders and teachers collaborate, make evidence-based decisions, understand that students are the top priority, communicate effectively, and are involved in trusting relationships.

Participants in this session explore eight areas of focus to consider in effectively leading the PLC at Work process.

1. Achieving focus and staying intentional
2. Establishing and maintaining organization
3. Building shared leadership
4. Using evidence for decision making and action
5. Prioritizing the student
6. Leading instruction
7. Fostering communication
8. Developing community and relationships

### **Best Practice or First Practice in Improving Your School?**

If you had a box of jigsaw puzzle pieces, would it matter which piece you used to complete your puzzle? Could you simply select the first piece that you touched? Would you try to make it fit despite its shape and size? Or, would you continue to search for the best piece? School improvement requires a continuous search for the right pieces of the puzzle. It isn't always about staying in our comfort zone and doing what we have always done. It isn't about a checklist or a quick brainstorm of ideas that may or may not be effective. It takes a little more consideration to truly match what students need with what we can determine to be the most effective practice. We learn by doing, and we make a difference when we focus on collaborative learning and results.

Participants in this session:

- Clarify and build common understanding of the *why* behind focusing on collaboration, learning, and results.
- Build common understanding of best practices in improving schools.
- Learn more about how to use continuums and rubrics to develop common understanding of the *what* and *how* of the work.
- Practice using rubrics and tools that support best practice implementation and school improvement.

## **COMMON FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT SESSION – TBD**

### **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 eight educators with 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.

### **Good to Great: SMART Goals to Move the Needle!**

How do you know what to expect? What to do next? What is driving your PLC process toward continuous improvement? We owe it to our students to not stop at "good enough." How do we move our collaborative work to "great"? What will ensure that we are digging deep and collectively understanding our next steps? SMART goals provide clarity and direction and ensure that we are results-driven in our practice. Participants in this session will learn about, and reflect on, the cycle of getting better and better and better.

Participants in this session:

- Recognize that SMART goals are the foundational cornerstone of continuous improvement.
- Learn how high-achieving schools and districts use SMART goals to develop collective inquiry practices.
- Practice using SMART goals to become more results-driven in their school or district.

### **Michael Roberts**

#### **Shifting From *Me* to *We***

Becoming a true professional learning community is hard work. 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 an interdependent, accountable team 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 school or district and understand the skills it takes to make that vision a reality.
- Gain an understanding of the importance of developing interdependence among staff in their school or district.

#### **Frontloading EL Students: Setting Them Up for Success**

How best to support students who do not speak English at home is a common question for school staff. Participants in this session learn the important role that whole-staff collaboration plays in supporting EL students. Michael Roberts provides participants with strategies they can implement as soon as they return to their site.

Learning outcomes from this session include:

- Understanding the key role of whole-staff collaboration in supporting English learners
- Discovering how frontloading students with key academic vocabulary creates confidence and serves as a springboard to their academic success

### **Enriching the Learning: Effectively Answering Question Four**

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 adequately address 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 in a PLC *With* Students, Not *To* Them**

The locus of control in the classroom needs to be shared with students. Students should collaborate with their peers and teachers about the learning process and the data produced by that learning. Participants in this session learn a process for empowering students to take part in answering 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 with students in the classroom to increase their achievement and decrease off-task behavior.

### **Julie A. Schmidt**

#### **The Essential Work of Teacher Teams in a PLC**

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 provided, *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. Julie Schmidt, who has led this work for more than 15 years and is currently a school district superintendent, shares valuable tools and practical examples.

Participants in this session:

- Gain an understanding about how the four critical questions of the PLC at Work framework drive 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.

### **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

### **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

### **Kenneth C. Williams**

#### **Starting a Movement: Embracing the Blessed Burden of Leadership**

The greatest challenge facing PLC school leaders is creating buy-in among teachers and teams. Some teams take off with the PLC process, some start but get stuck and stall, and others don't start because they haven't bought in yet. This dilemma creates "pockets of excellence," where some students benefit from high-performing teams fully engaged in the PLC process, while others are denied that opportunity. We can no longer leave to chance every students' accessibility to the best our teachers and teams can provide. The PLC process maximizes the efforts and capabilities of our teachers and leaders. In this session, Kenneth C. Williams clearly describes the five leadership shifts necessary to create buy-in breakthroughs. Participants leave this session with a process to ensure fidelity to best practices across every grade level and department team.

Participants in this session:

- Learn how leaders unknowingly sabotage teacher buy-in.
- Discover the difference between epiphanies and breakthroughs.
- Shift their thinking about how buy-in unfolds.
- Gain clarity about what they're doing well and where they need to improve.
- Leave with a solid plan to accelerate buy-in at their campus.

### **At Risk or Underserved? Focusing on What Really Matters in Student Learning**

The questions teachers ask about educating youth impact the results. Participants in this session learn to shift traditional thinking and change paradigms by collaboratively using expertise and resources to maximize student achievement. Kenneth C. Williams helps educators capitalize on PLC principles to ensure success for all students.

### **12 Angry Men: The Power of Productive Conflict**

Kenneth C. Williams uses the classic film *12 Angry Men* as a lens to discuss five qualities that characterize effective teams:

1. Open inquiry
2. Accepting responsibility for decision making
3. Participation of team members
4. Productive conflict to discover ideas and reveal new information
5. The essential role of diversity in decision making

The film explores consensus-building techniques among a group of men whose diverse personalities create intense conflict. Kenneth shows how teams face and overcome similar challenges to collaborate and succeed. The primary learning outcome is for participants to gain ideas to substantially improve team communication and effectiveness.