

Agenda

Edmond, OK . July 13–15

Monday, July 13

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

Tuesday, July 14

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Registration	Back Hall
	Continental Breakfast	Gym (Large)
8:00–9:45 a.m.	Keynote —Mike Mattos <i>The Litmus Test of a PLC: Making Decisions Through the Lens of Learning</i>	Auditorium
9:45–10:15 a.m.	Break	
10:15–11:45 a.m.	Breakout Sessions	
11:45 a.m.–1:15 p.m.	Lunch (provided)	Gym (Large)
1:15–2:45 p.m.	Breakout Sessions	
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.	Auditorium

Wednesday, July 15

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Continental Breakfast	Gym (Large)
8:00–9:30 a.m.	Breakout Sessions	
9:30–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.	Keynote —Robert Eaker <i>Would It Be Good Enough for Your Own Child?</i>	Auditorium

Agenda is subject to change.

Breakouts at a Glance

Presenters & Session Titles	Monday, July 13		Tuesday, July 14		Wednesday, July 15
	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.
Mandy Barrett					
Becoming Crystal Clear About Question One	Orchestra				
Building Buy-In for True PLCs at Work		Orchestra			Band
Yes We Can! An Unprecedented Opportunity to Improve Special Education Outcomes			Band		
Learning Targets: What Are We Aiming For?				Band	
Tim Brown					
Student Data Notebooks: Developing Ownership, Motivation, and a Growth Mindset	Gym (Small)			Gym (Small)	
Raising Questions and Finding Answers in Our Grading Practices		Gym (Small)			Gym (Small)
Getting on the Same Page: Establishing Collective Commitments About Learning and Collaboration			Auditorium		
Robert Eaker					
Friday Night in America: A Commonsense Approach to Improving Student Achievement	Band				
A Focus on Learning: What Would It Look Like If We Really Meant It?		Band			
Aligning the Work of a Professional Learning Community: Central Office, Schools, and Teams			Orchestra		
Developing a Stretch Culture				Orchestra	
Aaron Hansen					
Commitment, Persistence, and Reinspiration	Auditorium				
Owning Their Learning: Students as Partners in Reaching Next Generation Rigor		Freshman Cafeteria			Auditorium
Common Formative Assessment: The Lynchpin of the PLC Process			Freshman Cafeteria		
How to Develop PLCs for Singletons and Small Schools				Freshman Cafeteria	

Jacqueline Heller					
Effective Professional Development in a PLC at Work	Vocal				
Writing Instruction, Assessment, and Proficiency		Vocal		Vocal	
Taking Collective Responsibility for Reading Achievement			Vocal		Vocal
Mike Mattos					
Are We a Group or a Team?	Freshman Cafeteria				
Personalized Learning in a PLC at Work: Developing Student Agency Through the Four Critical Questions		Auditorium			
Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Elementary Schools			Gym (Small)		
Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Secondary Schools				Auditorium	
Guiding Principles for Principals: Tips and Tools for Leading the PLC Process					Freshman Cafeteria
Kenneth C. Williams					
Starting a Movement: Embracing the Blessed Burden of Leadership	Cafeteria			Cafeteria	
At Risk or Underserved? Focusing on What Really Matters in Student Learning		Cafeteria			
12 Angry Men: The Power of Productive Conflict			Cafeteria		Cafeteria

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Session Descriptions

Mandy Barrett

Becoming Crystal Clear About Question One

Question one of a PLC sets the foundation for the three other questions. It is vital that teams become “crystal clear” on exactly what students must know and be able to do throughout grade-level curricula. This session delves into the importance of identifying REAL (relevant, enduring, assessed, leveraged) standards and takes participants through the process of unwrapping these standards.

Participants in this session:

- Gain an understanding of the why behind identifying essential standards.
- Step through the process of unwrapping essential standards.
- Leave with tools to implement this process with their teams.

Building Buy-In for True PLCs at Work

This session details strategies to create and support an atmosphere of commitment, trust, and engagement as the PLC journey continues within the school community. Participants will leave with easy-to-use team-building ideas to move collaboration forward at a faster pace, allowing for learning to be the central focus of the PLC.

