

PLC at Work Institute Agenda

Las Vegas, NV • July 17–19, 2023

Monday, July 17

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 2–5.
11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)	
1:00–2:30 p.m.	Breakout Sessions	See pages 2–5.
2:30–2:45 p.m.	Break	
2:45–3:45 p.m.	Panel Discussion — <i>Presenters answer your most pressing questions.</i>	

Tuesday, July 18

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Registration	Locations TBD
	Continental Breakfast	
8:00–9:45 a.m.	Keynote —Julie A. Schmidt <i>From Urgency to Action</i>	
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:30 a.m.	Breakout Sessions	See pages 2–5.
11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)	
1:00–2:30 p.m.	Breakout Sessions	See pages 2–5.
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, July 19

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Continental Breakfast	Locations TBD
8:00–9:30 a.m.	Breakout Sessions	See pages 2–5.
9:30–9:45 a.m.	Break	
9:45–11:45 a.m.	Keynote —Brandon Jones <i>Coming soon!</i>	

Agenda is subject to change.

Breakout Sessions at a Glance

Presenters & Titles	Monday, July 17		Tuesday, July 18		Wednesday, July 19
	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.
Michael D. Bayewitz					
Leading PLCs in High-Poverty Elementary Schools: Proven Practices for Eliminating the Achievement Gap	X		X		
Collegiality Versus Congeniality: Engaging in the Difficult Conversations of a PLC		X			X
Effective Elementary School Leadership in a PLC				X	
Tim Brown					
Building a Commitment to Learning in Students	X				
How to Build Student Ownership, Motivation, and Efficacy Through the Four Questions of a Collaborative Team		X		X	
Activating the Keys of Formative Assessment to Create a Culture of Learning			X		
Grading: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly					X
Eric Burns					
Building a Strong Foundation: The Non-Negotiable to Every PLC	X				X
Building a Productive Collaborative Culture		X		X	
Prevention Is the Best Intervention			X		
Scott Carr					
Creating a Culture of Celebration	X				X
Innovation That Leads to Learning: Engaging Students in Authentic Experiences		X		X	

Presenters & Titles	Monday, July 17		Tuesday, July 18		Wednesday, July 19
	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.
Learning Leaders: Creating a Personalized Professional Development Program			X		
Luis F. Cruz					
Task Forces: The Secret Weapon PLCs Use to Close Opportunity Gaps in Learning	X				
Embracing the Five Vessels: Learning the Non-Negotiables to Becoming a High-Functioning PLC		X			
English Learners and PLCs			X		
Taping Before Painting: Blending the PLC and RTI Processes to Collectively Respond When Students Don't Learn				X	
I Am Sold on PLCs: Practical Tools and Directions to Be Successful					X
Aaron Hansen					
<i>Coming soon!</i>					
Brandon Jones					
More Than a Mission Statement: Unifying PLC and RTI to Guarantee Learning for All	X		X		
Abandoning Archaic Practices: Motivating and Preparing Generation Z Students		X			X
Demystifying Data: Making the Process Easy, Efficient, and Effective				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		

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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.
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
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
Common Assessments: The Key to Uncommon Results for Student and Teacher Learning			X		
Elementary ELA Strategies to Keep Your Students on Track				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
Joshua Ray					
Crumbling Foundations: Rebuilding Educators Through a Collaboration Culture	X				
From Compliance to Commitment: Understanding and Overcoming Resistance Through Collective Commitments		X			
What Great Teams Do Differently			X	X	
Eating the PLC Elephant: Practical Steps to Make Our New Learning Come to Life					X

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Julie A. Schmidt					
Protocols for Results: Using Data Discussions to Achieve Higher Levels of Learning for <i>All</i>	X				
Central Office Leadership: Articulate, Protect, and Promote		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

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Session Descriptions—Day 1

KEYNOTE

Mike Mattos

[KEYNOTE] 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

Michael D. Bayewitz

Leading PLCs in High-Poverty Elementary Schools: Proven Practices for Eliminating the Achievement Gap

Most educators would agree with the statement, *All children can learn*. Unfortunately, many schools fall short of making this a reality. Successful schools have built high-functioning PLCs with proven results for narrowing—even eliminating—the achievement gap despite high poverty and mobility rates. Using real-life examples, artifacts, and tools, Michael D. Bayewitz reveals how some Title I schools have built and maintained a consistent track record of success despite the ever-changing landscape in education.

