

AGENDA

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA • FEBRUARY 26–28

Wednesday, February 26

11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	Registration
12:30–2:00 p.m.	Keynote —Timothy S. Stuart <i>PLC at Work in International Schools</i>
2:00–2:15 p.m.	Break
2:15–3:45 p.m.	Breakouts
3:45–4:00 p.m.	Break
4:00–5:00 p.m.	Panel Discussion
5:00–6:00 p.m.	Reception

Thursday, February 27

7:30–8:00 a.m.	Registration
	Continental Breakfast
8:00–9:45 a.m.	Keynote —Nicole Dimich <i>Assessment That Cultivates Hope and Student Agency</i>
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break
10:00–11:30 a.m.	Breakouts
11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	Lunch (provided)
12:30–2:00 p.m.	Breakouts
2:00–2:15 p.m.	Break
2:15–3:15 p.m.	Team Time <i>Presenters are available to aid in your collaborative team discussions.</i>

Friday, February 28

7:30–8:00 a.m.	Registration
	Continental Breakfast
8:00–9:45 a.m.	Keynote —Sascha Heckmann <i>Personalized Learning in a PLC at Work: Student Agency Through the Four Critical Questions</i>
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break
10:00–11:30 a.m.	Breakouts

11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	Lunch (provided)
12:30–2:00 p.m.	Breakouts
2:00–2:15 p.m.	Break
2:15–2:30 p.m.	Closing Statements —Timothy S. Stuart
2:30–3:30 p.m.	Keynote —Mike Mattos <i>The Litmus Test of a PLC: Making Decisions Through the Lens of Learning</i>

BREAKOUTS AT A GLANCE

Presenters & Titles	Wednesday, February 26	Thursday, February 27		Friday, February 28	
	2:15–3:45 p.m.	10:00–11:30 a.m.	12:30–2:00 p.m.	10:00–11:30 a.m.	12:30–2:00 p.m.
Nicole Dimich					
Designing an Assessment Plan in a Personalized Context	x				
Co-Constructing Learning With Students		x			
Investing Students in Learning Through Assessment Practice			x		
Analyzing Student Work: Teachers and Students in Partnership				x	
Assessing Student Collaboration					x
Sascha Heckmann					
Agency at the Center: Highly Effective, Learning Progressive (HELP) Practices	x				
Collective Efficacy: A Framework for Highly Effective, Learning Progressive (HELP)—Elementary Schools		x			
Collective Efficacy: A Framework for Highly Effective, Learning Progressive (HELP)—Secondary Schools			x		

Personalizing Assessment: Agency, Equity, and Achievement				x	
Becoming a Highly Effective, Learning Progressive (HELP) School					x
Mike Mattos					
Are We a Group or a Team?	x				
The Power of One: Creating High-Performing Teams for Singleton Staff		x			
Taking Action: Connecting PLCs and RTI			x		
Uniting Academic and Behavior Interventions: Solving the Skill or Will Dilemma				x	
Guiding Principles for Principals: Tips and Tools for Leading the PLC Process					x
Timothy S. Stuart					
Leading Positive Change in International Schools		x			

Agenda is subject to change.

DAY 1 SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

KEYNOTE

Timothy S. Stuart—PLC at Work in International Schools

How do high-performing international schools continue to improve? Based on his book, *Global Perspectives: Professional Learning Communities at Work in International Schools* (Solution Tree Press, 2016), Timothy S. Stuart shares how some of the highest performing schools in the world can continue to improve student learning. He demonstrates how professional learning communities can ensure that *all* students learn at high levels, and how PLCs impact professional growth and school culture. Dr. Stuart shares his PLC implementation journey at three high-performing international schools and how these schools consistently increase academic performance through continuous innovation and collaboration.

Participants in this session:

- Understand the what, why, and how of PLCs in high-performing international schools.
- Acquire PLC implementation strategies.
- Understand some of the implementation challenges.

BREAKOUTS

Nicole Dimich—Designing an Assessment Plan in a Personalized Context

Assessments, when designed well, provide evidence of student learning in meaningful ways. Participants in this session learn how to develop an assessment plan that allows for personalized methods and individualized pathways while ensuring the most accurate information. This process leads to valid assessment evidence that communicates proficiency and mastery. An assessment plan ensures targeted formative practices, including common formative assessment, in a personalized and high-performing context. Common formative assessments are analyzed to understand what students need to learn next. The power of common formative assessments is in the feedback students act on as a result of deeper understanding of their learning needs. With learning progressions and personalized pathways, common formative assessments take on a new look. An assessment plan can provide personalization in a targeted and focused practice. Nicole Dimich offers tools and templates to focus this work.

Participants can expect to:

- Explore key aspects of assessment validity in crafting an assessment plan.
- Apply a protocol to create an assessment plan in a personalized context.
- Employ criteria to determine the most effective assessment methods to inform proficiency and mastery in a personalized context.

