

PLC at Work Institute Agenda

Fort Worth, TX • June 5–7, 2023

Monday, June 5

6:30–8:00 a.m.	Registration	Locations TBD
	Continental Breakfast	
8:00–9:45 a.m.	Keynote —Mike Mattos <i>The Urgency of the Moment</i>	
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:30 a.m.	Breakout Sessions	See pages 2–4.
11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)	
1:00–2:30 p.m.	Breakout Sessions	See pages 2–4.
2:30–2:45 p.m.	Break	
2:45–3:45 p.m.	Panel Discussion — <i>Presenters answer your most pressing questions.</i>	

Tuesday, June 6

6:30–8:00 a.m.	Registration	Locations TBD
	Continental Breakfast	
8:00–9:45 a.m.	Keynote —Julie A. Schmidt <i>Coming soon!</i>	
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:30 a.m.	Breakout Sessions	See pages 2–4.
11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)	
1:00–2:30 p.m.	Breakout Sessions	See pages 2–4.
2:30–2:45 p.m.	Break	
2:45–3:45 p.m.	Team Time — <i>Presenters aid in your collaborative team discussions.</i>	

Wednesday, June 7

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Continental Breakfast	Locations TBD
8:00–9:30 a.m.	Breakout Sessions	See pages 2–4.
9:30–9:45 a.m.	Break	
9:45–11:45 a.m.	Keynote —Sarah Schuhl <i>The Time is Now: The Journey Awaits</i>	

Agenda is subject to change.

Breakout Sessions at a Glance

Presenters & Titles	Monday, June 5		Tuesday, June 6		Wednesday, June 7
	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.
William M. Ferriter					
Collaborative Tools for Learning Teams in a PLC at Work	X				
You Can Learn! Building Student Ownership, Motivation, and Efficacy With the PLC at Work Process		X			X
Understanding the Role of the Guiding Coalition in a Professional Learning Community			X		
Making Differentiation Doable				X	
Michael J. Maffoni					
I Think They Are, Aren't They? The Role of Leadership in Monitoring the Development of PLCs	X		X		
Energize Your Teams: Coaching Collaborative Teams From Next Practice to Best Practice		X			X
The Five Keys to Effective Team Meetings: Keeping Focused on the Right Work				X	
Mike Mattos					
Are We a Group or a Team?	X				
Taking Action: How to Create a Highly Effective, Multitiered System of Supports		X			
Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Secondary Schools			X		
Behavior Solutions: Leveraging the PLC at Work Process to Teach Essential Behaviors				X	
Guiding Principles for Principals: Tips and Tools for Leading the PLC at Work Process					X

Presenters & Titles	Monday, June 5		Tuesday, June 6		Wednesday, June 7
	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.
Maria Nielsen					
The 15-Day Challenge: Win Quick, Win Often!	X				
Show Me What Ya Got: Student Engagement Strategies to Keep the Pulse on Learning		X			X
Help Your Team: Overcoming Common Collaborative Challenges in a PLC at Work			X		
Elementary ELA Strategies to Keep Your Students on Track				X	
Regina Stephens Owens					
The <i>Why</i> Effect: Intentional Systems Drive Inspirational Cultures	X				
Small Schools and Singletons: Wired for Rigor and Relevance		X			
Data Discussion for Instructional Leaders: From Data to Design to Demonstration of Learning			X		
Leveraging Technology for Learning in a PLC				X	
Coaching Competence, <i>Not</i> Compliance: Preparing Teachers to Lead by Learning					X
Barbara Phillips					
From Clarity to Competence: Translating Essential Standards Into Effective Daily Practice	X				
The Air Feels Different: Strategies for Engaging Students in the PLC Process		X		X	
The Picture That Drives Success: Charting the Course of Your PLC Journey			X		X
Julie A. Schmidt					

Presenters & Titles	Monday, June 5		Tuesday, June 6		Wednesday, June 7
	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.
Protocols for Results: Using Data Discussions to Achieve Higher Levels of Learning for <i>All</i>	X				
Differentiation for Teams: Taking It to the Next Level		X			
Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Elementary Schools			X		
Yes We Can: Collaboration by All, for All!				X	
Windows and Mirrors: Women Who Lead					X
Sarah Schuhl					
Focusing Teams and Students With Learning Targets	X				
Every Student Can Learn Mathematics: The Question Is Not <i>If</i> but <i>How</i>		X			
Data, Data, Data: What Do Teams Need? What Do Teams Do With It?			X		
Creating Common Assessments for Team and Student Learning				X	
Coaching Teams and Teachers in a PLC at Work					X
Darwin Prater Spiller					
Do You Have the Guts to Take on a PLC Fixer Upper?	X				X
A Day in the Life: PLC at Work in Action		X		X	
More Than Baking Cookies: Making Parents Crucial Members of the Learning Team			X		

Agenda is subject to change.

