

PLC at Work Institute Agenda

Las Vegas, NV • June 8–10, 2022

Wednesday, June 8

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Registration	
	Continental Breakfast	
8:00–9:45 a.m.	Keynote —Tim Brown <i>From Promises to Assurances: A PLC at Work</i>	
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.	Panel Discussion — <i>Presenters answer your most pressing questions.</i>	

Thursday, June 9

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Registration	
	Continental Breakfast	
8:00–9:45 a.m.	Keynote —Anthony Muhammad <i>The Way Forward: PLC at Work and the Bright Future of Education</i>	
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.	Team Time — <i>Presenters aid in your collaborative team discussions.</i>	

Friday, June 10

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Continental Breakfast	
8:00–9:30 a.m.	Breakout Sessions	
9:30–9:45 a.m.	Break	
9:45–11:45 a.m.	Keynote —Luis F. Cruz <i>Transformational Leadership: Aligning Adult Behaviors to Fuel Our PLC Journey</i>	

Agenda is subject to change.

Breakouts Sessions at a Glance

Presenters & Titles	Wednesday, June 8		Thursday, June 9		Friday, June 10
	10:00–11:30 a.m.	1:00–2:30 p.m.	10:00–11:30 a.m.	1:00–2:30 p.m.	8:00–9:30 a.m.
Tim Brown					
You Can Learn! Building Student Ownership, Motivation, and Efficacy With the PLC at Work Process	X				
Building a Commitment to Learning in Students		X			X
From Forming to Performing			X		
Doubling the Speed of Learning: Activating the Keys of Formative Assessment to Create a Culture of Learning				X	
Daniel Cohan					
Building a Professional Learning Community at the High School Level	X				
PLC Progress Monitoring: Tools and Techniques to Move Your PLC Forward		X		X	
Why Is It So Confusing? Defining Team Structures and Responsibilities in a PLC			X		
Two Steps Forward, One Step Back: Persevering Through Challenges and Setbacks					X
Luis F. Cruz					
Task Forces: The Secret Weapon PLCs Use to Close Opportunity Gaps in Learning	X				
I Like the Vibe Here! So How Do We Initiate and Sustain Our PLC Journey?		X			
English Learners and PLCs			X		
Taping Before Painting: Taking the Critical Steps to Respond				X	

Presenters & Titles	Wednesday, June 8		Thursday, June 9		Friday, June 10
	10:00–11:30 a.m.	1:00–2:30 p.m.	10:00–11:30 a.m.	1:00–2:30 p.m.	8:00–9:30 a.m.
Collectively When Students Don't Learn					
I Am Sold on PLCs: Practical Tools and Directions to Be Successful					X
Scott Cunningham					
Bloom It Up and Other Strategies PLCs Use to Extend and Enrich Learning	X				X
Help Your Team: Overcoming Common Collaborative Challenges in a PLC at Work		X		X	
How a High-Poverty, Dysfunctional School Became a National Model PLC			X		
Robert Eaker					
Friday Night in America: A Commonsense Approach to Improving Student Achievement	X				
Developing a Stretch Culture		X			
A Focus on Learning: What Would It Look Like If We Really Meant It?			X		
Aligning the Work of a Professional Learning Community: Central Office, Schools, and Teams				X	
Willy-Nilly Doesn't Work Here Anymore!					X
Aaron Hansen					
How to Develop PLCs for Singletons and Small Schools	X				
Owning Their Learning: Students as Partners in Next Generation Rigor		X		X	
Making Students the Hero in Their Learning Journey: Developing Hope, Self-Efficacy,			X		X

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	10:00–11:30 a.m.	1:00–2:30 p.m.	10:00–11:30 a.m.	1:00–2:30 p.m.	8:00–9:30 a.m.
and Motivation Through PLCs at Work					
Jason Hillman					
Don't Get Stuck! Getting the Most Out of Collaborative Team Meetings	X			X	
What You Do Matters! Take Charge of Your School's Culture		X			
Blue Ribbon Journey: How a Failing School Transformed Through the PLC Process			X		X
Timothy D. Kanold					
Heart & Soul: Living a Fully Engaged, High-Energy, Well-Balanced Professional Life!	X				X
Leading the PLC Life: Eliminating Barriers, Creating Vision, and Teaching the Loose-Tight Culture!		X			
Your PreK–12 PLC Mathematics Focus: Great Instruction and Tasks!			X		
Educator Wellness: Routines and Strategies for Living Your Best Life!				X	
Paula Maeker					
Deconstruct to Reconstruct: Building the Framework for Essential Learning	X				
Literacy at Work: Teams Accelerating Essential Outcomes for All Students		X			
All-Inclusive! Collectively Meeting the Diverse Needs of <i>All</i> Learners			X		
Leveling Up: Taking Collaborative Teams From Good to Great!				X	
Something's Always Going Right!					X

