

# Agenda

## San Antonio, TX • July 14–16

### Tuesday, July 14

6:30–8:00 a.m.	Registration	Tower View Registration
	Continental Breakfast	Hemisfair Prefunction
8:00–9:45 a.m.	<b>Keynote</b> —Regina Stephens Owens <i>A Declaration of Interdependence: Designing Culture and Developing Community for Learning</i>	Hemisfair Ballroom
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> —Presenters provide practical answers to your most pressing questions.	Hemisfair Ballroom

### Wednesday, July 15

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Registration	Hemisfair Prefunction
	Continental Breakfast	
8:00–9:45 a.m.	<b>Keynote</b> —Mike Mattos <i>The Litmus Test of a PLC: Making Decisions Through the Lens of Learning</i>	Hemisfair Ballroom
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> —Presenters are available to aid in your collaborative team discussions.	Hemisfair Ballroom

**Thursday, July 16**

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

**Agenda is subject to change.**

## Breakouts at a Glance

Presenters & Titles	Tuesday, July 14		Wednesday, July 15		Thursday, July 16
	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>Scott Carr</b>					
Learning Leaders: Creating a Personalized Professional Development Program	214D				
Earning Doesn't Always Equal Learning in Secondary Schools		214D		214D	
Innovation That Leads to Learning: Engaging Students in Authentic Experiences			214D		214D
<b>Luis F. Cruz</b>					
English Learners and PLCs	214BC				
I Like What I'm Hearing! So How Do We Initiate Our PLC Journey?		Hemisfair Ballroom			
Remembering Rick DuFour: Embracing the "Tight and Loose" of the PLC Process			217D		
Taping Before Painting: Taking the Critical Steps to Respond Collectively When Students Don't Learn				214BC	
I Am Sold on PLCs: Practical Tools and Directions to Be Successful					Hemisfair Ballroom
<b>Scott A. Cunningham</b>					
Bloom It Up and Other Strategies PLCs Use to Extend and Enrich Learning	214A			212	
How a High-Poverty, Dysfunctional School Became a National Model PLC		214A			
Celebrating and Retaining Staff: Creating an Effective Recognition Program			212		217C
<b>William M. Ferriter</b>					
Integrating Opportunities for Student Self-Assessment in Your Classroom	217B				
We're Meeting. Now What? Explicitly Structuring the Work of Learning Teams		217B			217B
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<b>Paula Maeker</b>					
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Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Secondary Schools			Hemisfair Ballroom		
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Guiding Principles for Principals: Tips and Tools for Leading the PLC Process					217D
<b>Anthony Muhammad</b>					
Bringing the Four PLC Questions to Life: Systems That Ensure All Students Learn	Hemisfair Ballroom				
Overcoming the Achievement Gap Trap: Liberating Mindsets to Effect Change		214BC			
Building Culture, Creating Purpose, and Overcoming Frustration on Your PLC Journey			214BC		
Collaboration Is a Lifestyle, Not a Meeting!				Hemisfair Ballroom	
Getting Started: Building Consensus and Responding to Resisters					214BC
<b>Maria Nielsen</b>					
The 15-Day Challenge: Win Quick, Win Often!	217A				217A
Show Me What Ya Got: Student Engagement Strategies to Keep the Pulse on Learning		217A			

Help Your Team: Overcoming Common Collaborative Challenges in a PLC			217A		
Common Assessments: The Key to Uncommon Results for Student and Teacher Learning				217A	
<b>Jamie Nino</b>					
Choosing to Make a Great Team: Collaboration at Its Finest	217C		217C		
Nothing More Than a Plate Full: A New PLC Game Plan					212
Unlocking the Power of Student Learning Communities		217C		217C	
<b>Regina Stephens Owens</b>					
The <i>Why</i> Effect: Intentional Systems Drive Inspirational Cultures	217D				
Personify Your Mission, Vision, and Values		217D			
Data Discussion for Instructional Leaders: From Data to Design to Demonstration of Learning			214A		
Leveraging Technology to Strengthen Teams				214A	
Collective Efficacy at Work					214A