Participants in this session:

- Hear about the unique PLC journey of a high-performing Title I elementary school.
- See concrete examples of interventions and practices that ensure student success at Title I schools.
- Obtain ideas and strategies, supported by practice and research, to implement at their K–6 schools.

Tim Brown

Building a Commitment to Learning in Students

The educators in a learning-centered school deliberately identify strategies for building and communicating high expectations with their students. The importance of this is reinforced by Anthony Muhammad’s research for his book, *Transforming School Culture: How to Overcome Staff Division*

(2017). Muhammad discovered that students will learn more and be more successful in an environment where all educators believe they can learn at high levels, and those educators work together to convince the students they can achieve lofty academic goals teachers set for them.

This session is designed to engage the audience in a thoughtful examination and exploration of four practical and proven strategies that engage students in building a commitment to learning.

Participants can expect to:

- Understand the importance of regularly communicating high expectations to students to develop a culture of learning throughout the school.
- Gain effective learning strategies to communicate and establish a learning-centered classroom culture.
- Recognize the important role celebrations play in reinforcing and sustaining a focus on learning for all.
- Explore various strategies for engaging students in goal setting to take greater ownership of their learning.

Eric Burns

Building a Strong Foundation: The Non-Negotiable to Every PLC

The journey begins here. Every successful, high-performing organization in any field of endeavor starts with a solid foundation. A professional learning community is no different. In this session, educators focus on the essential building blocks of a successful learning community that can withstand the test of time.

Participants can expect to:

- Understand the importance of the four pillars of a PLC.
- Assess their organization's current reality.
- Acquire strategies to develop a shared vision, mission, and collective commitments.
- Discuss the next steps to becoming a PLC.

Scott Carr

Creating a Culture of Celebration

In an age of standards and assessments, it is easy to forget the value of celebration and recognition. Scott Carr reviews ideas and ways to create a positive culture for all in a school. By following these innovative examples, teachers can become energetic leaders in a culture that values celebration.

Participants in this session learn about:

- Various ideas to celebrate and recognize students and school staff
- Effective structures for celebration and recognition
- Becoming leaders of celebration at their school sites

Luis F. Cruz

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*

Aaron Hansen

Coming soon!

Brandon Jones

More Than a Mission Statement: Unifying PLC and RTI to Guarantee Learning for All

A PLC's primary mission is to ensure high levels of learning for all students. With this goal in mind, do school support systems align with that mission? Despite our best lessons and efforts in class, we know some students will succeed only with additional time and support. Because of this, it is essential to create a system where all students are guaranteed to receive directed, specific, timely, and targeted intervention as well as extension.

Session participants identify common barriers when providing additional help to students, outline possible solutions, and explore the RTI plan of a model PLC secondary school. This session is based on the RTI research of Mike Mattos and Austin Buffum as well as action research from several model PLC schools.

Participants in this session:

- Examine their current reality and challenges regarding systematic interventions.
- Determine how a PLC addresses common challenges and helps sustain a tiered system of support for students.
- Investigate the enrichment and intervention plan of a current model PLC school.

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.

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.

Joshua Ray

Crumbling Foundations: Rebuilding Educators Through a Collaboration Culture

Things like virtual instruction, trauma, and learning loss have burdened educators in ways never before imagined. However, at the heart of a collaborative culture lies the possibility for teacher rejuvenation and support that are critical in these challenging times. In this session, Josh Ray examines school culture through the lens of professional fulfillment and belonging with the ultimate goal of healthier, happier educators and students.

Participants in this session can expect to:

- Understand what research says drives professional fulfillment.
- Examine their school culture to determine areas of distraction.
- Learn how a collaborative culture can provide the answer to teacher burnout and isolation.

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.

AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Michael D. Bayewitz

Collegiality Versus Congeniality: Engaging in the Difficult Conversations of a PLC

Creating a collaborative culture is an essential characteristic of a successful PLC. To do so, educators must build trust and invest in developing personal relationships. How do educators maintain congeniality and still confront difficult facts when results fall short? Participants leave this session with a toolkit for effective communication and coaching strategies on how to engage in difficult collegial conversations within the context of a PLC.