Presenters & Titles	Wednesday, June 8		Thursday, June 9		Friday, June 10
	10:00–11:30 a.m.	1:00–2:30 p.m.	10:00–11:30 a.m.	1:00–2:30 p.m.	8:00–9:30 a.m.
Celebrating Purpose, Practice, and Progress in a PLC at Work					
Anthony Muhammad					
Building Culture, Creating Purpose, and Overcoming Frustration on Your PLC Journey	X				
Collaboration Is a Lifestyle, Not a Meeting!		X		X	
Overcoming the Achievement Gap Trap: Liberating Mindsets to Effect Change			X		
Beyond Test Scores! The PLC at Work Process and Serving the Whole Child					X
Maria Nielsen					
The 15-Day Challenge: Win Quick, Win Often!	X				
Common Assessments: The Key to Uncommon Results for Student and Teacher Learning		X			
Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Elementary Schools			X		
Elementary ELA Strategies to Keep Your Students on Track				X	
Show Me What Ya Got: Student Engagement Strategies to Keep the Pulse on Learning					X
Steve Pearce					
Guiding Coalitions That Drive the PLC Process	X				
What's Next? Monthly Extensions to Challenge Proficient Students in a PLC		X		X	
Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Secondary Schools			X		

Presenters & Titles	Wednesday, June 8		Thursday, June 9		Friday, June 10
	10:00–11:30 a.m.	1:00–2:30 p.m.	10:00–11:30 a.m.	1:00–2:30 p.m.	8:00–9:30 a.m.
The Collaborative Team: The Engine That Drives the PLC Process					X

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Session Descriptions

Tim Brown

[KEYNOTE] From Promises to Assurances: A PLC at Work

Tim Brown sets the stage for our learning by deepening our understanding of the characteristics of a PLC at Work. The keynote is designed to clarify the six characteristics that create a powerful force to accomplish great things for all students.

You Can Learn! Building Student Ownership, Motivation, and Efficacy With the PLC at Work Process

Educators promote a strong sense of student efficacy within schools that focus on learning. Studies show promoting self-efficacy is one of the most significant factors in student motivation and engagement. In this session, participants examine essential characteristics for building student self-efficacy and explore team-developed products and strategies for using them.

Participants can expect to:

- Understand the term *dispositions* in the question, “What knowledge, skills, and dispositions do we want our students learning?”
- Learn how collaborative team questions influence student efficacy judgment.
- Explore products and processes that collaborative teams create to help students own their learning.

Building a Commitment to Learning in Students

“Organizations without a rich symbolic life become empty and sterile. The magic of special occasions is vital in building significance into collective life.” This is the wisdom of Lee G. Bolman and Terrence Deal in *Leading With Soul: An Uncommon Journey of Spirit*.

Tim Brown offers strategies to motivate students and staff by celebrating learning and setting high expectations. Learning-centered schools do not just communicate messages about every students’ ability to achieve. They also define actions to turn those core beliefs into reality.

Participants can expect to:

- Understand how communicating high expectations to students impacts their efficacy judgment.
- Learn how to establish a classroom culture centered on learning for all.
- Recognize how celebrations reinforce and sustain a focus on learning for all.

From Forming to Performing

When working to become highly effective, team efforts often are slowed because members skip steps in forming their teams. Establishing norms is necessary, but other components help school-based

teams accelerate the movement from individuals, to a group, to a team. Tim Brown helps attendees explore processes from the field they can take back to their teams.

In this session, participants understand the four stages of teams and delve into a team's "forming stage" to guarantee all teachers commit to being their best.

Participants can expect to:

- Understand the four stages of teams.
- Deepen their understanding of the impact of defining their team during the forming stage.
- Explore processes and tools that help teams establish their values.