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## Session Descriptions

### Scott Carr

#### **Learning Leaders: Creating a Personalized Professional Development Program**

In order to lead learning, educators must first commit to being learning leaders. Teachers and administrators must constantly grow their craft to have the greatest impact on student learning. Scott Carr provides creative ways to design job-embedded professional learning opportunities for all staff. Participants look at systems such as micro-credentialing, walkthroughs, externships, and co-teaching to support ongoing learning and developing teacher leaders in their schools. The power of collaboration and a focus on learning allow educators to escape from one-size-fits-all professional development and shift to personalized professional learning.

Outcomes from this session include:

- Reviewing research on the impact professional learning has on student achievement
- Discovering ways to develop a culture of personalized professional learning in schools
- Exploring programs that can be used to create job-embedded opportunities for professional learning

#### **Earning Doesn't Always Equal Learning in Secondary Schools**

Like Mario running through a Nintendo game, students spend a great deal of their time in school chasing points and prizes. How many times have teachers heard, “How much is this worth?” or “What extra credit do you offer?” Are points the currency for learning in your classroom? Do your grades truly reflect what students have learned, or do your grades show what they have completed? Participants look at alternative ways to motivate students to be learners and creators rather than point-gatherers, and explore how PLC teams can support true growth and learning through the use of evidence-based grading and effective feedback strategies.

Outcomes from this session include:

- Reflecting on current practices and comparing them to the research behind best practices
- Exploring how great feedback can promote learning and student success
- Discovering how an evidence-based approach can engage students in their learning

#### **Innovation That Leads to Learning: Engaging Students in Authentic Experiences**

The term *innovation* is often associated with technology and digital tools. True innovation comes when we enhance an experience by thinking and believing differently. To improve students’ learning experiences, we have to think and believe differently about the learning process. Participants in this session look at two specific strategies—project-based learning and design thinking—to create engaging experiences that challenge and motivate students to create and discover. Participants also make connections between these methods and the context of collaborative practices in a PLC to create a powerful learning experience for all students.

Outcomes from this session include:

- Exploring the basic structures of project-based learning experiences and design thinking frameworks

- Brainstorming project ideas that tie into essential content outcomes
- Using the leverage of PLC collaboration to support project-based learning and innovative teaching ideas

## **Scott A. Cunningham**

### **Bloom It Up and Other Strategies PLCs Use to Extend and Enrich Learning**

Scott A. Cunningham leads an exploration into strategies that extend and enrich learning for all students. Participants analyze common assessment data to plan and guide instruction that addresses the fourth critical question of a PLC, What do we do when students have learned the intended information? Scott shows how extended, enriched learning benefits all students, including advanced learners.

### **How a High-Poverty, Dysfunctional School Became a National Model PLC**

Scott A. Cunningham took bold steps to help his high-poverty, dysfunctional school become a national model PLC. He explains processes and strategies that turned his school around and shows how school leaders can make significant changes in the service of learning. Scott and fellow school leaders overhauled their system to create time for collaboration; added resources without receiving extra money (including Title I funding); reallocated existing resources; focused on common assessments to drive instruction; changed special education practices to a more inclusive model; and transformed a culture of low expectations to one devoted to high levels of learning for every student.

Participants in this session learn strategies to increase collaboration time and review research-based best practices for creating a culture of high expectations.

### **Celebrating and Retaining Staff: Creating an Effective Recognition Program**

Recognizing the virtues and achievements of teachers and staff helps retain them. When people feel valued and respected for their work, it creates lasting morale in the building. Recognition should not be just formal, annual celebrations, but rather a daily part of school culture. As important as this is, leaders sometimes do not have the time to recognize staff—or just don't know how to. Scott A. Cunningham outlines the importance of recognition and reviews the components of an effective recognition program.

