Agenda

Pasadena, CA • July 13–15

Monday, July 13

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Registration	
	Continental Breakfast	
8:00–9:45 a.m.	**Keynote**—Nicole Dimich *Instructional Agility: Assessment in Real Time*	
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:30 a.m.	**Breakout Sessions**	
11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)	
1:00–2:30 p.m.	**Breakout Sessions**	
2:30–2:45 p.m.	Break	
2:45–3:45 p.m.	**Open Space Technology Conversations**	

Tuesday, July 14

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Registration	
	Continental Breakfast	
8:00–9:45 a.m.	**Keynote**—Cassandra Erkens *Getting to the Good Stuff: Student Investment*	
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:30 a.m.	**Breakout Sessions**	
11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)	
1:00–2:30 p.m.	**Breakout Sessions**	
2:30–2:45 p.m.	Break	
2:45–3:15 p.m.	**Role-Alike Discussions**—*An expert-facilitated conversation about a specific assessment topic*	
	Central Office—Tom Schimmer	
	Building Administration—Jadi Miller	
	Instructional Coaches—Cassandra Erkens	
	Elementary Teachers—Nicole Dimich	
	Secondary Teachers—Mark Onuscheck	

Wednesday, July 15

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Continental Breakfast	
8:00–9:30 a.m.	**Breakout Sessions**	
9:30–9:45 a.m.	Break	
9:45–11:30 a.m.	**Keynote**—Tom Schimmer *Grading From the Inside Out*	

Day 1 Breakouts

Assessment Architecture

10:00–11:30 a.m.

Nicole Dimich Designing Effective Assessments in Three Steps	
Cassandra Erkens Designing Assessments for 21st Century Skills	
Jadi Miller Leading Assessment Literacy	
Mark Onuscheck Building Common Formative Assessments: The *Why, How,* and *What*	
Tom Schimmer Reassessment the Right Way	

1:00–2:30 p.m.

Nicole Dimich Writing Effective Items and Tasks	
Cassandra Erkens Feedback That Feeds Forward	
Jadi Miller Using Data to Get Results	
Mark Onuscheck Proficiency-Based Assessment: Engaging Students in High Expectations of Learning	
Tom Schimmer Assessing Student Work: Most Recent, Most Frequent, or Most Accurate?	

Agenda is subject to change.

Day 2 Breakouts

Instructional Agility

10:00–11:30 a.m.

Nicole Dimich Assessing Student Collaboration	
Cassandra Erkens Engineering Engaging Conversations	
Jadi Miller Learning Targets That Hit the Mark	
Mark Onuscheck Assessing Social–Emotional Learning	
Tom Schimmer Effective Leadership in Assessment and Grading	

1:00–2:30 p.m.

Nicole Dimich Rubrics and Scales: Designing and Using Them Well	
Cassandra Erkens Making Homework Count	
Jadi Miller Crimes Against Assessment	
Mark Onuscheck Assessing and Supporting Literacy in Every Subject: Why Every Teacher is a Reading Teacher	
Tom Schimmer Redefining Student Accountability	

Agenda is subject to change.

Day 3 Breakouts

Student Investment

8:00–9:30 a.m.

Nicole Dimich Analyzing Student Work to Plan Instruction and Intervention	
Cassandra Erkens Designing for Systemic Change in Grading Practices	
Jadi Miller Building the Ladder: Creating Learning Progressions	
Mark Onuscheck Student Voice Surveys: What Are Your Students Really Thinking?	
Tom Schimmer Assessing Critical Thinking	

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Session Descriptions

Nicole Dimich

[KEYNOTE] Instructional Agility: Assessment in Real Time
There is power and possibility in the moments teachers recognize students' confusion or understanding. Through questions, observations, and feedback, teachers, individually and collaboratively, maneuver and pivot to intentionally use assessment to inspire learners to gain confidence and achieve at high levels.