Doubling the Speed of Learning: Activating the Keys of Formative Assessment to Create a Culture of Learning

Formative assessment enhances learning for all students, especially those who struggle. Assessment expert Dylan Wiliam notes that formative assessment can double the speed of learning when it is effectively applied. The Assessment Reform Group in the United Kingdom identified five keys for improving assessment. Tim Brown explores each key and shares examples of teachers activating and using the five keys in their classrooms, teams, and schoolwide.

Participants can expect to:

- Explore relationships between formative assessment and student achievement.
- Examine ways in which teams align their assessment practices to increase student achievement.
- Evaluate considerations in the assessment process.

Daniel Cohan

Building a Professional Learning Community at the High School Level

American high schools are expected to be both comprehensive and individually focused, serving as the center of the community while preparing all children for graduation and their future. How can principals and staff meet these expectations while increasing learning and achievement for all students? Modeling our high schools as professional learning communities with strong RTI structures is our best hope.

Daniel Cohan draws from his experience teaching, leading, training, supervising, and supporting high schools of various structures, sizes, demographics, and philosophies to aid staff and administrators on their PLC and RTI journeys. He leads attendees through strategies, tools, and techniques to aid them in developing highly effective PLCs and provides tips and resources customized to the high school level.

Outcomes for this session include:

- Creating demand and collective ownership for a PLC culture at the high school level

- Learning strategies to overcome obstacles that prevent schools from becoming PLCs
- Understanding the structural elements necessary to systematically provide interventions and enrichment to all students
- Exploring high school schedules and examples to aid in your PLC journey

PLC Progress Monitoring: Tools and Techniques to Move Your PLC Forward

The research is clear: Modeling PLCs is our best hope for school and district improvement, and we know that *what gets monitored gets done*. Progress monitoring your collaborative teams and schoolwide PLC development are essential for continuous improvement along the PLC journey.

School and district improvement plans have long existed, but are they effective? Impactful? Connected to daily work? Improvement plans can be powerful tools, but they must be clear, aligned to the everyday work, and progress monitored. In this interactive session, attendees learn how to progress monitor their PLC to keep moving forward and explore how and why progress monitoring plans are an essential component of continuous improvement. Sample school plans and schedules to use with your school or district are reviewed.

Participants in this session:

- Establish their PLC current reality.
- Learn how to effectively progress monitor collaborative teams and PLC effectiveness.
- Align school improvement plans and PLC progress monitoring plans.
- Explore effective strategies, tools, and models to keep moving forward.
- Discuss school examples and case studies.

Why Is It So Confusing? Defining Team Structures and Responsibilities in a PLC

Traditional schools and PLC schools have various teams and structures. Small and large schools and districts striving to become PLCs must have clear team structures and responsibilities that work interdependently to ensure all students learn at high levels. The difference in team makeup, functionality, specific responsibilities, and actions—as well as how teams are monitored—distinguishes traditional schools from highly effective PLC schools. Intervention teams, building leadership teams, content- and grade-level teams all have a place in PLCs. This session explores teams' expectations and responsibilities.

Participants in this session learn key factors of teams in a PLC model, including:

- How different teams function individually (loose) and interdependently (tight) in a PLC
- The definition of a true *team* and how this compares to your existing teams
- The interconnected roles and responsibilities of building leadership teams, teacher teams, and RTI teams

- Understanding the relationship between trust and achievement on your teams and in your school

Two Steps Forward, One Step Back: Persevering Through Challenges and Setbacks

Like cultivating a garden, cultivating a highly effective PLC requires preparation, perseverance, and continuous monitoring and nurturing. Ongoing challenges and new variables inevitably arise, leading to setbacks, derailment, or paralysis. Leading PLCs is a delicate balance of attending to *culture* and *structure* at the same time. We must understand and remind ourselves that challenges are part of the continuous improvement cycle. Participants in this interactive session share their stories and learn from one another about how to maintain momentum in their PLCs.

Participants in this interactive session:

- Learn how to stay the course and maintain the essential elements of an effective PLC.
- Practice with tools and techniques for monitoring what is loose versus tight in your PLC.
- Explore the causes of resistance and understand how changing behavior leads to changing culture.
- Study examples from schools that have overcome common obstacles and setbacks.
- Develop strategies to overcome passivity and inaction.

