



Foundational PLC at Work Model Agenda

Day 1

7:30–7:50 a.m.	Registration
7:50–8:00 a.m.	Introduction and Overview —Host and PLC Associate
8:00–9:30 a.m.	Session —Mike Mattos <i>The Urgency of the Moment</i>
9:30–9:45 a.m.	Directed Q&A Session —PLC Associate
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break
10:00–11:30 a.m.	Session —Julie A. Schmidt <i>From Urgency to Action</i>
11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	Lunch
12:30–1:00 p.m.	Directed Work Session <i>Begin action steps for continuous improvement.</i>
1:00–2:30 p.m.	Session —Anthony Muhammad <i>The Way Forward: PLC at Work and the Bright Future of Education</i>
2:30–2:45 p.m.	Break
2:45–3:15 p.m.	Team Time <i>The PLC associate leads a session on putting PLC into practice.</i>
3:15–3:30 p.m.	Inspiration and Closing Comments —Host and PLC Associate

Day 2

7:30–7:50 a.m.	Registration
7:50–8:00 a.m.	Reconnection —Host and PLC Associate
8:00–9:30 a.m.	Session —Mike Mattos <i>Are We a Group or a Team?</i>
9:30–9:45 a.m.	Directed Q&A Session —PLC Associate
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break
10:00–11:30 a.m.	Session —Maria Nielsen <i>Common Assessments: The Key to Uncommon Results for Student and Teacher Learning</i> or Customized Session with the PLC Associate
11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	Lunch
12:30–1:00 p.m.	Directed Work Session <i>Continue action steps for continuous improvement.</i>
1:00–2:30 p.m.	Session —William M. Ferriter <i>Progress-Driven Leadership in a PLC at Work</i>
2:30–2:45 p.m.	Break
2:45–3:15 p.m.	Team Time <i>Communicate a clear vision within your team.</i>
3:15–3:30 p.m.	Inspiration and Closing Comments —Host and PLC Associate

Optional Sessions

- Anthony Muhammad—*Bringing the Four PLC Questions to Life: Systems That Ensure All Students Learn*
- Jeanne Spiller—*Yes We Can: Collaboration by All, for All!*
- Jeanne Spiller—*The Critical Role of PLC Question One: How to Choose and Develop Collective Understanding of Essential Standards*
- Regina Stephens Owens—*The Why Effect: Intentional Systems Drive Inspirational Cultures*

Session Descriptions—Day 1

8:00–9:30 am

Mike Mattos

The Urgency of the Moment

As educators, we face one of the most historically challenging times in our nation’s history. The years-long impact of the global pandemic has exacerbated inequities in academic achievement while creating unprecedented needs in student social-emotional health. And while more students face significant gaps in their learning, the academic rigor that all students must master for future success have never been greater. How we respond to this moment in time—this convergence of need and necessity—will have a generational impact on our students and our collective prosperity.

Fortunately, there has never been greater professional consensus on the best way to close learning gaps and ensure high levels of learning for all students: Schools and districts should function as a professional learning community. In this opening keynote, Mike Mattos sets the stage for our learning by creating a shared vision of the essential elements, thinking, and vocabulary that drive a true professional learning community.

10:00–11:30 am

Julie A. Schmidt

From Urgency to Action

As convincingly laid out during the Day 1 keynote, educators across the nation and the world are responding to historic challenges with a sense of urgency to meet the ever-growing needs of *all* students. Not to be confused with panic, a collective sense of urgency sharpens an organization’s focus on the actions it must take in order to meet the challenges laid before it. When that collective sense of urgency leads to collective research-based action, sustainable improvement over time can be expected. Make no mistake: urgency and high-leverage action do not occur by chance, but rather by an ongoing commitment to learning and leading.

In this keynote, Julie A. Schmidt addresses creating a collective sense of urgency around the right work in your school or district and takes a deeper dive into the actions teams engage in while developing and maintaining a laser-like focus on student learning in a professional learning community. Whether you are new to the PLC journey or hoping to gain clarity on your next high-leverage steps several years into the work, this keynote will inspire a *calm and clear* sense of urgency.