Participants in this session:

- Gain appreciation for the importance of building a collaborative culture.
- Understand the difference between collegiality and congeniality in a PLC.
- Leave with a toolkit for facilitating effective communication and coaching strategies.

Tim Brown

How to Build Student Ownership, Motivation, and Efficacy Through the Four Questions of a Collaborative Team

Many students struggle in school because they lack the dispositions associated with high self-efficacy. Studies show that self-efficacy is one of the most significant factors in student motivation and engagement and that educators are the key contributor to a student's academic self-efficacy. Participants in this session examine how the four questions of collaborative teams, when done well, positively influence a student's efficacy judgment.

Participants can expect to:

- Clarify and delineate the dispositions that we want to develop in our students to ensure greater success.
- Learn about the four keys and five essential actions that influence a student's efficacy judgment.
- Understand how the four questions of collaborative teams influence a student's efficacy judgment.
- Explore products and processes that collaborative teams are developing and using to positively influence their students' efficacy judgements.

Eric Burns

Building a Productive Collaborative Culture

The three big ideas of a high-performing PLC are: 1) a focus on learning, 2) a collaborative culture, and 3) a results orientation. Educators are excited about collaborating with their peers. However, what if your collaborative team meetings are not yielding the desired results? In this session, Eric Burns shows participants how to maximize productivity during collaborative team meetings.

Participants in this session:

- Learn the difference between working in a collaborative team and a group.
- Learn the process of collaboration within the four critical questions framework.
- Identify the tight and loose of every productive collaborative team meeting.

Scott Carr

Innovation That Leads to Learning: Engaging Students in Authentic Experiences

The term *innovation* is often associated with technology and digital tools. True innovation comes when we enhance an experience by thinking and believing differently. To improve students' learning experiences, we have to think and believe differently about the learning process. Participants in this session look at two specific strategies—project-based learning and design thinking—to create engaging experiences that challenge and motivate students to create and discover. Participants also make connections between these methods and the context of collaborative practices in a PLC to create a powerful learning experience for all students.

Outcomes from this session include:

- Exploring the basic structures of project-based learning experiences and design thinking frameworks
- Brainstorming project ideas that tie into essential content outcomes
- Using the leverage of PLC collaboration to support project-based learning and innovative teaching ideas

Luis F. Cruz

Embracing the Five Vessels: Learning the Non-Negotiables to Becoming a High-Functioning PLC

If a school or district is committed to becoming a professional learning community, then adult behaviors need to shift away from those found in a traditional school system. What behaviors are those found within the context of a PLC? What are five main behaviors that need to be embraced for successful transformation to a PLC. Join Luis F. Cruz as he explains what Rick Dufour called the five non-negotiables schools must embrace to become PLC right and avoid becoming PLC lite.

Dr. Cruz shows participants:

- The specific adult behaviors needed to change to become a PLC
- The five big behaviors that shift all necessary adult behaviors to become a PLC
- The difference between becoming a PLC and embracing the PLC process

Aaron Hansen

Coming soon!

Brandon Jones

Abandoning Archaic Practices: Motivating and Preparing Generation Z Students

We are preparing students for jobs that do not exist to solve challenges that have not yet been identified. What happens when our current practices fail to motivate, engage, and prepare the current generation of students who depend on the immediacy of the world around them? The challenge lies in the fact that their system of thinking from neural to practical is instant and problem based—the opposite of preceding generations.

In this session, Brandon Jones compares 21st century learning and traditional practices that have significant impacts on student motivation and learning.

Participants can expect to:

- Compare significant differences between this generation of students and past generations, including those of educators.
- Identify archaic practices that demotivate students.
- Identify 21st century learning practices that motivate and prepare students for their future.

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.

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.

Joshua Ray

From Compliance to Commitment: Understanding and Overcoming Resistance Through Collective Commitments

No school has ever become a professional learning community without experiencing resistance along the way. However, it's easy to assign judgment to those resistant to change instead of understanding and accounting for why the change is difficult. In this session, Josh Ray addresses how to go from taking resistance personally to understanding the underlying competing commitments causing good people to resist. Most importantly, participants learn how to define and practice new behaviors that will overcome resistance and transform their schools.