Session Descriptions—Day 1

KEYNOTE

Mike Mattos

The Urgency of the Moment

As educators, we face one of the most historically challenging times in our nation’s history. The years-long impact of the global pandemic has exacerbated inequities in academic achievement while creating unprecedented needs in student social-emotional health. And while more students face significant gaps in their learning, the academic rigor that all students must master for future success have never been greater. How we respond to this moment in time—this convergence of need and necessity—will have a generational impact on our students and our collective prosperity.

Fortunately, there has never been greater professional consensus on the best way to close learning gaps and ensure high levels of learning for all students: Schools and districts should function as a professional learning community. In this opening keynote, Mike Mattos sets the stage for our learning by creating a shared vision of the essential elements, thinking, and vocabulary that drive a true professional learning community.

MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS

William M. Ferriter

Collaborative Tools for Learning Teams in a PLC at Work

For many teachers, professional learning team meetings can be nothing short of overwhelming. Unaccustomed to making collective decisions, teams struggle to organize their work together and begin to question the benefit of a school’s decision to restructure as a professional learning community. Participants in this session explore the kinds of tangible structures and explicit tools that learning teams must have in place to make their collaborative meetings productive.

Participants in this session:

- Learn how personalities influence the successes or struggles of learning teams.
- Discuss the role that clear norms and expectations for behavior play in the successful work of a learning team.
- Explore practical tools and products designed to structure the work of learning teams over time.

Michael J. Maffoni

I Think They Are, Aren’t They? The Role of Leadership in Monitoring the Development of PLCs

The most effective teams have a clear understanding of the work they are being asked to do and engage in habits that help them accomplish their goals. Leaders at all levels of a school system play an important role in setting clear expectations and creating consistent processes to monitor and support the PLC process. Hoping teams “do the right work” is not an effective strategy to ensure successful implementation of the three big ideas and four critical questions of a PLC. Teams thrive when leaders strike the right balance of providing top-down pressure and bottom-up support.

This session provides participants a clear view of their role in supporting effective implementation of the PLC process and allows them to connect into ways they can monitor and support the work of schools and teams in their system without having to be present in every team meeting.

Participants in this session:

- Examine the loose-tight philosophy required to become an effective PLC at Work.
- Learn the important role district and school leaders play in monitoring the development of PLCs.
- Explore the three key characteristics for successfully monitoring the work of schools and teams.
- Investigate practical structures to monitor schools and collaborative teams.
- Determine concrete next steps to be taken to monitor the PLC process and results.

Mike Mattos

Are We a Group or a Team?

Collaborative teacher teams are the engine that drives a professional learning community. When these teams are highly engaged in the right work, student learning accelerates ... and when they are not, learning sputters and stalls. Because teachers have traditionally been required to attend grade-level or departmental team meetings, schools often mistakenly assume that merely renaming these gatherings “PLC time” represents teacher collaboration. The act of meeting together does not make a team, but instead, merely a group.

Participants in this session:

- Assess if they are currently part of a group or a team.
- Review the essential work of teacher teams in a PLC.
- Learn how to successfully navigate team disagreements.
- Leave with specific action steps to improve your teacher team.

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.

Regina Stephens Owens

The *Why* Effect: Intentional Systems Drive Inspirational Cultures

Organizational purpose, collective beliefs, and commitments affect building systems at all levels. How can we ensure that all practices and procedures are intentional and personify organizational beliefs? It all begins with the *why*. Regina Stephens Owens shares strategies to move cultures from an attitude of compliance, coercion, and fear to one that is respectful, responsive, and reflective.