Luis F. Cruz

[KEYNOTE] Transformational Leadership: Aligning Adult Behaviors to Fuel Our PLC Journey

As a result of the pandemic, inequities revealed nationwide beg the question, Are we really all in this together? Since schools do not exist in a vacuum and have inherited social inequities, educators must embrace bold leadership approaches to ensure high levels of learning for all.

As we reimagine school leadership in a new and challenging context, we must accept that our PLC journey ultimately is fueled by changing adult behaviors. But what happens when well-intentioned adults in our schools refuse to commit to the necessary behaviors? Luis F. Cruz, a former elementary, middle, and high school principal, reveals insights from his best-selling book, *Time for Change: Four Essential Skills for Transformational School and District Leaders* (2019), to guide participants in the work of creating robust PLCs. In addition, Dr. Cruz reminds us of the moral imperative we all share that must act as the driving force for PLC implementation back home.

Task Forces: The Secret Weapon PLCs Use to Close Opportunity Gaps in Learning

A strong and focused PLC ensures high levels of learning for all students. To achieve this goal, PLCs acknowledge that achievement gaps result when traditional school systems don't give historically marginalized students the opportunity to learn. Task forces assemble teams of educators to confront systemic barriers that hinder English learners, students with individual education plans, and economically disadvantaged students, to name a few disenfranchised student cohorts. Luis F. Cruz

shares how task forces redesign systems in seven steps to ensure all students learn at high levels, including those traditionally excluded from optimal opportunities.

Participants in this session learn:

- Why our traditional school system was designed to produce achievement gaps
- How collective leadership in the form of a task force initiates the required action to effectively address gaps in learning
- How the PLC process is synonymous with equity and redesigning a system never originally designed for today's definition of *all*

I Like the Vibe Here! So How Do We Initiate and Sustain 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? How do we maintain the momentum of a successfully initiated PLC? Luis F. Cruz explains and expands upon the who, why, and how associated with the PLC process.

Participants in this session learn:

- How to initiate and sustain the PLC process
- The role of collective leadership in the form of a guiding coalition
- Why and how to establish and sustain the foundational pillars of a PLC

English Learners and PLCs

Luis F. Cruz shares how schools use PLC strategies to help English learner populations flourish. By effectively using PLC components, administrative and teacher leaders close achievement gaps for students learning English as an additional language. Dr. Cruz shows how EL task-force leaders reculture and restructure, while introducing best practices to increase learning outcomes for all students.

Participants in this session learn:

- Why students learning English as an additional language are an asset and not a deficit
- How teacher-led task forces increase academic performance for students learning English as an additional language
- How the PLC process is tweaked to more effectively address the learning needs of EL students

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

The third critical question of effective collaboration, What do we do when students don't learn?, often stumps teachers and administrators. Luis F. Cruz showcases methods that schools use to guarantee

collaboration (taping the room) and to ensure a 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 effective teacher teams collaborate and respond when students do not learn
- How to incorporate the five nonnegotiable vessels of the PLC Process
- How the use of common assessments is the lynch pin between PLC and RTI at work processes

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

As educators initiate the PLC process, they need practical tools to begin and enhance the journey. However, educators might discover that their staff needs convincing when it comes to embracing and implementing PLC at Work. Luis F. Cruz shares resources, movie clips, and a powerful activity to convince administrative and teacher leaders why implementation of the PLC process must become and continue to be a priority.

Participants in this session learn:

- Practical actions to accelerate PLC at Work.
- The four schools activity
- Why resistance to the PLC process is to be expected

Scott Cunningham

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

Scott A. Cunningham leads an exploration of 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.

Help Your Team! Working Together to Solve Common Team Challenges in a PLC at Work

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 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 Scott A. Cunningham 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.

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 through Solution Tree. 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.

Robert Eaker

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, and coaches regularly employ successful strategies in nonacademic school settings. In particular, the tactics football coaches use to win on the gridiron on Friday nights are similar to school teams' efforts 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.

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.

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 PLC concepts and practices districtwide.

Willy-Nilly Doesn't Work Here Anymore!