Participants in this session:

- Learn the underlying causes of rational resistance.
- Consider whether their school could have deep-rooted beliefs in competition with becoming a Professional Learning Community at Work.
- Create powerful and simple behavioral commitments that cause a school to shift from their current reality to the vision they hold for the future.

Julie A. Schmidt

Central Office Leadership: Articulate, Protect, and Promote

This session focuses on and clarifies the critical role central office leadership plays in the implementation of professional learning communities work that supports long-term sustainability. This session is designed for those who serve in any central office role and those who aspire to serve in such a role.

Participants can expect to:

- Consider how district-level leaders must articulate what is most important.
- Learn about specific actions leaders must take to protect the work identified as being most critical to the improvement of student outcomes.
- Discover how leaders promote the work through aligned goal setting and the thoughtful allocation of resources.

Session Descriptions—Day 2

KEYNOTE

Julie A. Schmidt

From Urgency to Action

As convincingly laid out during the Day 1 keynote, educators across the nation and the world are responding to historic challenges with a sense of urgency to meet the ever-growing needs of *all* students. Not to be confused with panic, a collective sense of urgency sharpens an organization's focus on the actions it must take in order to meet the challenges laid before it. When that collective sense of urgency leads to collective research-based action, sustainable improvement over time can be expected. Make no mistake: urgency and high-leverage action do not occur by chance, but rather by an ongoing commitment to learning and leading.

In this keynote, Julie A. Schmidt addresses creating a collective sense of urgency around the right work in your school or district and takes a deeper dive into the actions teams engage in while developing and maintaining a laser-like focus on student learning in a professional learning community. Whether you are new to the PLC journey or hoping to gain clarity on your next high-leverage steps several years into the work, this keynote will inspire a *calm and clear* sense of urgency.

MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Michael D. Bayewitz

Leading PLCs in High-Poverty Elementary Schools: Proven Practices for Eliminating the Achievement Gap

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Participants in this session:

- Hear about the unique PLC journey of a high-performing Title I elementary school.
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Tim Brown

Activating the Keys of Formative Assessment to Create a Culture of Learning

Formative assessment can have an amazing impact on learning and is especially beneficial for students who struggle. If you have students who struggle in your school, being great at formative assessment is

crucial. Participants in this session examine their current assessment practices in comparison to the five keys and nine principles of assessment for learning. Practical examples and strategies are shared throughout the session.

Participants can expect to:

- Explore the relationship between formative assessment and student achievement.
- Evaluate important considerations in the assessment process.
- Examine tools, scenarios, and processes from the field that demonstrate that the five keys and nine principles are doable in every classroom, at every level.

Eric Burns

Prevention Is the Best Intervention

There are too many students in my intervention group! It starts with good Tier 1 instruction.

Collaborative teams must become crystal clear about what we want our students to learn and how are we going to assess their learning to minimize the number of students addressed by question three of a PLC: What are we going to do when students don't learn?

Participants in this session can expect to:

- Learn a process of effectively deconstructing standards.
- Create student-friendly learning targets.
- Use formative assessments to drive instruction.

Scott Carr

Learning Leaders: Creating a Personalized Professional Development Program

In order to lead learning, educators must first commit to being learning leaders. Teachers and administrators must constantly grow their craft to have the greatest impact on student learning. Scott Carr provides creative ways to design job-embedded professional learning opportunities for all staff. Participants look at systems such as micro-credentialing, walkthroughs, externships, and co-teaching to support ongoing learning and developing teacher leaders in their schools. The power of collaboration and a focus on learning allow educators to escape from one-size-fits-all professional development and shift to personalized professional learning.

Outcomes for this session include:

- Reviewing research on the impact professional learning has on student achievement
- Discovering various ways to develop a culture of personalized professional learning in schools
- Exploring various programs that can be used to create job-embedded opportunities for professional learning

Luis F. Cruz

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

Aaron Hansen

Coming soon!

Brandon Jones

More Than a Mission Statement: Unifying PLC and RTI to Guarantee Learning for All

A PLC's primary mission is to ensure high levels of learning for all students. With this goal in mind, do school support systems align with that mission? Despite our best lessons and efforts in class, we know some students will succeed only with additional time and support. Because of this, it is essential to create a system where all students are guaranteed to receive directed, specific, timely, and targeted intervention as well as extension.