Participants in this session can expect to:

- Examine why recognition is essential to staff morale.
- Identify barriers to recognizing staff and discover solutions to these barriers.
- Explore various strategies schools use to effectively recognize teachers and staff.

## **Luis F. Cruz**

### **English Learners and PLCs**

Luis F. Cruz shares how schools use PLC strategies to help English learner populations flourish. This session details PLC components administrative and teacher leaders use to close the achievement gap for students learning English as a second language. Dr. Cruz shows how task force leadership can reculture and restructure, while introducing best practices to increase learning outcomes for all

students. Learn the seven steps an EL task force can initiate to ensure that students learning English as a second language are included in the “all means all” mantra that defines a school’s fundamental purpose of learning for every student.

Participants in this session discover how:

- Teacher-led task forces increase academic performance for English learners.
- PLC practices highlight stark realities when English learners are not learning.
- Adults change their expectations and behaviors when listening to the needs of English learners, resulting in significant improvements in student achievement.

### **I Like What I’m Hearing! So How Do We Initiate Our PLC Journey?**

Research from academia and accounts from educators worldwide confirm that PLCs, when implemented effectively, lead to high levels of learning for every student. However, questions remain. Who is responsible for initiating a PLC? How does a team establish the foundational pillars of a PLC? How does this process take shape? Is it normal to expect staff resistance to this process and is there a difference between rational and irrational forms of resistance? Luis F. Cruz explains in practical terms the *who*, *why*, and *how* associated with the PLC process.

Participants in this session learn:

- How to initiate a PLC process
- The role of a guiding coalition
- How to establish the foundation of a PLC

### **Remembering Rick DuFour: Embracing the “Tight and Loose” of the PLC Process**

Throughout his professional life, Richard DuFour shared important insights aimed at guiding educators in their quest to continuously strengthen implementation of the PLC process. One of his most notable keynotes captured the essence of which aspects of the PLC process must be tight and which could be loose. Luis F. Cruz honors the life of Dr. Rick DuFour by reminding audiences of Rick’s message and his purpose of ensuring learning for *all* students.

Outcomes from this session include:

- Understanding why adopting a collaborative culture is a “must do” in a successful PLC
- Learning why ensuring a guaranteed and viable curriculum is essential to the PLC process
- Exploring why allowing teachers the “defined autonomy” to teach in the manner they feel most effective is a loose aspect of the PLC process

### **Taping Before Painting: Taking the Critical Steps to Respond Collectively When Students Don’t Learn**

The third critical question of a PLC, What do we do when students don’t learn?, often stumps teachers and administrators. Luis F. Cruz showcases methods that schools across the country use to guarantee effective collaboration (taping the room) to ensure an effective collective response when students do not learn (painting the room). Participants learn how the PLC and RTI processes complement each other in increasing academic achievement for all students.

Participants in this session learn:

- How teacher teams effectively collaborate and respond when students do not learn
- Ways to ensure a guaranteed and viable curriculum
- The critical role of common assessments

### **I Am Sold on PLCs: Practical Tools and Directions to Be Successful**

As educators initiate an effective PLC process, they need practical tools to begin and enhance their journey. After leaving this institute, educators may discover that staff back at their site need to be convinced that the PLC process is the most practical path to take in the collective quest to accelerate learning for all students. Luis F. Cruz shares articles, templates, activities, and videos to provide administrative and teacher leaders the necessary tools to amplify improvement at their site.

Participants in this session learn:

- The difference between rational and irrational forms of adult resistance and how to address each
- The art *and* science of effective leadership and how to maneuver in both directions
- Practical actions to accelerate the PLC process

### **William M. Ferriter**

#### **Integrating Opportunities for Student Self-Assessment in Your Classroom**

School assessment experts Rick Stiggins and Jan Chappuis once argued that creating opportunities for students—particularly those who struggle academically—to collect evidence that they are making progress toward mastering important outcomes is a moral imperative that we simply cannot ignore. “Are we skilled enough,” they wrote, “to use classroom assessment to either keep all learners from losing hope to begin with or to rebuild that hope once it has been destroyed?” Their point was clear: In grade-driven spaces, many students never have the opportunity to feel successful in school. This session introduces participants to the tangible steps William M. Ferriter has taken to integrate opportunities for self-assessment into his classroom, ensuring that every student has the chance to see themselves as capable, competent learners.