Participants can expect to:

- Promote high standards of achievement for all.
- Create a collective, rather than individual, leadership focus.
- Design and sustain a values-driven culture that is evidenced by trust, transparency, reflection, and responsiveness.

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.

Julie A. Schmidt

Protocols for Results: Using Data Discussions to Achieve Higher Levels of Learning for *All*

Is your system overwhelmed with data? Using protocols to transform data into information is an efficient and effective way to achieve improved results. Participants examine tools that empower teams to use data to drive instruction, impact student learning, and identify specific processes to meet district needs.

Participants in this session:

- Review research related to and examples of data-driven decision making.
- Apply multiple protocols for data analysis.
- Reflect on their school or district's current reality, while identifying tools that can be used or modified to meet specified needs.

Sarah Schuhl

Focusing Teams and Students With Learning Targets

How can students articulate what they are learning? How can assessments be created to determine whether students are learning? Learning targets bring clarity to students and teachers about expected outcomes in each course or subject area.

Participants in this session gain insight into writing clear learning targets from standards. Sarah Schuhl discusses strategies for using learning targets to help students self-assess their progress and for collaborative teams to create and analyze common assessments.

Participants can expect to:

- Examine how to write effective learning targets.
- Develop strategies for using targets to involve students in their learning.
- Discover ways to create and analyze tests using learning targets.

Darwin Prater Spiller

Do You Have the Guts to Take on a PLC Fixer Upper?

Many schools claim to be a professional learning community. They may have teams and give lip service to the idea, but often they are just practicing “PLC lite.” True PLCs build a strong foundation, have a shared vision of what exemplary looks like, and are committed to the journey to get there.

Participants in this session:

- Discover how to prioritize resources to achieve their dream school.
- Identify the expertise of team members and use best practices strategically.
- Gather evidence of success for major transformational PLC components.
- Acquire strategies to avoid building blunders.

AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS

William M. Ferriter

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

In her research on the reasons students dropout of high school, Deborah Feldman (2017) made a surprising discovery: Most kids who walked away before graduation could track their decision to specific moments of academic challenge that caused them to stop believing in “their ability to be a student.” What are the implications of Feldman’s discovery for practitioners? It is imperative to build both the confidence and capacity of every learner. This session introduces participants to the steps that career classroom teacher and Solution Tree author Bill Ferriter has taken to use student-centered versions of the four critical questions of learning in his classroom.

Participants in this session can expect to:

- Discuss the important role that student self-efficacy plays in learning.

- Be introduced to student-centered versions of the four critical questions of the PLC at Work process.
- Explore simple student self-efficacy building strategies that can be integrated into any classroom.

Michael J. Maffoni

Energize Your Teams: Coaching Collaborative Teams From Next Practice to Best Practice

It is clear, now more than ever, that effective implementation of a PLC at Work matters and is too important to be left to chance. Coaching collaborative teams provides the necessary bridge as they cross the knowing-doing gap.

Michael J. Maffoni helps participants strengthen their PLCs through effective coaching practices. Participants examine why coached teams go further faster than uncoached teams and explore how a proven team-coaching cycle, tools, and professional development modules from *Energize Your Teams: Powerful Tools for Coaching Collaborative Teams in PLCs at Work* (Solution Tree, 2021) provide resources for schools to make the shift from “PLC Lite” to “PLC Right.”

Participants in this session:

- Learn a proven, effective coaching cycle that fortifies collaborative team and school PLC practices.
- Engage in activities to apply the coaching tools, processes, and professional development to coach collaborative teams in a PLC.
- Explore professional development modules aligned to the five essential prerequisites of a PLC so teams receive just-in-time professional development based on their specific next steps.

Mike Mattos

Taking Action: How to Create a Highly Effective, Multitiered System of Supports

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, educators face an unprecedented challenge: how to close the learning gaps created by months of school closures and uneven access to learning opportunities. In this breakout, Mike Mattos discusses specific steps that schools can take to create a highly effective, multitiered system of supports to target learning gaps and show how the PLC at Work process creates the larger, schoolwide framework required to successfully intervene.

Participants in this session:

- Gain an understanding of the guiding principles behind a multitiered system of interventions.
- Learn the essential actions that collaborative teams must complete at Tier 1 to effectively respond when students don’t learn.
- Explore how to target preventions, interventions, extension, and remediation.
- Prioritize resources to best meet student needs.