Session participants identify common barriers when providing additional help to students, outline possible solutions, and explore the RTI plan of a model PLC secondary school. This session is based on the RTI research of Mike Mattos and Austin Buffum as well as action research from several model PLC schools.

Participants in this session:

- Examine their current reality and challenges regarding systematic interventions.
- Determine how a PLC addresses common challenges and helps sustain a tiered system of support for students.
- Investigate the enrichment and intervention plan of a current model PLC school.

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

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.

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.

Joshua Ray

What Great Teams Do Differently

The elements of a Professional Learning Community at Work are clear, but often it is hard to envision how they translate in the weekly work of collaborative teams. If you are looking for resources to make your work more efficient or find yourself wanting to just get more from your collaborative team, this is the session for you!

Participants in this session:

- Learn how to ensure collaborative time is meaningful for teachers.
- Gain concrete examples of how teams answer the four critical questions.
- Leave with practical ideas to make their teamwork more efficient and impactful.

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.

AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Michael D. Bayewitz

Effective Elementary School Leadership in a PLC

No one will dispute that effective leadership is critical for a professional learning community to thrive, but what do principals actually do to make this happen? In this session, participants review relevant research and explore and exchange activities, tools, and ideas in order to create a dynamic learning environment anchored by effective teacher collaboration.

Participants in this session:

- Learn how administrators can shape and create the conditions for effective collaboration.

- Identify effective uses of school principals' time to strengthen student achievement.
- Share ideas, tools, and resources with colleagues to support effective collaboration.

Tim Brown

How to Build Student Ownership, Motivation, and Efficacy Through the Four Questions of a Collaborative Team

Many students struggle in school because they lack the dispositions associated with high self-efficacy. Studies show that self-efficacy is one of the most significant factors in student motivation and engagement and that educators are the key contributor to a student's academic self-efficacy. Participants in this session examine how the four questions of collaborative teams, when done well, positively influence a student's efficacy judgment.

Participants can expect to:

- Clarify and delineate the dispositions that we want to develop in our students to ensure greater success.
- Learn about the four keys and five essential actions that influence a student's efficacy judgment.
- Understand how the four questions of collaborative teams influence a student's efficacy judgment.
- Explore products and processes that collaborative teams are developing and using to positively influence their students' efficacy judgements.

Eric Burns

Building a Productive Collaborative Culture

The three big ideas of a high-performing PLC are: 1) a focus on learning, 2) a collaborative culture, and 3) a results orientation. Educators are excited about collaborating with their peers. However, what if your collaborative team meetings are not yielding the desired results? In this session, Eric Burns shows participants how to maximize productivity during collaborative team meetings.

Participants in this session:

- Learn the difference between working in a collaborative team and a group.
- Learn the process of collaboration within the four critical questions framework.
- Identify the tight and loose of every productive collaborative team meeting.

Scott Carr

Innovation That Leads to Learning: Engaging Students in Authentic Experiences

The term *innovation* is often associated with technology and digital tools. True innovation comes when we enhance an experience by thinking and believing differently. To improve students' learning experiences, we have to think and believe differently about the learning process. Participants in this session look at two specific strategies—project-based learning and design thinking—to create engaging experiences that challenge and motivate students to create and discover. Participants also make

connections between these methods and the context of collaborative practices in a PLC to create a powerful learning experience for all students.

Outcomes from this session include:

- Exploring the basic structures of project-based learning experiences and design thinking frameworks
- Brainstorming project ideas that tie into essential content outcomes
- Using the leverage of PLC collaboration to support project-based learning and innovative teaching ideas

Luis F. Cruz

Taping Before Painting: Blending the PLC and RTI Processes to Collectively Respond When Students Don't Learn

Luis F. Cruz shows how to embrace the power of the word *and* versus the tyranny of the word *or*. It's not PLC or RTI, but instead, embracing both the PLC and RTI processes to become a professional learning community. Dr. Cruz showcases how educators use effective collaborative processes (taping the room) to ensure a collective response when students do not learn (painting the room). Hence, 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 non-negotiable vessels of the PLC Process
- How to gauge collaborative practices via seven stages
- How teacher teams implement structures and processes that will allow for a collective response when students do not learn

Aaron Hansen

Coming soon!

