

Charlotte PLC Agenda

Charlotte, NC • June 28–30, 2022

Tuesday, June 28

6:30–8:00 a.m.	Registration, Continental Breakfast	Ballroom Pre-Function 1
8:00–9:45 a.m.	Keynote —Tim Brown <i>From Promises to Assurances: A PLC at Work</i>	Richardson Ballroom
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:30 a.m.	Breakout Sessions	(See pages 3–6.)
11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)	
1:00–2:30 p.m.	Breakout Sessions	(See pages 3–6.)
2:30–2:45 p.m.	Break	
2:45–3:45 p.m.	Panel Discussion — <i>Presenters answer your most pressing questions.</i>	Richardson Ballroom

Wednesday, June 29

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Registration, Continental Breakfast	Ballroom Pre-Function 1
8:00–9:45 a.m.	Keynote —Anthony Muhammad <i>The Way Forward: PLC at Work and the Bright Future of Education</i>	Richardson Ballroom
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:30 a.m.	Breakout Sessions	(See pages 3–6.)
11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)	
1:00–2:30 p.m.	Breakout Sessions	(See pages 3–6.)
2:30–2:45 p.m.	Break	
2:45–3:45 p.m.	Team Time — <i>Presenters aid in your collaborative team discussions.</i>	Richardson Ballroom

Thursday, June 30

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Continental Breakfast	Ballroom Pre-Function 1
8:00–9:30 a.m.	Breakout Sessions	(See pages 3–6.)
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>	Richardson Ballroom

Agenda is subject to change.

Breakout Sessions at a Glance

Presenters & Titles	Tuesday, June 28		Wednesday, June 29		Thursday, June 30
	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.
Kristen Bordonaro					
Instructional Strategies Designed to Improve Student Outcomes	E218				E218
My Student Is Struggling. Now What?		E218	E218		
Yes We Can! Creating Learning Environments Where <i>All</i> Students Can Learn				E218	
Tim Brown					
You Can Learn! Building Student Ownership, Motivation, and Efficacy With the PLC at Work Process	Richardson Ballroom				Richardson Ballroom
Building a Commitment to Learning in Students		Richardson Ballroom			
From Forming to Performing			Richardson Ballroom		
Doubling the Speed of Learning: Activating the Keys of Formative Assessment to Create a Culture of Learning				Richardson Ballroom	
Luis F. Cruz					
Task Forces: The Secret Weapon PLCs Use to Close Opportunity Gaps in Learning	E219 A				
I Like the Vibe Here! So How Do We Initiate and Sustain Our PLC Journey?		E219 A			
English Learners and PLCs			E219 A		
Taping Before Painting: Taking the Critical Steps to Respond Collectively When Students Don't Learn				E219 A	

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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.
I Am Sold on PLCs: Practical Tools and Directions to Be Successful					E219 A
Jennifer Deinhart					
Identifying Essential Standards: Prioritizing Your Mathematics Curriculum	E221 A				
Instructional Coaching in a PLC at Work: Tips for Common Challenges		E221 A			
Student Goal Setting in a PLC at Work			E221 A		E221 A
The Work of Teams: Choosing High-Level Mathematics Tasks to Engage Students (K–5)				E221 A	
Aaron Hansen					
How to Develop PLCs for Singletons and Small Schools	E217				
Owning Their Learning: Students as Partners in Next Generation Rigor		E217		E217	
Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Secondary Schools			E217		
Making Students the Hero in Their Learning Journey: Developing Hope, Self-Efficacy, and Motivation Through PLCs at Work					E217
Paula Maeker					
Deconstruct to Reconstruct: Building the Framework for Essential Learning	E216				
Literacy at Work: Teams Accelerating Essential Outcomes for <i>All</i> Students		E216			

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All-Inclusive! Collectively Meeting the Diverse Needs of <i>All</i> Learners			E216		
Leveling Up: Taking Collaborative Teams From Good to Great!				E216	
Something's Always Going Right! Celebrating Purpose, Practice, and Progress in a PLC					E216
Anthony Muhammad					
Building Culture, Creating Purpose, and Overcoming Frustration on Your PLC Journey	E219 BC				
Collaboration Is a Lifestyle, Not a Meeting!		E219 BC		E219 BC	
Overcoming the Achievement Gap Trap: Liberating Mindsets to Effect Change			E219 BC		
Beyond Test Scores! The PLC at Work Process and Serving the Whole Child					E219 BC
Maria Nielsen					
The 15-Day Challenge: Win Quick, Win Often!	E219 D				
Common Assessments: The Key to Uncommon Results for Student and Teacher Learning		E219 D			
Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Elementary Schools			E219 D		
Elementary ELA Strategies to Keep Your Students on Track				E219 D	
Show Me What Ya Got: Student Engagement Strategies to Keep the Pulse on Learning					E219 D
Barbara Phillips					

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From Clarity to Competence: Translating Essential Standards Into Effective Daily Practice	E212 BD				
The Air Feels Different: Strategies for Engaging Students in the PLC Process		E212 BD		E212 BD	
The Picture That Drives Success: Charting the Course of Your PLC Journey			E212 BD		E212 BD

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Session Descriptions

Kristen Bordonaro

Instructional Strategies Designed to Improve Student Outcomes

When working with students who aren't demonstrating mastery following the curriculum, it can become difficult to determine what strategies to implement. Teachers often have a variety of strategies in their teaching tool box, but it can be difficult to determine what to use and when. Throughout this session, Kristen Bordonaro discusses practical, easy-to-implement strategies to keep expectations high and meet the needs of struggling students.

Participants in this session can expect to:

- Utilize high-leverage practices to increase student achievement.
- Collect data to determine if the strategies are working effectively and efficiently.

