Solution Tree

LiveStream EVENTS

Omaha, NE • July 20–22, 2020

Day 1–July 20

8:00–9:45 a.m.	**Keynote**—Tim Brown *Setting the Stage: Understanding the Big Ideas and Foundational Blocks of the PLC at Work Process*
9:45–10:15 a.m.	Break
10:15–11:45 a.m.	**Session**—William M. Ferriter *Integrating Opportunities for Student Self-Assessment in Your Classroom*
11:45 a.m.–1:15 p.m.	Lunch
1:15–2:45 p.m.	**Session**—Anthony Muhammad *Overcoming the Achievement Gap Trap: Liberating Mindsets to Effect Change*
2:45–3:15 p.m.	Break
3:15–4:15 p.m.	**Live Panel Discussion**—*Presenters provide practical answers to your most pressing questions.*

Day 2–July 21

8:00–9:45 a.m.	**Keynote**—Sarah Schuhl *Ready, Set, Go! Ensuring Student Learning in a PLC at Work*
9:45–10:15 a.m.	Break
10:15–11:45 a.m.	**Session**—Tim Brown *Getting on the Same Page: Establishing Collective Commitments About Learning and Collaboration*
11:45 a.m.–1:15 p.m.	Lunch
1:15–2:45 p.m.	**Session**—Anthony Muhammad *Collaboration Is a Lifestyle, Not a Meeting!*
2:45–3:15 p.m.	Break
3:15–4:15 p.m.	**Team Time**—*Presenters are available to aid in your collaborative team discussions.*

Day 3–July 22

8:00–9:30 a.m.	**Session**—Sarah Schuhl *Focusing Teams and Students With Learning Targets*
9:30–10:00 a.m.	Break
10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.	**Keynote**—Anthony Muhammad *Moving Beyond "PLC Lite": Nurturing Full Commitment to the PLC Process*

Optional Breakout Sessions

- **Jennifer Deinhart**—*Elementary Student Goal Setting in a PLC at Work*

- **Heather Friziellie**—*Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Elementary Schools*

- **Janel Keating**—*Bumps in the Road: Getting More Kids to Learn More at Higher Levels*

- **Mike Mattos**—*The Essential Work of Teacher Teams in a Professional Learning Community*

- **Mike Mattos**—*Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Secondary Schools*

- **Mike Mattos**—*Simplifying Response to Intervention: How to Create a Highly Effective, Multitiered System of Supports*

- **Sarah Schuhl**—*Creating Common Assessments for Team and Student Learning*

- **Eric Twadell**—*Let's Stop Talking About It and Start Doing It: The Five Stages of Evidence-Based Grading*

Day 1—Session Descriptions

Tim Brown
[Keynote] Setting the Stage: Understanding the Big Ideas and Foundational Blocks of the PLC at Work Process

This keynote is a call to action to energize individual and collective efforts to create schools of high expectations through the PLC process. In 1997, University of Tennessee researchers S. Paul Wright, Sandra P. Horn, and William L. Sanders reported, "As a result of analyzing the achievement scores of more than 100,000 students across hundreds of schools, the conclusion is that the most important factor affecting student learning is the teacher." More recent studies by Dr. John Hattie have concluded that not only are teachers the key contributors to student learning, but their impact is most profound when they work together to evaluate their effect on student learning. To attain high achievement in every classroom, unsurpassed collaboration must become a school's priority.

Tim Brown sets the stage for the next two and a half days of learning by discussing the three big ideas of the PLC at Work process, their connection to beliefs and practices, and what it means to commit to a focus on learning, to work collaboratively, and to be accountable for a school's mission, vision, values, and goals.

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.

Anthony Muhammad
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)

Day 2—Session Descriptions

Sarah Schuhl

[Keynote] Ready, Set, Go! Ensuring Student Learning in a PLC at Work
A professional learning community works to ensure high levels of learning for every student. How can school and districtwide teams effectively accomplish this lofty objective? The key is to address the four critical questions of a PLC at Work that guide the process. Collaborative teams must build a shared understanding of standards to intentionally link instruction, assessment, and student re-engagement as needed.

This work can seem daunting without a roadmap or vision for how to effectively and efficiently create the materials needed and respond to the data gathered. In this keynote, Sarah Schuhl clarifies the essential work of collaborative teams through concrete examples, practical tools, and proven protocols.

Tim Brown

Getting on the Same Page: Establishing Collective Commitments About Learning and Collaboration
Daniel Goleman, author of *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ* (2005), argues that explicitly stated values are one of the most powerful steps teams can take toward becoming exemplary. Developing a common vision of instruction, assessment, and interventions at the classroom, team, and schoolwide levels are critical steps in the PLC process. Tim Brown shares strategies and provides helpful examples for developing collective commitments and common vision.