Designing Effective Assessments in Three Steps
When designed well, assessments provide meaningful evidence of student learning. This session introduces an assessment design process based on Nicole Dimich Vagle's book, *Design in 5: Essential Phases to Create Engaging Assessment Practice* (Solution Tree Press 2014). Participants in this session learn three steps to designing high-quality assessments: choosing standards, crafting learning goals, and planning assessment methods to ensure accurate information that communicates proficiency and provides insight into next steps for instruction. Participants receive tools and templates to focus this work. Administrators and those who support teachers will find these resources useful in facilitating quality assessment design in their own contexts.

Participants in this session learn:
- Key aspects of assessment validity
- A three-step protocol to design or revise quality assessments
- The most effective methods in ensuring accurate assessment evidence

Writing Effective Items and Tasks
Outcomes from this session include learning how to recognize and write meaningful multiple-choice and constructed-response items at various cognitive levels. When written well and used effectively, these types of items provide quality information to describe and grow student learning. The use of these types of items in instruction can be powerful in helping students achieve at high levels. Teachers and teams will find these ideas applicable to designing assessments and creating engaging instruction.

Participants in this session:
- Identify and apply key characteristics of effective multiple-choice items.
- Identify and apply key characteristics of effective constructed-responses items.
- Learn to use items to engage students in formative dialogue.

Assessing Student Collaboration
Ever have a disastrous group project experience? Dissatisfied with how students work in a group? Collaborating effectively is one of the most critical skills employers identify as essential for success in the global economy. Nicole Dimich Vagle provides insight into the following questions: How do we accurately and fairly assess collaboration? How do we design an effective assessment task that provides accurate information on a student's collaborative skills? Participants learn ways to design tasks that assess collaboration and facilitate effective collaboration in the classroom with students.

Learning outcomes include:
- Exploring key design elements to accurately assess student collaboration
- Examining and experiencing collaboration as an instructional strategy that leads to gathering real-time evidence (instructional agility)

Rubrics and Scales: Designing and Using Them Well
Effective rubrics offer students and teachers descriptions of the quality of student work and progress toward achieving standards. While rubrics may have powerful formative and summative purposes, they can be overwhelming to create or use well. Participants in this session explore the design and use of effective, efficient, and meaningful rubrics.

Learning outcomes from this session include:
- Identifying characteristics of quality rubrics and how they differ from proficiency scales
- Designing effective and meaningful rubrics
- Discovering how to use rubrics for formative purposes

Analyzing Student Work to Plan Instruction and Intervention
We have an overwhelming amount of data at our fingertips. This can lead to collaborative teams feeling overwhelmed or in a constant cycle of assessing without pausing to maximize the value of this information. Common formative assessments provide insight into the extent in which students learned essential standards. When analyzed, these insights guide teachers to design instruction and intervention that meets students' needs and allows them to gain confidence and achieve at high levels. This session offers a process for examining student work before planning effective instruction and intervention.

Learning outcomes from this session include:
- Considering the connections among essential standards, assessment, and intervention to ensure learning for all
- Discovering how to choose effective intervention and instructional strategies based on student work
- Analyzing student work to identify instruction and interventions needed for students to achieve proficiency and mastery.

Cassandra Erkens
[KEYNOTE] Getting to the Good Stuff: Student Investment
In the ideal classroom, all learners would be deeply invested in their learning, demonstrating motivation, persistence, passion, and high levels of intellectual risk taking and engagement. Is that even realistic? Yes! But changes to current assessment practices and systems are essential if learners will ever be able to self-regulate as they engage in the work of deep learning. This keynote explores the mental mindset and strategies that educators must employ to support learners in *getting to the good stuff.*

Learning outcomes include:
- Identifying barriers that block learners from truly investing in their learning
- Exploring the educator's mindset that is required to support deep learning at the classroom level
- Identifying strategies and tools that teachers can use to support learners in self-regulation

Designing Assessments for 21st Century Skills
We are preparing learners today for a world we have not experienced and may have difficulty comprehending. How can we create and use assessments that tap into a global and technological realm? How can we ensure that assessments move us beyond the practice of regurgitating information to the practice of co-creating new insights and new solutions for a complex and rapidly changing world? Cassandra Erkens explores the integration of rigor, relevance, and 21st century skills in assessment design.