Participants in this session:

- Discover how to move schools away from adult-centered behavior to student-centered learning.
- Determine the importance of a collaborative culture within a school community.
- Engage in activities that support teachers in committing to the importance of working as a PLC.

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. Mandy Barrett 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

Learning Targets: What Are We Aiming For?

Unwrapping essential standards reveals many levels of skills and concepts for teams to target throughout instruction and assessment. This session begins by unwrapping a standard together to gain knowledge of the specific learning targets being addressed. From there, participants work through the process of developing a strong instructional response to assure that the necessary time and additional support given to students meets their learning needs. By thoughtfully designing assessments aimed at specific learning targets, along with gathering and analyzing student data, teams are able to know exactly what their students have learned and areas that still need support.

Participants in this session:

- Discover the importance of identifying learning targets.
- Walk through the process of designing common formative assessments.
- Learn the significance of receiving timely information to guide instruction.

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.

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

Robert Eaker

Would It Be Good Enough for Your Own Child?

After five decades of strong and consistent research, it is no longer in doubt what an effective school looks like. The central question facing educational leaders is, “Are we committed to embedding practices for all students that are as effective as the educational practices we would want for our own child?” This session emphasizes research-based practices that comprise the Professional Learning Community at Work framework which, when implemented with specificity and fidelity, ensures high levels of learning for all students.

Friday Night in America: A Commonsense Approach to Improving Student Achievement

Teachers already know more about how to ensure student learning than they may realize. Band directors, art teachers, coaches, and other singletons regularly employ successful strategies in nonacademic school settings. In particular, tactics football coaches use to win on the gridiron on Friday nights are similar to efforts school teams use in the academic arena. Robert Eaker reviews practices that lead to improved student learning across the board. He shows how teacher teams can “suit up” with powerful strategies to triumph every school day.

A Focus on Learning: What Would It Look Like If We Really Meant It?

There is a fundamental difference between schools that function as professional learning communities and their more traditional counterparts: a shift from a focus on teaching and covering content to a focus on learning for every student, skill by skill. While few would disagree with the importance of student learning, some schools struggle with exactly how to embed practices that promote student success in the classroom. This session focuses on specific strategies schools, teams, and teachers use to enhance student success in schools that really mean it when they proclaim they want all students to learn.

Aligning the Work of a Professional Learning Community: Central Office, Schools, and Teams

A districtwide professional learning community is more than a sum of individual parts. A high-performing school district that functions as a PLC reflects a thoughtful alignment and integration of work at the central office level, in individual schools, and in teacher teams. While highlighting the efforts of highly successful school districts, Robert Eaker describes how these districts organize and align at each level to implement professional learning community concepts and practices districtwide.

Developing a Stretch Culture

If the goal of achieving high levels of learning for all students is to be realized, then schools must develop a culture that stretches the aspirations and performance levels of students and adults alike. Robert Eaker focuses on cultural shifts PLCs make while developing a stretch culture. He pays particular attention to assessment and providing students with additional time and support to achieve high academic benchmarks.

Aaron Hansen

Commitment, Persistence, and Reinspiration

Author and educator Mike Schmoker calls it *the press*—the daily avalanche of reports, lesson plans, grading, parent inquiries, emails, and meetings that add to the enormous pressure teachers and leaders face. It is no wonder that educators often feel frustrated and are distracted from what is important. Aaron Hansen motivates participants through structured activities and stories that reiterate what is crucial: all students learning at high levels. Participants are reinspired as they develop ways to keep staff members committed, persistent, and motivated.

Participants can expect to:

- Learn how to connect each staff member's personal purpose to the organization's vision.
- Help staff members establish and sustain commitment and persistence to achieve high levels of learning for all students.
- Become reinspired to make a difference at their sites and in their districts.