Robert Eaker shares how disjointed incrementalism in schools undermines efforts in achieving high levels of learning for all students. Dr. Eaker bases this session on the research in Michael Rutter's book *Fifteen Thousand Hours: Secondary Schools and Their Effects on Children* (1982), recounting a three-year study of a dozen secondary schools in large urban areas. Highly effective schools have one thing in common: agreed-upon ways of doing things—doing the right things for the right reasons in the right ways at the right times. The process begins with reaching a consensus on the *why* of work before focusing on the *what*.

Aaron Hansen

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.

Outcomes for this session include:

- Discussing common structural barriers that prevent singletons from joining collaborative teams and learning how others have overcome those challenges
- Gaining the understanding necessary to develop an action plan to incorporate singletons into the PLC process

Owning Their Learning: Students as Partners in Next Generation Rigor

To reach the levels of rigor being demanded of them on high-stakes assessments and life in the innovation era, students must become owners of their learning. All too often, students sit passively in compliance doing assignments, but aren't really *learning* what is intended. Participants will be challenged to rethink their teaching stance to become more learner centered by embedding PLC and RTI concepts into their daily practice. Participants walk away with strategies they can use in their schools and classrooms tomorrow to empower students to own their learning.

Participants can expect to:

- Learn the difference between a delivery-centered stance and a learner-centered stance and how to apply these concepts to empower students.
- Walk away with self-generated strategies for empowering students to reach their true potential.
- Be re-inspired!

Making Students the Hero in Their Learning Journey: Developing Hope, Self-Efficacy, and Motivation Through PLCs at Work

Teachers and leaders will be inspired to rethink their roles and to accept the challenge of fundamentally shifting student mindsets from apathy, compliance, and even victimization to hope. Students develop the courage to try, face failure, and try again. They learn they are capable and powerful individuals with the capacity for changing the trajectory of their lives and those of future generations to come. Teachers and leaders experience fulfillment, renewed purpose, and excitement for their work as they use the seven-step framework for helping students develop self-efficacy and motivation.

Participants can expect to:

- Learn how to use the seven-step framework for helping students take ownership, set goals, become motivated, self-assess their progress, course correct, and engage in metacognition, all to develop a strong sense of self-efficacy.
- Learn how the PLC process is the foundation for making new stories possible.
- Be re-inspired and recommitted to making a difference!

Jason Hillman

Don't Get Stuck! Getting the Most Out of Collaborative Team Meetings

A collaborative culture is one of the three big ideas in the PLC model, and collaborative teams are a cornerstone of the PLC process. Getting started and maintaining productive collaborative sessions can be a daunting task. This session provides real-world applications of strategies and tools to help get teams started and avoid getting stuck in the process. Jason Hillman discusses strategies and tools his teams use to aid them on their PLC journey and that ultimately propelled them to become a model PLC school through Solution Tree.

Learning outcomes from this session include:

- Understanding the makeup of a positive and productive collaborative team session
- Gaining practical tools and strategies to help their collaborative teams get started and keep moving forward
- Learning how to systematically build collaboration throughout their buildings

What You Do Matters! Taking Charge of Your School's Culture

School culture has to be purposefully and systematically developed. If we as educators do not have a plan to develop the culture of our school, it will develop on its own—and it may not be the culture we want. In order to create a positive and productive culture, we need to get the voices of our positive and productive leaders in the room. Oftentimes, these leaders are not vocal and feel isolated. This session provides a practical approach—including activities—to develop and maintain a positive school culture.

Learning outcomes from this session include:

- Understanding school culture
- Gaining practical strategies to develop the culture in their schools
- Ways to create and sustain a collaborative culture through shared leadership
- Clearly understanding the importance of their role in developing school culture

Blue Ribbon Journey: How a Failing School Transformed Through the PLC Process

Nationally recognized principal Jason Hillman presents the action steps he took with his staff as their school transformed from a failing school to a National Blue Ribbon Award winner. Jason discusses the collaborative vision- and mission-building process his staff went through that ultimately changed the culture of the building. Participants in this session explore authentic PLC strategies and processes they can employ within their own schools and classrooms and watch a video that illustrates collaboration with a focus on student and adult learning. This powerful story of Meadowlark Elementary School's transformation is instructional and motivational.

Learning outcomes from this session include:

- Establishing a practical approach to creating a shared vision and mission (or mantra)
- Discovering a process to create clear goals and developing a system to achieve continuous progress toward those goals
- Learning how to systematically embed professional development through the PLC process

Timothy D. Kanold

Heart & Soul: Living a Fully Engaged, High-Energy, Well-Balanced Professional Life!