Learning outcomes include:
- Exploring widely accepted 21st century skills
- Identifying the criteria for, and non-negotiables of, quality assessment design
- Identifying quality and non-quality assessment options
- Exploring how to design a 21st century skill-based assessment

Feedback That Feeds Forward
Done well, formative assessment can motivate the unmotivated, restore the desire to learn, encourage students to keep learning, and create increased achievement. All of this is irrelevant if we cannot properly communicate the formative and summative assessment information to its most important users, the students, with meaningful feedback. This session explores the characteristics of quality feedback, engages educators to practice *giving* quality feedback, and identifies strategies educators can readily use for generating fast, yet meaningful, feedback.

Outcomes from this session include:
- Identifying characteristics of quality feedback as a means to keep learners engaged in the learning process
- Engaging in practicing the use of productive feedback that feeds forward
- Exploring strategies for self- and peer review and evaluation techniques that can be used to support learning and increase motivation

Engineering Engaging Conversations
The quality of formative data a teacher can generate during instruction is directly related to the quality of the questions he or she asks and the classroom conversations that result. Cassandra Erkens provides rationale for using conversation as an instructional foundation and explores options for creating engaging conversations and criteria to monitor student engagement and learning.

Learning outcomes include:
- Understanding the rationale and role of engineering conversations as an instructional foundation
- Exploring frameworks for generating engaging conversations
- Applying a criteria for monitoring student engagement and learning

Making Homework Count
Teachers use homework for three primary purposes: practice, preparation, and extension of classroom learning. According to some research, homework is one of the most powerful instructional strategies teachers employ to impact student achievement. Yet other research indicates there is little to no correlation between homework and current achievement results. How might we leverage homework to increase student productivity and achievement? Participants explore necessary considerations for the design and use of homework as a formative assessment tool to positively impact student learning.

Learning outcomes include:
- Aligning the intent of homework with promising practices in homework design and use
- Identifying formative assessment tools and processes to support the use of homework as an opportunity for safe practice
- Exploring error as a means to develop instructionally agile responses to data from practice opportunities for maximizing learning

Designing for Systemic Change in Grading Practices
How do leaders create significant paradigm shifts in assessment practices and policies—especially with hot-button topics such as grading—when the system is entrenched in traditions by virtually all stakeholder groups? Though educational experts call for change in assessment practices and policies, the challenge can be daunting when internal and external stakeholders resist the idea. This session provides teacher leaders and administrators a model for systemic change and the tools and strategies needed to navigate the model.

Learning outcomes from this session include:
- Exploring best practices in leading systematic change
- Identifying key strategies, tools, and protocols to navigate change
- Aligning current or future plans to a working theory of change

Jadi Miller
Leading Assessment Literacy
Most educators know that assessments are valuable, but they do not always feel confident in their understanding of the purposes and uses of assessments. Strengthening your team's assessment literacy means that everyone understands the purposes and effective uses of assessment so that productive conversations about student data become part of every collaborative conversation. This session explores how to create learning opportunities for building leaders, team leaders, or staff who want to improve their team's skills and knowledge.

Learning targets for this session include developing educators' awareness of assessment literacy and identifying key processes and learning opportunities that facilitate assessment literacy.

Using Data to Get Results
Do you feel like you're drowning in data and still don't have the information you truly need? Data has the potential to change learning trajectories for students, yet it can be intimidating and overwhelming for educators. Without effective and usable tools, teachers might avoid using the data that can have the most impact on student learning. This session explores various ways of collecting and using data to maximize its impact on student learning and minimize anxiety for teachers.