1:00–2:30 pm

Anthony Muhammad

The Way Forward: PLC at Work and the Bright Future of Education

The impact of COVID-19 will have long-lasting effects on every facet of our society. Very few institutions were more disrupted than schools. The pandemic affected staffing, funding, morale, and the continuity of student learning. Anthony Muhammad explores the history of the field of education and examines why the

tenets of the PLC at Work process were important before the global pandemic and why they will be even more important after the pandemic. This is not the time to back away from PLCs; this is the time to reinforce the foundation of the PLC at Work process.

Participants in this session learn that:

- Developing the profession of education has always been evolving. Utopia never existed.
- The principles of PLC at Work are timeless.
- The PLC at Work process is essential in order to repair and advance the field of education.

Session Descriptions—Day 2

8:00–9:30 am

Mike Mattos

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.

10:00–11:30 am

Maria Nielsen

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 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.

1:00–12:30 pm

William M. Ferriter

Progress-Driven Leadership in a PLC at Work

Possessing deep insight into the core work of collaborative teams, participants in Solution Tree’s PLC Institutes are, in many ways, the most important leaders in any building. They bear responsibility for working together to identify next steps worth taking even as teachers faced with new challenges begin to

question just how doable those next steps really are. As Teresa Amabile and Steven Kramer demonstrate in *The Progress Principle* (2011), “The secret to amazing performance is empowering talented people to succeed at meaningful work” (p. 2). So, how can you empower talented people to succeed at meaningful work? The key rests in creating the conditions that make real progress possible—a process introduced in this keynote presentation by Solution Tree author and associate Bill Ferriter.

Participants can expect to:

- Explore the influences that impact the choices we make when driving change.
- Study the characteristics of successful change efforts in fields beyond education.
- Identify next steps worth taking to move their own schools forward.

Session Descriptions—Optional Sessions

Anthony Muhammad

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

Anthony Muhammad focuses on the systemic implementation of a PLC at Work's four critical questions. Participants learn what it takes to move from theory to practical, systemic implementation. Dr. Muhammad's strategies are immediately usable when participants return to their schools.

Participants in this session:

- Practice developing essential standards and student outcomes.
- Learn to create valuable and valid common assessments.
- Discover how to establish an intervention system that meets all students' needs.

Jeanne Spiller

Yes We Can: Collaboration by All, for All!

When teams commit to collaborating in the PLC process dedicated to high levels of learning for *all* students, a key critical step is to examine their personal and systemic beliefs about students, themselves, and learning. Then, ensure that all systems align, bringing this vision to life. Participants in this session are provided with strategies and protocols to examine mindsets and collaborative processes to drive action planning that ensure higher levels of learning for all students. This session is designed for both general and special educators.

Participants in this session:

- Examine best practices for ensuring all means *all*.
- Learn strategies to bring each of these best practices to life in your local context.
- Reflect on local current practices and policies that do and do not align with the belief that all students can learn at high levels and identify key next steps for moving forward.

The Critical Role of PLC Question One: How to Choose and Develop Collective Understanding of Essential Standards

Learn why getting clear about what students should know and be able to do by grade, by subject, or by course is critical for collaborative teams. Participants review the vital role of question one, discover how to determine essentials, and learn how to develop collective understanding of the essentials in preparation for teaching, assessing, and most importantly student learning. This session is specifically for those who have not developed essential standards or would like a refresher.

Participants can expect to:

- Learn why determining essential standards and deep, collective understanding of the essentials is important and logical.
- Discover and practice a process for ensuring collective understanding of the essentials.

Regina Stephens Owens

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 move cultures from an attitude of compliance, coercion, and fear to one that is respectful, responsive, and reflective.

Participants can expect to:

- Promote high standards of achievement for all.
- Create a collective, rather than individual, leadership focus.
- Design and sustain a values-driven culture that is evidenced by trust, transparency, reflection, and responsiveness.