Owning Their Learning: Students as Partners in Reaching Next Generation Rigor

Let's aspire to more than merely leading students to pass the state test. Students who own their learning and know that it is meaningful will exceed expectations on high-stakes tests and be empowered to do more. Participants are challenged to get serious about what they really want students to learn to be successful in school and life instead of just on tests. They will learn how to supercharge their PLC practices—the most powerful model for changing schools—to blow through the low levels of thinking

on most tests while enabling students to gain attributes, skills, and hope for an even more important test—the test of life.

Outcomes from this session include:

- Using PLC practices to empower kids to own their learning
- Helping kids develop metacognition and self-efficacy for passing the state test and much more
- Being reminded of the “moral purpose” of giving hope to students

Common Formative Assessment: The Linchpin of the PLC Process

There are two primary reasons we collect data on a PLC team: 1) to improve professional practice and 2) to increase student learning. Participants in this session explore the kinds of data, protocols, and conversations that help teachers improve their practice. Aaron Hansen illustrates how to shift data collection and common assessments from “a thing we do” to a powerful means for gathering actionable information that results in substantive improvements in student learning. Before systems of intervention can be as effective as we hope, teacher teams must become adept at gathering information about students’ measurable deficits. The more fluid teams become, the better their outcomes.

Participants in this session:

- Practice using simple data to inform decisions about intervention.
- Use that set of data to understand how to engage in conversations that improve teams’ professional practice.
- Understand the power of involving students in tracking their own data to develop a sense of ownership in their learning.

How to Develop PLCs for Singletons and Small Schools

PLC concepts resonate with most educators, but making collaborative learning work in small schools or for singleton teachers can be challenging. Participants explore five models for creating meaningful professional learning teams: 1) changing schedules to allow teachers to teach the same subjects, 2) vertical teaming, 3) cross-curricular teaming, 4) supporting roles, and 5) using electronic tools to pair teachers with peers in the same subject area.

Participants discuss common structural barriers that prevent singletons from joining collaborative teams and develop an action plan to incorporate singletons into the PLC process.

Jacqueline Heller

Effective Professional Development in a PLC at Work

Too often, professional development for teachers does not lead to sustained changes in instructional practices. Breaking through the knowing–doing gap and building capacity within teacher teams is best accomplished when teachers have a firm understanding of the seven features of professional development and implement the three big ideas of a PLC. PLCs call for effective job-embedded professional development to improve individual and collective practices and achieve higher levels of learning for all—students and adults.

Participants in this session:

- Learn ways to improve collaborative team time using research-affirmed criteria and effective job-embedded professional development.
- Discover what teams need in order to embrace sustained changes in instructional practices.
- Explore various professional development approaches that foster collective efficacy as teams learn together.

Writing Instruction, Assessment, and Proficiency

Writing instruction is often the first thing to get cut from the literacy block. Many teachers consider themselves to be readers but do not consider themselves to be writers, which makes them less confident about writing instruction. This is all the more reason teams need to collaborate to improve individual and collective practices in writing and ensure students are strong communicators. Participants in this session consider tasks for teams to tackle during their collaborative time to improve writing instruction, assessment, and proficiency in the literacy block as well as other content areas.

Learning outcomes from this session include:

- Understanding how to create learning progressions for writing standards
- Experiencing a team process for developing inter-rater reliability in scoring student writing
- Discovering ways to use writing assessments to determine targeted individual, small-group, and whole-group lessons

Taking Collective Responsibility for Reading Achievement

If reading proficiency lays the foundation for achievement in all other content areas, are teachers using all the human resources available at their site to ensure every child is known by name and by need and gets the time and support necessary to read at high levels? Taking collective responsibility for student reading means having high expectations for all readers, using data to set goals, sharing instructional practices, and communicating with all adults who impact reading achievement.

Participants in this session:

- Consider models of co-teaching reading to support diverse populations.
- Explore tools for grouping students for targeted small-group reading instruction to achieve reading goals.
- Discover how classroom teachers, specialists, and other staff can communicate and work more interdependently to improve reading achievement.

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.

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.

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

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.

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.

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.

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.