Sascha Heckmann—Agency at the Center: Highly Effective, Learning-Progressive (HELP) Practices

This session explores the highly effective, learning-progressive (HELP) continuums presented in the book Sascha Heckmann coauthored, *Personalized Learning in a PLC at Work* (Solution Tree Press, 2018). As practitioners, educators frequently hear references to research-based best practices. Dr. Heckmann leads an exploration of some of the core research on being a highly effective teacher and blends that with the companion view of being a learning-progressive educator. By uniting best practices with those that empower learners, educators can create the best of both worlds: a highly effective *and* learning-progressive classroom.

Participants in this session:

- Gain an understanding of the highly effective, learning progressive classroom environment.
- Obtain a framework for shifting their classroom practices to allow for the expression of agency.
- Receive a starter pack of strategies that are highly effective and learning progressive.

Mike Mattos—Are We a Group or a Team?

Collaborative teacher teams are the engines that drive 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.

DAY 2 SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

KEYNOTE

Nicole Dimich—Assessment That Cultivates Hope and Student Agency

Assessment is information, not evaluation. Engaging in the assessment process inspires deep learning and critical understanding of the impact of our teaching practices. As collaborative teams and students implement this process, assessment evidence ensures the highest levels of learning for each student when collaborative teams use this evidence to:

1. Inform what each student needs to deepen his or her learning.
2. Provide insight on the effectiveness of instruction.
3. Guide students in using their assessment information to reflect on their strengths and next steps (learning to learn).

This interactive keynote highlights the critical understandings and strategies that collaborative teacher teams need in order to use assessment to inspire student achievement, not merely to measure and record it. Creating and analyzing assessments guides the work of teams as they strive to design innovative instruction, invest students in their learning, and inform targeted and specific interventions and extensions.

MORNING BREAKOUTS

Nicole Dimich—Co-Constructing Learning With Students

Alison Cook-Sather, a professor of education and director of the Teaching and Learning Institute at Bryn Mawr College, worked with colleagues to study the power of authorizing students to be critical and active partners in creating the conditions for their learning, and collaborating with educators and their community to create a thriving learning environment.

Co-designing learning leads to investment and ensures meaningful learning experiences and authentic work. The co-design process builds trust, investment, and inspiration. This session explores key elements of co-construction and tools and strategies to facilitate the process with students at the center of their learning.

Participants can expect to:

- Explore key aspects of co-design that lead to accelerated and personalized learning.
- Apply a process of co-construction to inform its implementation in a high-performing context.
- Consider tools and strategies to facilitate a co-design process.

Sascha Heckmann—Collective Efficacy: A Framework for Highly Effective, Learning-Progressive (HELP)—Elementary Schools

Increasingly, schools are moving away from individual classroom environments toward open-concept learning communities. In this session, Sascha Heckmann shares the principles that support schools in successfully making this shift, and participants gain strategies that support teachers in leveraging communities to ensure high levels of learning for all students.

Participants in this session:

- Explore key challenges educators face in transitioning to elementary-level learning communities.
- Examine a framework for creating a successful K–6 learning community.
- Obtain strategies to support elementary educators in implementing the framework to support a successful transition to learning communities.

Mike Mattos—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.

Timothy S. Stuart—Leading Positive Change in International Schools

The world is changing, and schools are required to be agile and flexible to meet the personalized learning needs of every child. With a longstanding legacy of success, the journey of reinvention in high-performing international schools can be extremely challenging. International schools must continue to reinvent themselves to ensure that all students are engaged, learning at high levels, and are future ready. This session provides participants insight into the change process and the courage to begin the journey. Timothy S. Stuart sheds insight into ever-evolving change strategies, shares what has and hasn't worked, and provides resources and perspectives on the change process.

Participants in this session:

- Identify the change process in which they are currently engaged.
- Articulate success criteria.
- Develop strategies for removing obstacles to change.
- Strategically identify leverage factors that can accelerate the change process.

AFTERNOON BREAKOUTS

Nicole Dimich—Investing Students in Learning Through Assessment Practice

Investment in learning occurs when students see relevance, meaning, and connection among and between units of study. How are students able to articulate what they are learning, their strengths, and the steps to increase their learning? How are students learning from and acting on specific feedback given during instruction and on assessments? How do students track their progress on essential learning? For students' reflections on learning to be most meaningful, consider how the classroom culture positively influences a student's beliefs about how he or she can learn. This session explores key skills students need to self-regulate and Nicole Dimich shares tools and strategies to consider in implementation.

Participants in this session:

- Explore key skills students need in order to learn to self-regulate.
- Consider feedback practices that lead to self-assessment.
- Identify ways for students to reflect through self-regulation and tracking.