Learning targets for this session include exploring ways to collect and use student achievement data and identifying other types of data that inform collaborative decisions.

Learning Targets That Hit the Mark
An effective and well-designed learning target can help with planning and developing a lesson, but the impact of that learning target does not end in the first few minutes of the lesson or when it is written on the board. This session explores how to create and effectively use learning targets to plan, deliver, and assess lessons in ways that inform teaching and learning for teachers and students alike.

Learning targets for this session include:
● Exploring how to write learning targets that effectively inform planning and instruction
● Identifying ways to incorporate learning targets throughout instruction
● Sharing ways to utilize learning targets in formative and summative assessments

Crimes Against Assessment
This session provides opportunities for participants to explore common mistakes educators make when it comes to assessment. Participants identify some of these mistakes, think through ways to correct them, and consider the types of changes that can positively impact student learning. The emphasis is on empowering educators to learn and grow their own assessment literacy while maximizing the impact of assessments.

Learning targets for this session include identifying common errors around assessment development and use and strategizing how to turn those errors into effective practices.

Building the Ladder: Creating Learning Progressions
Teacher clarity, one of the most powerful influences on student learning, includes teacher knowledge of the content. Creating a learning progression helps teachers build shared understanding about content and define the progressively more sophisticated thinking the content requires of learners. Participants in this session discover ways to create a blueprint for instruction and assessment that helps teachers know where and when to assess and adjust instruction.

Learning targets for this session include:
● Exploring the *what* and *why* of learning progressions
● Examining different types of learning progressions
● Identifying strategies and resources for creating learning progressions

Mark Onuscheck

Building Common Formative Assessments: The *Why*, *How*, and *What*
Common formative assessments (CFAs) aren't just for grading. They are meant to help teams critically analyze the evidence of learning and creatively address teaching practices. Mark Onuscheck investigates how teams thrive when CFAs drive innovative ideas about instructional change, curricular decisions, and student growth. Participants confront the questions: What evidence of learning are your teams collecting? How are they discussing this evidence? and How do those discussions lead to positive changes for students? Participants are asked to bring in assessments they are interested in revising.

Proficiency-Based Assessment: Engaging Students in High Expectations of Learning
Explore how stronger assessment practices, when used effectively, tighten the interconnectedness between teaching and learning. Mark Onuscheck demonstrates a collaborative teaming process focused on the function of assessment and illustrates ways for teams to have stronger, more effective discussions about what students are supposed to know, understand, and do, as well as how to know when they have learned. Participants are asked to bring in examples of rubrics or criteria they use to evaluate student achievement.

Assessing Social–Emotional Learning
In bold and thoughtful ways, schools must focus more mindfully on students' social–emotional learning (SEL) development. Participants focus on underlying SEL skills that support academic achievement and student growth. Mark Onuscheck illustrates how to approach assessment practices that promote collaborative conversations dedicated to supporting students' abilities to regulate emotions, demonstrate characteristics of perseverance, foster a growth mindset, create a sense of self-efficacy, focus on self-management, and build social awareness.

Assessing and Supporting Literacy in Every Subject: Why Every Teacher Is a Reading Teacher
Are your students not reading? Do they read "below grade level"? Do they read but don't understand what they read? This session focuses on assessment and student learning across all academic disciplines by exploring how close reading assessments promote engagement, vocabulary development, comprehension, and synthesis.

Student Voice Surveys: What Are Your Students Really Thinking?
We often assess students. How do they assess us? In this session, consider the value of creating student voice surveys to better understand how students perceive 1) a sense of classroom belonging, 2) whether their classrooms create a supportive climate, 3) whether
the learning strategies used during instruction are effectively supporting all students, 4) how students are viewing teacher and student relationships, and 5) whether students actually
value the subject matter they are learning.