Participants in this session:

- Discuss the important role self-assessment plays in learning.
- Learn about common challenges in integrating student self-assessment into the classroom.
- Explore simple self-assessment behaviors that can be integrated into any classroom.

#### **We’re Meeting. Now What? Explicitly Structuring the Work of Learning Teams**

For many teachers, professional learning team meetings can be nothing short of overwhelming. Unaccustomed to making collective decisions, teams struggle to organize their work together and begin to question the benefit of a school’s decision to restructure as a professional learning community. In this session, participants explore the kinds of tangible structures learning teams must have in place to make their meetings successful.

Participants in this session:

- Learn how personalities influence the successes and struggles of learning teams.

- Discuss the role that clear norms and expectations for behavior play in the successful work of a learning team.
- Explore practical tools and products designed to structure the work of learning teams over time.

### **Digital Tools for Differentiation**

If schools are truly working to ensure success for every student, learning experiences must be differentiated to meet the needs of individual students. The challenge, however, rests in making differentiation doable. While few teachers doubt the importance of differentiating, many struggle to make customized learning spaces a reality.

In this presentation, Solution Tree author and full-time classroom teacher Bill Ferriter introduces participants to a range of digital tools that can be used to:

- Track progress by student and by standard in a differentiated classroom.
- Provide structure for differentiated classrooms.
- Facilitate initial attempts at remediation and enrichment in a differentiated classroom.

### **Small Schools and Singletons: Structuring Meaningful Professional Learning Teams for Every Teacher**

The PLC concept resonates with most educators, but making collaborative learning work in small schools or for singleton teachers can be challenging. In this session, participants explore four different models for creating meaningful professional learning teams for singletons and teachers in small schools: 1) the creation of vertical teams studying skills that cross content areas, 2) using interdisciplinary teams to focus on addressing the engagement levels of at-risk students, 3) designing class loads that allow teachers to teach the same subjects, and 4) using electronic tools to pair teachers with peers working in the same subject area.

Participants in this session:

- Discuss common structural barriers that make collaboration more difficult for singleton teachers or teachers in small schools.
- Examine four potential models for creating meaningful professional learning teams for singleton teachers or teachers in small schools.
- Develop the beginnings of an action plan for incorporating singleton teachers or teachers in small schools into the PLC process.

### **Paula Maeker**

#### **Literacy at Work: The PLC Process Through the Lens of Literacy**

Literacy is at the heart of learning. Every student in every content area engages in reading and writing. For educators to guarantee high levels of literacy learning for every student, every day, teams must engage in thoughtful and intentional instructional design. Participants in this session approach professional learning community processes through the lens of literacy. They examine the high-leverage actions and protocols of collaborative teams that lead to greater success for students, far beyond the assignment of a reading level. They also analyze effective and ineffective examples of literacy instructional design to build a greater understanding of teamwork.

Participants can expect to:

- Examine a process for determining essential learning targets in literacy.
- Develop a framework for collaborative instructional design.
- Identify strategies that encourage depth and complexity in literacy engagement.
- Understand the significance of literacy assessment in the teaching and learning cycle.

### **High Expectations, High Support: Guaranteeing High Levels of Learning at the Elementary Level for Every Child, Every Day**

Labels define supports, not potential. Ensuring every student learns at high levels means that educators must confront harmful fundamental assumptions and embrace universal truths about teaching and learning. True professional learning communities have high expectations for all learners and provide equally high levels of support to achieve that. Paula Maeker leads participants in exploring the shift from traditional mindsets in elementary classrooms to the new paradigm of educators working collaboratively to meet the individual and unique needs of every student they serve. Educators face the challenge of meeting students where they are and creating a pathway for their success head on.