Sascha Heckmann—Collective Efficacy: A Framework for Highly Effective, Learning-Progressive (HELP)—Secondary Schools

Increasingly, schools are moving away from individual classroom environments toward open-concept learning communities. In this session, Sascha Heckmann shares the principles that support schools in successfully making this shift, and participants gain strategies that support teachers in leveraging communities to ensure high levels of learning for all students.

Participants in this session:

- Explore key challenges educators face in transitioning to secondary-level learning communities.
- Examine a framework for creating a successful secondary-level learning community.
- Obtain strategies to support secondary educators in implementing the framework to support a successful transition to learning communities.

Mike Mattos—Taking Action: Connecting PLCs and RTI

How does your school respond when students don't learn? Compelling evidence shows that response to intervention can successfully engage a school's staff in a collective process to provide every child 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.

Participants in this session:

- Understand the guiding principles behind a multi-tiered system of interventions.
- Learn the essential actions that collaborative teams must complete at Tier 1 to effectively respond when students don't learn.
- Prioritize resources to address academic and behavior interventions.
- Begin to create a pyramid of interventions for their school.

DAY 3 SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

MORNING KEYNOTE

Sascha Heckmann—Personalized Learning in a PLC at Work: Student Agency Through the Four Critical Questions

This keynote explores how schools can personalize student learning through the four critical questions of a PLC at Work. These questions provide an ideal framework for allowing students to take ownership of learning and the space for them to express agency. Participants explore how schools can become highly effective and learning progressive, uniting disciplinary and transdisciplinary learning outcomes within a PLC and, in the process, prepare students for their future.

Participants in this session come to understand:

- The highly effective, learning-progressive framework
- How the four critical questions of a PLC drive student agency
- How a PLC can transform a school to be learning progressive

MORNING BREAKOUTS

Nicole Dimich—Analyzing Student Work: Teachers and Students in Partnership

We have an overwhelming amount of data at our fingertips. This can lead to collaborative teams feeling overwhelmed or in a constant cycle of assessing without pausing to maximize the power of this information. Common formative assessments provide insight into the extent to which students are learning essential skills and how to ensure they are growing. When student work is analyzed, these insights guide teachers and students to design instruction that meets student needs and helps them achieve at high levels and, simultaneously, gain confidence. This session offers a process for students and teachers to examine student work, to plan effective instruction, and to guide next steps in learning.

Participants in this session:

- Consider the key components of examining student work to understand where students are in learning critical skills.
- Learn how to choose effective instructional strategies or activities from analyzing student work.
- Analyze student work to identify instructional needs to achieve mastery.

Sascha Heckmann—Personalizing Assessment: Agency, Equity, and Achievement

All people learn differently, and yet so often we ask all of our students to perform the same assessment tasks to demonstrate their learning. This session explores how we can embed agency in assessment to personalize learning. Participants explore deeply held beliefs about assessment through the lens of equity, the role agency plays in empowering students to demonstrate their best learning, and how we can use highly effective and learning progressive assessment strategies to empower every child to succeed.

Participants in this session:

- Examine the tension between assessment and reporting in a personalized learning environment.
- Explore assessment strategies that allow students to express agency.
- Understand how to ensure equity of expectations while allowing for personalized expression of understanding.

Mike Mattos—United Academic and Behavior Interventions: Solving the Skill or Will Dilemma

Some students struggle in school because they lack academic skills and knowledge. Others struggle because they do not demonstrate the behaviors necessary to succeed in school. And often, the most at-risk youth lack both. This session shows how the PLC at Work process can be used to target and teach essential social and academic behaviors at-risk students need to thrive in school.

AFTERNOON BREAKOUTS

Nicole Dimich—Assessing Student Collaboration

Have you ever had a disastrous group project experience? Are you dissatisfied with how students work in a group?

Collaborating effectively is one of the most critical skills employers identify as essential for success in our global economy. This session addresses the questions: How do we accurately and fairly assess collaboration? And how do we design an effective assessment task that provides accurate information on a student's collaborative skills? Nicole Dimich shares practical examples and useful tools to design tasks that assess collaboration and facilitate effective collaboration with students in the classroom.

Participants in this session:

- Explore key design elements that accurately assess student collaboration.
- Learn and experience collaboration as an instructional strategy that leads to gathering real-time evidence (instructional agility).

Sascha Heckmann—Becoming a Highly Effective, Learning-Progressive (HELP) School

Sascha Heckmann facilitates an exploration of what it means to be a highly effective, learning-progressive school. Using the findings from more than 170 school visits, participants in this session explore the future of schooling, how PLCs support schools in being highly effective, and how schools can leverage PLCs to provide a future-ready, learning-progressive environment.

Participants in this session:

- Explore the needs of the future workplace and the shifts schools must make to prepare their students.
- Discover how professional learning communities ensure a highly effective experience for students.
- Explore how student agency can support a highly effective school by ensuring that students receive a learning progressive, future-ready education.

Mike Mattos—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.

AFTERNOON KEYNOTE

Mike Mattos—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.