Maria Nielsen

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.

Regina Stephens Owens

Small Schools and Singletons: Wired for Rigor and Relevance

Singleton teachers are accustomed to seeking solutions and understanding opportunities as they arise. Operating efficiently and effectively within a PLC can be challenging. Team members must collaborate on common denominators, work with peers to improve professional practices and student learning, leverage technology, and authentically engage in the PLC at Work process.

Regina Stephens Owens shows how to use best practices in collaboration, and participants learn how to design action plans supporting the work of schools and singleton teachers in a PLC.

Participants can expect to:

- Gain clarity on connecting in a PLC.
- Seek solutions for successful partnering.
- Learn to function effectively in a PLC.

Barbara Phillips

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.

Julie A. Schmidt

Differentiation for Teams: Taking It to the Next Level

Highly effective PLC practices are built on the foundation of high-functioning collaborative teams. These teams recognize that each team member brings different perspectives to the table. This session focuses on understanding the dynamics of teams and assessing the current level of functioning.

Participants can expect to:

- Define the characteristics of high-performing teams.
- Engage in an activity to help build understanding for team members.
- Identify levels of team functioning.
- Consider strategies and activities to move teams to higher levels of functioning.

Sarah Schuhl

Every Student Can Learn Mathematics: The Question Is Not *If* but *How*

Mathematics collaborative teams are made of teachers who work tirelessly to grow student learning. Yet, despite every effort, too many students in too many schools are struggling. Why? What can be done? It starts with mathematics teams having an intentional and focused learning plan for the year, for every unit of instruction, and for each daily lesson. Participants in this session explore how teachers effectively plan for grade-level learning and identify the key criteria to consider when designing mathematics lessons.

Participants use the Mathematics in a PLC at Work™ lesson design model to:

- Examine research-affirmed teaching actions that maximize student learning during a mathematics lesson.
- Consider how to use prior knowledge routines effectively.
- Examine the balanced use of lower-level- 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.

Darwin Prater Spiller

A Day in the Life: PLC at Work in Action

Most people would sooner experience a sermon than merely hear it. What does it really look like when our PLC processes are running smoothly? How do our roles change? Through videos, participants in this session experience highly effective school teams unpacking standards, evaluating student work, and developing a schoolwide protocol, as well as a clip showing a school building the capacity of PLC leaders. Bring your popcorn and be ready to discuss your current realities compared to those you observe here. Design your own best day in your site or district PLC journey.

Participants in this session:

- Observe the action of a highly effective team as it works through the process of unpacking standards.
- Examine a team collaboratively evaluating student work.
- Recognize their current realities and plan next steps.

Session Descriptions—Day 2

KEYNOTE

Julie A. Schmidt

Coming soon!

MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS

William M. Ferriter

Understanding the Role of the Guiding Coalition in a Professional Learning Community

The guiding coalition in any professional learning community plays an essential role in both championing and supporting the right work. But what exactly does “championing and supporting the right work” look like in action? That’s a question answered in this session by Solution Tree author and career classroom teacher Bill Ferriter.

Participants in this session:

- Examine the role of the guiding coalition in a Professional Learning Community at Work.
- Learn more about supporting collaborative teams at different stages of development.
- Discuss the role that SMART goals for collaborative team development can play in the work of guiding coalitions.
- Discover specific tools and resources that guiding coalitions can use to support the development of collaborative teams.

Michael J. Maffoni

I Think They Are, Aren’t They? The Role of Leadership in Monitoring the Development of PLCs

The most effective teams have a clear understanding of the work they are being asked to do and engage in habits that help them accomplish their goals. Leaders at all levels of a school system play an important role in setting clear expectations and creating consistent processes to monitor and support the PLC process. Hoping teams “do the right work” is not an effective strategy to ensure successful implementation of the three big ideas and four critical questions of a PLC. Teams thrive when leaders strike the right balance of providing top-down pressure and bottom-up support.

This session provides participants a clear view of their role in supporting effective implementation of the PLC process and allows them to connect into ways they can monitor and support the work of schools and teams in their system without having to be present in every team meeting.