Tom Schimmer

[KEYNOTE] Grading From the Inside Out

Developing a standards-based mindset is the oft overlooked, but essential, first step of long-term grading reform. Based on his book *Grading From the Inside Out: Bringing Accuracy to Student Assessment Through a Standards-Based Mindset* (Solution Tree Press, 2016), Tom Schimmer outlines how to take a standards-based approach to grading, even when a traditional grading and reporting paradigm exists. He discusses the non-negotiable, true north of grading for accuracy and with confidence and the three essential practices that are the cornerstones for developing a standards-based mindset.

Learning outcomes include:
- Understanding how to audit any grading practice through the lens of accuracy and confidence
- Exploring the faulty logic behind traditional grading practices
- Identifying replacement routines and practices that establish a standards-based mindset and approach to grading, independent of any changes to school or district policy

Reassessment the Right Way

Reassessment is one of the most misunderstood aspects of sound grading practices. Much more than simply a do-over, reassessment involves clear assessment information, targeted instruction that matches the level of intensity as it relates to student needs, and re-verification of new proficiency levels. This session helps participants see reassessment as a natural part of the learning process, not just something earned by jumping through manufactured hoops to make the process more difficult. Participants also explore reassessment at the school policy level and the classroom practice level.

Participants in this session:
- Understand the essential role reassessment plays within a learning-centered culture.
- Explore the most productive approaches to creating district, school, department, and team-based reassessment policies.
- Learn how to establish the "social contract" of reassessment and the accompanying routines within individual classrooms.

Assessing Student Work: Most Recent, Most Frequent, or Most Accurate?

Sometimes the most recent evidence of learning is the most accurate; sometimes it's the most frequent. Tom Schimmer explores standards and circumstances that lead to the most accurate determination of student proficiency and how participants can discover the most accurate levels of proficiency by considering the depth, breadth, and an adequate sampling of what is being assessed. Tom also shares important guidelines for effectively determining an overall grade.

Effective Leadership in Assessment and Grading
With any change effort, leadership matters! Tom Schimmer explores the steps leaders can take to transform grading and assessment practices within any context. Highlights include effective leadership strategies, mindsets, and practices that maximize the potential success of any implementation effort, the natural evolution of new ideas, the ways to plan for short-term wins, and ideas for handling the inevitable challenges and roadblocks. Whether a leader by title or by influence, participants bring together ideas that make assessment transformations possible and sustainable.

Learning outcomes include:
- Identifying the ways leaders cultivate the conditions to support grading reform
- Understanding the natural evolution of new ideas in an organization
- Exploring ways for leaders to manage inevitable implementation roadblocks and challenges

Redefining Student Accountability
The need for students to be held accountable is often cited as a reason why some hesitate to implement more sound grading practices. Tom Schimmer focuses on systems, structures, and routines that can redefine accountability and reshape a school's culture. Rather than using zeros, late penalties, or other traditional punitive grading practices, participants see that real accountability can be achieved without compromising the integrity of a student's proficiency grade.

Learning outcomes include:
- Identifying the perils of punitive grading and the resulting inaccuracies that compromise the integrity of what is ultimately reported about student proficiency
- Understanding an alternative, more productive definition of accountability within the context of learning
- Exploring the multiple systems required to create a culture of real accountability that leaves student optimism and hope intact

Assessing Critical Thinking
Critical thinking sits at the heart of the competencies that are essential for learners to develop in the 21st century. Tom Schimmer highlights how educators can take advantage of their assessment fundamentals to seamlessly assess critical thinking. Specifically, participants learn 1) how *specifist* and *generalist* views of critical thinking can contribute to schools developing a comprehensive approach to critical thinking, 2) various tools that can be developed in support of assessment, 3) instructional implications for creating critical thinking opportunities, and 4) dispositional habits of critical thinkers.

Learning outcomes include:
- Examining the overlap and contradiction between the two dominant psychological views of critical thinking
- Understanding why and how the assessment of critical thinking relies heavily on clearly articulated performance criteria
- Exploring how learners can, through the cultivation of habitual behaviors and dispositions, develop into critical thinkers