My Student Is Struggling. Now What?

For general education teachers, it is so hard to know where to start and how to document what we are doing to support students when they begin to struggle in the classroom. In this session, Kristen Bordonaro focuses on the key strategies for teachers to implement when they notice a student beginning to struggle and how to create a learning progression that documents their interventions.

Participants in this session can expect to:

- Identify how to recognize when a student is beginning to struggle.
- Implement an individualized learning plan to document interventions.
- Collect data on interventions to support problem-solving conversations.

Yes We Can! Creating Learning Environments Where All Students Can Learn

Students who receive special education services can demonstrate the highest levels of success when high expectations are set by their teams. Even with the highest expectations, students must have the support of collaborative teams that have a clear understanding of what is needed. It can be overwhelming for general education and special education teachers to create a framework for student success and to know where to start. Participants learn how to act as content specialists and instructional strategists to meet the needs of *all* students.

Participants in this session can expect to:

- Understand the roles of the content strategist and instructional strategist.
- Implement collaborative strategies to increase communication between general education and special education.
- Collect data to determine if the student's plan is working effectively and efficiently.

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.

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

Jennifer Deinhart

Identifying Essential Standards: Prioritizing Our Mathematics Curriculum (K–5)

It is important for collaborative teams in Professional Learning Communities at Work to identify essential standards of learning within a mathematics curriculum. In order to implement a guaranteed and viable curriculum during core instruction, while also providing systematic and targeted interventions for students, we need to first determine which standards are most essential. Participants in this session have an opportunity to put these ideas into practice and leave with an understanding of the process as well as tools to use back at their schools.

Participants in this session:

- Build common knowledge around key concepts and terms.
- Establish criteria for identifying essential standards and prioritize which standards are critical for high levels of learning.
- Preview next steps for unpacking essential standards.

Instructional Coaching in a PLC at Work: Tips for Common Challenges

As instructional leaders, coaches are often at the center of the work of collaborative teams. Jennifer Deinhart presents strategies to overcome common challenges while staying true to the PLC at Work process. Participants engage in an open dialogue about effective collaborative team meetings and working with teammates who are resistant to change.

Participants in this session:

- Explore the different meeting structures that support collaborative teams answering the four critical questions of learning.
- Use their own experiences to collectively brainstorm possible solutions for the challenges all instructional leaders face.
- Take time to plan agendas and structures for team meetings.

Student Goal Setting in a PLC at Work

Jennifer Deinhart explores how teams answer the four critical questions of learning through the lens of student goal setting. Through this work, teams dig deeply into the most essential standards and see how goal setting leads to more targeted instruction. Participants also learn how to engage students in being reflective of their own work and next steps in learning.

Participants in this session:

- Explore how teams learn content and develop progressions for learning around essential standards.
- Develop skills in creating quality assessments, common scoring practices, and student self-reflection.
- Learn how to have more purposeful data discussions that result in targeted instruction.

The Work of Teams: Choosing High-Level Mathematics Tasks to Engage Students (K–5)

Engaging students in cognitively demanding tasks often provides opportunities for teachers to facilitate rich discussions around mathematics. Using high-level tasks during instruction can also support student engagement in the Standards for Mathematical Practice. Explore how collaborative teams can intentionally select appropriate tasks and design lessons that include questions to guide students in productive talk.

Participants in this session:

- Examine Standards for Mathematical Practice: 1) Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them. 2) Construct viable arguments. 3) Critique the reasoning of others.
- Identify high-level tasks that provide students with opportunities to justify their responses.

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!

Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Secondary Schools

If the fundamental purpose of being a professional learning community is to ensure all students learn at high levels, then there must be time embedded during the school day to provide students extra time and support to succeed. In this session, Mike Mattos provides real examples showing how to create time for supplemental and intensive interventions.

Participants learn specific steps to implement a flexible secondary intervention period, including how to:

- Learn specific steps to implement a flexible intervention period.
- 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.

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 reinspired and recommitted to making a difference!

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.

Barbara Phillips

From Clarity to Competence: Translating Essential Standards Into Effective Daily Practice

Getting crystal clear on what students must know and be able to do can be challenging. Educators are faced with far too many learning standards that are often written in unfriendly language. In this

session, Barbara Phillips provides participants with comprehensive tools and step-by-step practice to identify and unwrap essential standards. Participants focus on four critical elements of effective instruction to create aligned daily lessons that ensure high levels of learning for all.

Participants in the session can expect to:

- Practice the process of identifying and unwrapping essential learning standards.
- Identify four research-based elements of effective instruction.
- Learn how to translate an unwrapped standard into highly effective, engaging lessons.

The Air Feels Different: Strategies for Engaging Students in the PLC Process

When the PLC at Work process is implemented with fidelity, it creates a sense of energy and momentum like no other. The air in the school feels different! In this session, Barbara Phillips provides participants with specific strategies for engaging students in the process to extend their voice and sense of belonging within the learning community.

Participants in the session can expect to:

- Review the three big ideas of a professional learning community.
- Explain why engaging students in the PLC at Work process is critical.
- Identify specific strategies to deliberately model and engage students in the process.
- Create a plan for implementing student-engaging strategies within a PLC.

The Picture That Drives Success: Charting the Course of Your PLC Journey

Just as the picture on the front of a jigsaw puzzle box provides a guide for successful puzzle completion, a comprehensive plan of how to systematically implement the many moving parts of professional learning communities is also imperative for success. In this session, participants assess their school's current reality and construct a multiyear plan to achieve the ultimate goal of becoming a model PLC.

Participants in the session can expect to:

- Reflect on their current reality regarding PLC essential practices.
- Chart a projected year-by-year course of action to reach PLC success.
- Define the success criteria that will be used to evidence progress throughout the journey.