Participants in this session:

- Examine the loose-tight philosophy required to become an effective PLC at Work.
- Learn the important role district and school leaders play in monitoring the development of PLCs.
- Explore the three key characteristics for successfully monitoring the work of schools and teams.
- Investigate practical structures to monitor schools and collaborative teams.
- Determine concrete next steps to be taken to monitor the PLC process and results.

Mike Mattos

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.

Maria Nielsen

Help Your Team: Overcoming Common Collaborative 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 Maria Nielsen and other educators who possess a wide range of backgrounds and experiences in all education levels.

Participants in this session:

- Identify common challenges that limit team efficacy.
- Collaboratively resolve specific challenges and share strategies to help teams progress.
- Practice specific coaching strategies designed to assist teams in their critical work.

Regina Stephens Owens

Data Discussion for Instructional Leaders: From Data to Design to Demonstration of Learning

In a time of tremendous focus on data, it is imperative to grow a rich collaborative culture through dialogue and data protocols—moving from a deficit mindset to a growth mindset. Participants in this session discover ways to create this culture, use data as information, and increase team capacity and student learning.

Participants can expect to:

- Focus on results through the lens of data.
- Move from data to demonstration of learning.
- Ensure their beliefs and behaviors align as they utilize data.

Barbara Phillips

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, Barbara Phillips leads participants in assessing their school's current reality and constructing 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.

Julie A. Schmidt

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 components of systematic intervention and enrichment, participants examine protocols and criteria to assess their own schools' responses and an action-planning template for next steps in raising the bar and closing the gap in the local context.

Participants examine strategies and structures to collaboratively:

- Examine the essential core beliefs that relate to all means *all*.
- Review and reflect on the essential elements of Tiers 1, 2, and 3 intervention.
- Consider high-leverage usage of resources (human, material, structural) to meet the needs of all learners.
- Examine the most common RTI mistakes.
- Reflect on critical reminders regarding process and criteria.
- Apply a current reality assessment tool while learning.

Sarah Schuhl

Data, Data, Data: What Do Teams Need? What Do Teams Do With It?

The third big idea of a professional learning community is to focus on results. How do collaborative teams use data to: 1) make informed decisions about assessment and instruction, 2) determine whether or not students have learned, and 3) involve students in the learning process? Participants in

this session explore ways to collect and organize data and consider how to respond to the results obtained. They also learn a protocol for analyzing assessment data in a PLC collaborative team.

Darwin Prater Spiller

More Than Baking Cookies: Making Parents Crucial Members of the Learning Team

All too often, parents are relegated to stapling, labeling, or baking as school volunteers. In reality, learning teams cannot fully communicate their high expectations to students or get to the high levels of learning they desire without parents on their teams as working partners outside school. Darwin Prater Spiller shares ideas, tools, and stories of how his staff built a learning community with parents as vital partners.

Participants in this session:

- Engage in discussion on national data trends regarding parental involvement.
- Collaboratively create a toolkit of evidence-based strategies.
- Learn how to assess and celebrate parents' unique abilities and experiences.

AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS

William M. Ferriter

Making Differentiation Doable

If schools are truly working to move every student forward, learning experiences must be differentiated to meet the needs of individual students. The challenge, however, rests in making differentiation doable. While few teachers doubt the importance of differentiating, many struggle to make customized learning spaces a reality.

In this presentation, Solution Tree author and career classroom teacher Bill Ferriter introduces participants to a range of strategies that can be used to:

- Carefully plan and deliver initial attempts at remediation and enrichment in a differentiated classroom.
- Create meaningful “turn to” tasks for students to tackle after demonstrating mastery of grade level essentials.
- Systematically track progress by student and by standard.

Michael J. Maffoni

The Five Keys to Effective Team Meetings: Keeping Focused on the Right Work

Team meetings should result in team members experiencing an energy gain—not an energy drain.

This session explores the five keys to effective team meetings and how each plays a different role in helping promote positive and productive team meetings. When team meetings become unproductive or burdensome, the root of the problem is likely related to the lack of implementation of one of the

five keys of highly effective teams. Like diamonds, each of these keys are multifaceted and contribute to the team's productivity in different ways. When all are present, teams are more effective and efficient.

Participants in this session:

- Understand the five keys to effective teams and how they enhance team collaboration, effectiveness, and student learning.
- Reflect on how their team behaviors align with widely accepted best practice.
- Examine specific tools that can help provide clarity on the most common learning team tasks.