Ours is a profession of “emotional labor,” and it is easy to experience mental and emotional exhaustion from the daily actions of our work life. Living the PLC life can be an experience of joy, and it can also sometimes leave teachers and leaders feeling overwhelmed. Relationships are hard work!

Timothy D. Kanold notes, “I have been exhausted at times and lost contact with the joy of my work life. So it is for you. Sooner or later, the world of your professional life stretches you beyond your limits. Yet, there are daily routines to help you regain your balance, renew your energy, and experience a state of heightened positive emotion at work, once again.”

By understanding their *heartprint* and *soul story* impact, attendees learn routines to overcome prolonged stress and avoid potential burnout. Dr. Kanold draws from his award-winning *HEART! Fully Forming Your Professional Life as a Teacher and Leader* (2018) and the companion *SOUL! Fulfilling the Promise of Your Professional Life* (2021) to provide research, insights, and reflective tools for every season of professional life.

Participants can expect to:

- Consider daily routines for developing a positive emotional response to students and colleagues every day.
- Understand how compassion and self-compassion can prevent emotional exhaustion and burnout.
- Consider how to develop your relational intelligence at work and home.
- Discover how to *live your best life* through the use of daily, well-balanced Quadrant II quietude.

Leading the PLC Life: Eliminating Barriers, Creating Vision, and Teaching the Loose-Tight Culture

School-site administrators and leaders, guiding coalition members, instructional coaches, and school district or central office administrators, face the challenge of guiding others into PLC life. They help those they lead to overcome obstacles for the sustained implementation of the PLC process.

Timothy D. Kanold reveals how to become dynamic and inspiring decision makers others want to follow. As participants identify primary barriers to the PLC life, Dr. Kanold facilitates dialogue to find meaningful solutions based on understanding what is loose and tight in a PLC at Work culture. He reveals how to use a shared vision as the voice of authority to impact positive change, and examines how to effectively monitor the quality of the PLC process by celebrating actions that advance the shared vision and values (commitments) of your leadership life.

Participants can expect to:

- Identify school site- and district-level barriers to full PLC process implementation.
- Use a loose-tight model for PLC implementation focus and improvement.
- Learn how to create a shared working vision for the PLC work and process.
- Become inspiring leaders others will want to follow.

Your PreK–12 PLC Mathematics Focus: Great Instruction and Tasks!

Timothy D. Kanold explores how collaborative teams can improve student achievement in mathematics through the balanced use of lower- and higher-level-cognitive-demand tasks and classroom discourse combined with meaningful formative feedback during instruction.

Dr. Kanold shares research-affirmed lesson design criteria essential to student perseverance, development of self-efficacy, and sustained effort in mathematics class every day. He shares sample mathematics tasks and online resources for teacher support.

Participants use the PLC mathematics lesson design model to:

- Examine research-affirmed teaching actions that maximize student learning during a mathematics lesson.
- Consider how to use prior knowledge activities effectively.
- Examine the balanced use of lower- and higher-level-cognitive-demand tasks during class.
- Embrace the balanced use of small-group student discourse as part of a formative feedback process that encourages student perseverance, engagement, effort, efficacy, and participation during the lesson.

Educator Wellness: Routines and Strategies for Living Your Best Life!

Timothy D. Kanold and his colleague Tina H. Boogren define educator wellness as a “continuous, active process toward achieving a positive state of good health and enhanced physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being.” They have created a research-affirmed educator wellness framework for rating, reflecting, and acting to improve the daily well-being and wellness story of everyone working within the educational enterprise.

Dr. Kanold shares how all teachers, leaders, and staff can be immersed in and not exhausted by their work life. He reveals five routines for improving weekly wellness and well-being to help participants bring their best selves to work each day.

Participants can expect to:

- Use the mental wellness routine of *efficacy* to build confidence and competence at work.
- Embrace the emotional wellness routine of *mindfulness* to build atomic habits that stick.
- Give the physical wellness routine of *movement* a shout in everyday life.
- Understand how to use the social wellness routines of *trust* and *relationships* to develop friendships and effectively collaborate with others.