Participants in this session can expect to:

- Examine the assumptions and beliefs of a learning-for-all culture.
- Explore the pathway teams take in building effective initial instruction around essential learning.
- Address the unique needs of learners with tailored instruction and individualized pathways to mastery.
- Provide teams with tools to support every student's access to high levels of learning.

### **Even Better! Taking Teams From Good to Great**

Why should districts, schools, and teams that already see good results in student achievement invest in the PLC process? How does the conversation about the need for change start when everything is "just fine"? Regardless of where it begins, the journey of continuous improvement never ends. This session focuses on the power behind building shared knowledge, engaging in collective inquiry, and discovering the impact of collaboration. Participants explore how to take their districts, campuses, and teams to new levels with outstanding results.

Participants can expect to:

- Explore the characteristics of high-performing collaborative teams.
- Learn how the PLC process and four critical questions can drive even greater student achievement.
- Gain tools and strategies to take teams to the next level.

### **Enjoy the Ride! Celebrating and Finding Joy in the PLC Process**

The journey of building a culture of collaboration that ensures high levels of learning for all isn't easy. How do educators keep the joy of this work at the core of their mission, vision, values, and goals? To sustain the momentum of the PLC process, educational communities must celebrate small wins early

and often. Participants in this session share ideas, tools, and stories of being in relentless pursuit of what is going right.

Participants can expect to:

- Discover how to build a culture of intentional celebration.
- Look at celebrating specific wins and milestones through the lens of the four critical questions.
- Explore ideas and tools for schoolwide celebrations in learning.

## **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.

### **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.

### **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.

### **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.

### **Jamie Nino**

#### **Choosing to Make a Great Team: Collaboration at Its Finest**

Great collaboration means getting all team members on the same page. It is key within a professional learning community that trust be established and members arrive at a consensus to make actionable decisions that improve student learning. All members on a team must engage in the "right work" and be mutually responsible for achieving learning goals.

Participants in this session learn to:

- Build a vision.
- Arrive at a consensus.
- Establish norms.
- Develop collective commitments.

### **Nothing More Than a Plate Full: A New PLC Game Plan**

Participants in this session draw from new learning gleaned from this institute and come up with a game plan before returning to their sites. It is important to have a plan in place before the school year starts to fortify professional learning communities and to balance obligations and tasks. Setting goals and prioritizing new learning is significant when beginning a new school year.

Participants in this session:

- Organize learning from previous keynote and breakout sessions.
- Construct a plan with short-term and long-term goals.
- Recognize the balancing act of a PLC: What is “loose” and what is “tight”?
- Effectively balance the priorities within a classroom and school.

### **Unlocking the Power of Student Learning Communities**

Participants in this session are introduced to student learning communities (SLCs). Just as adults build their own capacity, students need to do likewise. This high-leverage team action ensures that students are actively participating in their own learning. Student learning communities encourage students to have a growth mindset and hold one another mutually accountable for learning.

Outcomes from this session include:

- Understanding how to establish goals with students
- Exploring new activities that help motivate students
- Examining how to establish a safe culture within a classroom so students are successful

## **Regina Stephens Owens**

**[KEYNOTE]**

### **A Declaration of Interdependence: Designing Culture and Developing Community for Learning**

Becoming a PLC requires that we take on the characteristics of learning, collaborating, and getting results through collective inquiry, action research, and a commitment to continuous improvement.

In an era of accountability, the collective responsibility for continuous improvement has given way to teams and departments in silos and school improvement primarily focused on test scores. Regina Stephens Owens discusses the essentials required to develop the culture and collective responsibility to ensure that all learn at high levels.

Participants in this session:

- Explore methods of designing and developing culture based on the mission, vision, and values of a professional learning community.
- Examine ways to ensure transformation, from first order to second order, leveraging the six characteristics of a learning community.
- Learn how to develop a learning infrastructure and measure behaviors to ensure sustained transformation and produce collected efficacy.

### **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

### **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

### **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

### **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

### **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.