Mike Mattos

Behavior Solutions: Leveraging the PLC at Work Process to Teach Essential Behaviors

The fundamental purpose of a professional learning community is to ensure high levels of learning for all students. To achieve this mission, we know that some students will need support mastering the behaviors needed to succeed in school and beyond. Every school knows this universal truth, but many schools lack the systematic processes to achieve this outcome. In this breakout, Mike Mattos demonstrates how a school can leverage the PLC at Work process to identify, teach, assess, and intervene when students lack essential academic and social behaviors.

Participants can expect to:

- Learn how the entire school—the entire PLC—must work together to teach essential behaviors.
- Apply the four critical questions of the PLC at Work process to identify, teach, assess, and intervene around essential behaviors.
- Consider systematic, tiered supports to target behavior interventions.

Maria Nielsen

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.

Participants in this session:

- 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.

Regina Stephens Owens

Leveraging Technology for Learning in a PLC

In the changing world of education, whether face-to-face or virtual environments, learning must happen. Regina Stephens Owens provides strategies to leverage technology to ensure high levels of learning for all learners, adults and students.

Participants can expect to:

- Understand how to leverage technology in support of teamwork.
- Leverage web resources with four essential questions of a PLC.
- Utilize technology for continuous improvement and to build collective capacity.

Barbara Phillips

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.

Julie A. Schmidt

Yes We Can: Collaboration by All, for All!

When teams commit to collaborating in the PLC process dedicated to high levels of learning for *all* students, a key critical step is to examine their personal and systemic beliefs about students, themselves, and learning. Then, ensure that all systems align, bringing this vision to life. Participants in this session are provided with strategies and protocols to examine mindsets and collaborative processes to drive action planning that ensure higher levels of learning for all students. This session is designed for both general and special educators.

Participants in this session:

- Examine best practices for ensuring all means *all*.
- Learn strategies to bring each of these best practices to life in your local context.
- Reflect on local current practices and policies that do and do not align with the belief that all students can learn at high levels and identify key next steps for moving forward.

Sarah Schuhl

Creating Common Assessments for Team and Student Learning

Common assessments help students and teachers answer the second critical question of a PLC, “How do we know if students learned it?” What is the purpose of each assessment? How can they be used to help students identify what they have and have not yet learned? Participants explore considerations for writing quality common assessments and using them to involve students in their learning.

Participants can expect to:

- Understand a balanced assessment system.
- Learn criteria for creating high-quality common assessments.
- Explore how to use common assessments for student reflection and action.

Darwin Prater Spiller

A Day in the Life: PLC at Work in Action

Most people would sooner experience a sermon than merely hear it. What does it really look like when our PLC processes are running smoothly? How do our roles change? Through videos, participants in this session experience highly effective school teams unpacking standards, evaluating student work, and developing a schoolwide protocol, as well as a clip showing a school building the capacity of PLC leaders. Bring your popcorn and be ready to discuss your current realities compared to those you observe here. Design your own best day in your site or district PLC journey.

Participants in this session:

- Observe the action of a highly effective team as it works through the process of unpacking standards.
- Examine a team collaboratively evaluating student work.
- Recognize their current realities and plan next steps.

Session Descriptions—Day 3

MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS

William M. Ferriter

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

In her research on the reasons students dropout of high school, Deborah Feldman (2017) made a surprising discovery: Most kids who walked away before graduation could track their decision to specific moments of academic challenge that caused them to stop believing in “their ability to be a student.” What are the implications of Feldman’s discovery for practitioners? It is imperative to build both the confidence and capacity of every learner. This session introduces participants to the steps that career classroom teacher and Solution Tree author Bill Ferriter has taken to use student-centered versions of the four critical questions of learning in his classroom.

Participants in this session can expect to:

- Discuss the important role that student self-efficacy plays in learning.
- Be introduced to student-centered versions of the four critical questions of the PLC at Work process.
- Explore simple student self-efficacy building strategies that can be integrated into any classroom.

Michael J. Maffoni

Energize Your Teams: Coaching Collaborative Teams From Next Practice to Best Practice

It is clear, now more than ever, that effective implementation of a PLC at Work matters and is too important to be left to chance. Coaching collaborative teams provides the necessary bridge as they cross the knowing-doing gap.