Paula Maeker

Deconstruct to Reconstruct: Building the Framework for Essential Learning

We’ve all heard the saying, “Teaching isn’t hard. But effective teaching is!” So how do classroom teachers make the shift from teaching content to guaranteeing learning in initial instruction? Collaboratively! This session takes teams through the process of identifying essential outcomes, deconstructing and reconstructing essential standards, and creating a pacing guide to design a

framework that ensures all students reach grade-level, course, or content-essential expectations or higher (or come insanely close)!

Participants can expect to:

- Build shared expertise in the power of deconstructing essential learning into targets and goals.
- Learn the application of deconstructing, reconstructing, and mapping essential learning outcomes.
- Connect shared learning with shared action.

Literacy at Work: Teams Accelerating Essential Outcomes for *All* Students

Literacy is at the center of learning. Without students developing strong skills in reading, writing, and oral language, the learning gap widens exponentially. A PLC at Work asks teams to collectively articulate what every student must know and be able to do. This becomes particularly complicated when teams try to tackle identifying what is essential from the seemingly unending scope of literacy learning and standards. In this session, Paula Maeker guides collaborative teams in learning how to identify, prioritize, and clarify essential learning targets in literacy and create a powerful, actionable response that accelerates literacy learning for every child, every day.

Participants can expect to:

- Develop a framework for establishing essential literacy standards.
- Build shared expertise in the power of deconstructing essential literacy learning into targets and goals.
- Explore tools and strategies to guide collaborative literacy teams through the four critical questions of a PLC at Work.

All-Inclusive! Collectively Meeting the Diverse Needs of *All* Learners

The word *all*, by definition, does not exclude, so how do we meet the varied and unique needs of learners who are eligible for additional services? If we embrace the idea that every student is *our* student, then we need systems and structures that deepen collaboration for all students' success. Teachers learn how to provide access and support to all learners through the Professional Learning Communities at Work process framework. Designed for both general and special educators and based on the book *Yes We Can!* (Solution Tree, 2016), this session provides participants with strategies and protocols to examine mindsets and collaborative processes to ensure higher learning levels for *all* students. No low expectations allowed!

This session asks participants to:

- Examine past and current realities regarding special education.
- Reflect on practices that do and do not support a culture of learning for all.

- Learn strategies for effective and purposeful collaboration between general and special educators.

Leveling Up: Taking Collaborative Teams From Good to Great!

How do you make a professional learning community that is sustaining the right work in the right way even better? Intentionally! Even for highly effective collaborative teams, the journey of continuous improvement never ends. In this session, Paula Maeker delves into the beliefs and behaviors that level up the collaborative practices of teams that are already embracing the PLC at Work process and want to elevate their practice or purpose. Better never stops!

Participants can expect to:

- Reflect on current beliefs and behaviors that align and support the PLC at Work process.
- Explore the characteristics of high-performing collaborative teams.
- Learn how reinvesting in the four critical questions of a PLC can drive even greater student achievement.
- Gain tools and strategies to take teams to the next level of implementation.

Something's Always Going Right! Celebrating Purpose, Practice, and Progress in a PLC at Work

The journey of building a culture of collaboration that ensures high levels of learning for all isn't easy! How do we keep the joy of this work at the core of our mission, vision, values, and goals? To sustain the momentum of the PLC process, educational communities must celebrate small wins early and often. Engaging in intentional celebrations along the way builds collective teacher efficacy, provides intentional alignment of beliefs and behaviors, and creates a culture of purpose and fulfillment. Let's 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 from the lens of the four guiding questions.
- Explore ideas and tools for schoolwide celebrations in learning.

Anthony Muhammad

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

The impact of COVID-19 will have long-lasting effects on every facet of our society. Very few institutions were more disrupted than schools. The pandemic affected staffing, funding, morale, and the continuity of student learning. Anthony Muhammad explores the history of the field of education and examines why the tenets of the PLC at Work process were important before the global pandemic and why they will be even more important after the pandemic. This is not the time to back away from PLCs; this is the time to reinforce the foundation of the PLC at Work process.

Participants in this session learn that:

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

Building Culture, Creating Purpose, and Overcoming Frustration on Your PLC Journey

Anthony Muhammad addresses two vital stages in creating a PLC culture: 1) establishing philosophical agreement and building shared purpose, and 2) addressing staff frustration and reluctance to change. He leads an exploration of theories linking school culture and student learning, and participants leave with practical strategies to transform 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 established where people embrace collective responsibility? Anthony Muhammad 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. Dr. 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.