Outcomes from this session include:
- Understanding the importance of developing explicit commitments with members of a team
- Participating in strategies for developing collective commitments as a team
- Exploring processes and protocols that make values more than a one-time event

Anthony Muhammad

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.

Day 3—Session Descriptions

Sarah Schuhl

Focusing Teams and Students With Learning Targets

How can students articulate what they are learning? How can assessments be created to determine whether students are learning? Learning targets bring clarity to students and teachers about outcomes expected in each course or subject area. Participants in this session gain insight into writing clear learning targets from standards. Sarah Schuhl discusses strategies for using learning targets to help students self-assess their progress and for collaborative teams to create and analyze common assessments.

Outcomes from this session include:

- Examining how to write effective learning targets
- Developing strategies for using targets to involve students in their learning
- Discovering ways to create and analyze tests using learning targets

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

Optional Breakouts—Session Descriptions

Jennifer Deinhart
Elementary Student Goal Setting in a PLC at Work
Jennifer Deinhart explores how teams answer the four critical questions of learning through student goal setting. Participants dig deeply into essential standards and develop targeted instruction. As a result, they learn how to help students reflect on their work and next steps in learning.

Outcomes of this season include:
- Reviewing how teams develop learning progressions based on essential standards
- Building skills in creating assessments, common scoring practices, and student self-reflection tools
- Identifying ways to hold data discussions that result in targeted instruction

Heather Friziellie
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 critical ingredients for systematic intervention and enrichment, participants receive criteria to assess their own schools' responses and an action-planning template for the next steps in raising the bar and closing the gap.

Educators review strategies and structures collaboratively to:
- Examine core beliefs.
- Use resources (human, material, and temporal) to meet all learners' needs, including developing a schedule to ensure intervention is timely, systematic, and directive.
- Use data to drive intervention, with a focus on progress monitoring to focus actions.
- Examine the most common RTI mistakes.
- Review a tool to assess the progress and opportunities for the district, school, or team when considering interventions.

Janel Keating
Bumps in the Road: Getting More Kids to Learn More at Higher Levels
The road to becoming a PLC is never smooth. There are bumps along the way. The issue is not how to avoid the inevitable bumps, but rather how to deal with them. Janel Keating shares challenges to implementing PLCs and provides participants with a process for overcoming these challenges.

Mike Mattos
The Essential Work of Teacher Teams in a Professional Learning Community
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 book pulls resources from *Learning by Doing: A Handbook for Professional Learning Communities at Work* (2016) to show how effective teacher teams manage their precious collaboration time. Co-author Mike Mattos shares valuable tools and practical examples.

Participants can expect to:
- Understand how four critical questions 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 next steps.

Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Secondary Schools
Identifying students who need help is the lesser obstacle most secondary schools face; instead, the more significant issue is one of time. How do teacher teams schedule interventions during the school day? Mike Mattos offers examples from a high-performing school on how to create time for supplemental and intensive interventions.

Participants learn 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.

Simplifying Response to Intervention: How to Create a Highly Effective, Multitiered System of Supports
How does your school respond when students don't learn? Compelling evidence shows that response to intervention (RTI)—also known as a multitiered system of supports (MTSS)—can engage a school's staff to provide every student with additional time and support to learn at high levels. Yet this potential lies dormant at many schools, buried under layers of state regulations, district protocols, misguided priorities, and traditional practices. Mike Mattos shows how the PLC at Work process creates a broader schoolwide framework to create a multitiered system of supports.

Participants can expect to:
- Understand the characteristics of the three tiers of the RTI process.
- Connect the work of teacher teams in a PLC to effective supplemental interventions.
- Define the roles of classroom teachers, administrators, and support staff.

Sarah Schuhl
Creating Common Assessments for Team and Student Learning
Common assessments help students and teachers answer the second critical question of a PLC, How do we know if students learned it?

Sarah Schuhl helps address the purpose of assessments and how to identify what students have and have not yet learned. Participants explore considerations for writing quality common assessments and using them to involve students in their learning.

Outcomes from this session include:
- Understanding a balanced assessment system
- Exploring considerations for item types to include on common assessments
- Learning how to use common assessments to help students self-reflect

Eric Twadell

Grading for Learning: The Five Stages of Evidence-Based Grading

Standards-based grading often is cited as the "third rail of school reform." Yet a PLC must embrace assessment and grading practices to support student learning. This session helps teachers and teams differentiate professional development related to standards-based grading implementation.

Participants in this session:

- Review how learning maps can differentiate professional development.
- Learn how to structure professional development and learning maps pertaining to standards-based grading and reporting.
- Explore challenges associated with traditional grading practices and reporting results.