Michael J. Maffoni helps participants strengthen their PLCs through effective coaching practices. Participants examine why coached teams go further faster than uncoached teams and explore how a proven team-coaching cycle, tools, and professional development modules from *Energize Your Teams: Powerful Tools for Coaching Collaborative Teams in PLCs at Work* (Solution Tree, 2021) provide resources for schools to make the shift from “PLC Lite” to “PLC Right.”

Participants in this session:

- Learn a proven, effective coaching cycle that fortifies collaborative team and school PLC practices.
- Engage in activities to apply the coaching tools, processes, and professional development to coach collaborative teams in a PLC.
- Explore professional development modules aligned to the five essential prerequisites of a PLC so teams receive just-in-time professional development based on their specific next steps.

Mike Mattos

Guiding Principles for Principals: Tips and Tools for Leading the PLC at Work Process

Becoming a professional learning community will not happen by luck, chance, or hope; it requires focused and effective leadership. In this breakout, Mike Mattos provides guiding principles, practical examples, and targeted tools to help leaders—site or district administration and teacher leaders—successfully support teacher teams.

Participants learn how to:

- Create an effective site leadership team.
- Develop and enforce team norms.
- Monitor and support the work of collaborative teams.

Maria Nielsen

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.

Regina Stephens Owens

Coaching Competence, *Not* Compliance: Preparing Teachers to Lead by Learning

In a time of great change and instability, educators and administrators more than ever need to become empowered learners. Let’s move from telling to teaching and from unsupported expectations to unmatched experiences that ensure educators are prepared for continuous learning.

Participants can expect to:

- Design and develop culture for learning.
- Learn to coach competency, not just compliance.
- Build collective capacity through shared responsibility of learning.
- Invest in personal mastery that results in increased capacity, collective responsibility, and increased achievement.

Barbara Phillips

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, Barbara Phillips leads participants in assessing their school's current reality and constructing 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.

Julie A. Schmidt

Windows and Mirrors: Women Who Lead

This session leads participants through a rollercoaster of emotions, connections, celebrations, and reflections on the historical and current challenges women face as they take on leadership roles. Participants celebrate together and reflect on vulnerabilities leading to a higher level of self-efficacy and awareness.

Participants can expect to:

- Examine some of the challenges women have historically faced when making the decision to pursue a leadership position.
- Celebrate the wins—large and small.
- Reflect on our own personal journeys.
- Walk away with connections and a higher level of self-efficacy and awareness around our own uniqueness.

Sarah Schuhl

Coaching Teams and Teachers in a PLC at Work

Instructional coaches support teachers and teams engaged in the PLC process. How can instructional coaches grow the learning of both teachers and collaborative teams in intentional coaching cycles? How is the time of instructional coaches spent to maximize teacher and student learning? Sarah Schuhl provides strategies to create meaningful and effective coaching cycles with a focus on improved student learning.

Participants can expect to:

- Learn listening strategies for effective coaching.
- Explore coaching plans for teams and teachers to use in coaching cycles.

Darwin Prater Spiller

Do You Have the Guts to Take on a PLC Fixer Upper?

Many schools claim to be a professional learning community. They may have teams and give lip service to the idea, but often they are just practicing “PLC lite.” True PLCs build a strong foundation, have a shared vision of what exemplary looks like, and are committed to the journey to get there.

Participants in this session:

- Discover how to prioritize resources to achieve their dream school.
- Identify the expertise of team members and use best practices strategically.
- Gather evidence of success for major transformational PLC components.
- Acquire strategies to avoid building blunders.

KEYNOTE

Sarah Schuhl

The Time Is Now: The Journey Awaits

All too often, schools hope students will do better from one year to the next. In a professional learning community, however, that hope is turned into action—with a clear plan to ensure learning. Staff work to embrace the three big ideas and collaborative teams answer the four critical questions. Teams build a shared understanding of standards to intentionally link instruction, assessment, and student re-engagement as needed.

Along the way, there will be roadblocks. How will you and your teams navigate the roadblocks and keep the focus on the journey ahead? Be inspired to turn learning into action and become the school you desire, one that ensures the learning of every student. Sarah Schuhl sheds light on the journey ahead and challenges you to implement your learning back at home using practical tools, protocols, and examples.