Overcoming the Achievement Gap Trap: Liberating Mindsets to Effect Change

More than 20 years ago, the first book on PLC at Work was published by Richard DuFour and Robert Eaker. The PLC at Work process 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 today? Without exception, schools that use this system 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 at Work practice
- Learning the difference between leadership behaviors that undermine and those that promote the purpose of a PLC
- Exploring practical strategies that improve the ability to lead others through the change process and build consensus

Beyond Test Scores! The PLC at Work Process and Serving the Whole Child

The PLC at Work process is committed to a focus on *learning*. Learning does not have to be narrowly defined by academic standards and state test scores. Anything that we want students to learn—including social and emotional health, resilience, citizenship, entrepreneurship, and civility—can all be facilitated through the four PLC questions. If the COVID-19 pandemic taught anything, it is that human beings are complex and our holistic well-being is important.

Participants can expect to learn:

- How to strategically plan to define, assess, and address nonacademic student traits
- Strategies to engage counselors, social workers, and other nonacademic staff members in the PLC at Work process
- How to prioritize and promote student needs beyond test scores and student labels

Maria Nielsen

The 15-Day Challenge: Win Quick, Win Often!

This interactive session establishes, reboots, or re-energizes the work of collaborative teams. Schools nationwide 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.

Common Assessments: The Key to Uncommon Results for Student and Teacher Learning

The secret is out: Common formative assessments are the key to improving student learning! Formative assessments are powerful when teams of teachers create assessments in common, then share and discuss the results. This collaborative process leads to a dramatic increase in student learning and improved teaching practices. Maria Nielsen provides proven tools to use common assessments across

grade levels and departments and illustrates practical strategies for implementing and using assessments to substantially improve student and adult learning.

Participants in this session:

- Examine the benefits of using common assessment as a grade level or department.
- Understand the balance between formative and summative assessments.
- Gain formative assessment tools to increase student and adult learning.
- Discover quick and easy ways to look at data and drill down to individual students.

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 guarantee students additional time and support for learning when they need it. 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.
- Consider key elements and aligned actions of effective RTI/MTSS practices.
- Examine the most common RTI mistakes.
- Review a tool for assessing the progress and opportunities for the district, school, or team in considering next steps.

Elementary ELA Strategies to Keep Your Students on Track

Maria Nielsen takes educators on an interactive journey to gain new and exciting ELA and writing strategies as a team. In this fast-paced session, elementary teachers gain clarity about ELA standards and explore how reading and writing go hand-in-hand for increased student learning. Participants also learn how to focus on year-long essential standards while using a district-prescribed curriculum.

In this session, participants:

- Gather tools and graphic organizers to connect reading and writing.
- Understand learning progressions on literacy-focused instruction and assessment.
- Overlay essential standards with district-prescribed curricula.
- Examine research-based teaching strategies to improve classroom instruction.

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.

Steve Pearce

Guiding Coalitions That Drive the PLC Process

The PLC at Work process is a change that no school leader can conduct alone. Having a guiding coalition to lead this work is a crucial and vital step in becoming a true PLC. Most schools have a school leadership team, but do they actually function as a guiding coalition that leads the PLC process in their building?

Participants in this session learn:

- What a guiding coalition is
- Who should be in the guiding coalition
- What work the guiding coalition should lead and support
- Practical tips and ideas to ensure that your guiding coalition is successful

What’s Next? Monthly Extensions to Challenge Proficient Students in a PLC

When we take on the mission of becoming a high-level PLC at Work, we are ensuring high levels of learning for all students. One group of students who are often omitted from our deliberate and intentional planning are the students who already know the material. In this session, participants learn all about question four of the PLC process and gain strategies, protocols, and tools that can be incorporated into future units of study.

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.

The Collaborative Team: The Engine That Drives the PLC Process

The PLC at Work framework is ultimately driven by the work of collaborative teams in each school.

Participants in this session explore the *why* behind the impact of teams and practical strategies around the topics of:

- Focusing on the right work
- Meaningful protocols and products
- Dealing with conflict
- Becoming a model collaborative team