Brandon Jones

Demystifying Data: Making the Process Easy, Efficient, and Effective

Albert Einstein stated that “the definition of genius is taking the complex and making it simple.”

One of the final stages of team development centers around the use of information gathered from assessments. Unfortunately, this is also a tempting stopping place in the improvement process. We find that some schools and teacher teams suffer from what Waterman and Peters call DRIP—data rich information poor (2006). These teams have ample data but lack the process to turn this meaningful information into a competitive advantage.

Brandon Jones explores the most meaningful ways to analyze data in a professional learning community. Participants use simple, practical data protocols to become efficient with their work and lead them to action.

Participants in this session:

- Determine how to effectively use data in a collaborative team.
- Learn how to use a protocol to increase efficiency.
- Practice engaging in this process using a real world scenario.

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.

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.

Joshua Ray

What Great Teams Do Differently

The elements of a Professional Learning Community at Work are clear, but often it is hard to envision how they translate in the weekly work of collaborative teams. If you are looking for resources to make your work more efficient or find yourself wanting to just get more from your collaborative team, this is the session for you!

Participants in this session:

- Learn how to ensure collaborative time is meaningful for teachers.
- Gain concrete examples of how teams answer the four critical questions.
- Leave with practical ideas to make their teamwork more efficient and impactful.

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.

Session Descriptions—Day 3

MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Michael D. Bayewitz

Collegiality Versus Congeniality: Engaging in the Difficult Conversations of a PLC

Creating a collaborative culture is an essential characteristic of a successful PLC. To do so, educators must build trust and invest in developing personal relationships. How do educators maintain congeniality and still confront difficult facts when results fall short? Participants leave this session with a toolkit for effective communication and coaching strategies on how to engage in difficult collegial conversations within the context of a PLC.

Participants in this session:

- Gain appreciation for the importance of building a collaborative culture.
- Understand the difference between collegiality and congeniality in a PLC.
- Leave with a toolkit for facilitating effective communication and coaching strategies.

Tim Brown

Grading: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

When schools make the shift from a focus on teaching to a focus on learning, they must be willing to examine beliefs, assumptions, policies, guidelines, and practices to ensure everything we do that affects learning is aligned to the mission of the school. Because of the effect grading has on student learning, a discussion about grading practices must be part of the reflective and learning effort by staff. In this session, Tim Brown shares strategies and resources to help staff engage in a collaborative process that examines some of the more prevalent fixes that need to happen with grading if staff is going to be true to a mission that promotes high levels of learning for all students.

Participants can expect to:

- Answer the question, Where should we begin in our discussion about grading?
- Discuss the importance of crafting a statement about what a grade represents.
- Examine four notable fixes in our grading practices in light of a standards- or evidence-based approach to learning: homework, 100% scales, formative assessment, and averaging scores.
- Reflect on grading practices and guidelines that have been successfully implemented in schools at every level.

Eric Burns

Building a Strong Foundation: The Non-Negotiable to Every PLC

The journey begins here. Every successful, high-performing organization in any field of endeavor starts with a solid foundation. A professional learning community is no different. In this session, educators focus on the essential building blocks of a successful learning community that can withstand the test of time.

Participants can expect to:

- Understand the importance of the four pillars of a PLC.
- Assess their organization's current reality.
- Acquire strategies to develop a shared vision, mission, and collective commitments.
- Discuss the next steps to becoming a PLC.

Scott Carr

Creating a Culture of Celebration

In an age of standards and assessments, it is easy to forget the value of celebration and recognition. Scott Carr reviews ideas and ways to create a positive culture for all in a school. By following these innovative examples, teachers can become energetic leaders in a culture that values celebration.

Participants in this session learn about:

- Various ideas to celebrate and recognize students and school staff
- Effective structures for celebration and recognition
- Becoming leaders of celebration at their school sites

Luis F. Cruz

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:

- Why resistance to the PLC process is to be expected
- Resources from *Learning by Doing* that act as powerful resources.
- Practical actions to accelerate PLC at Work
- The four schools activity

Aaron Hansen

Coming soon!

Brandon Jones

Abandoning Archaic Practices: Motivating and Preparing Generation Z Students

We are preparing students for jobs that do not exist to solve challenges that have not yet been identified. What happens when our current practices fail to motivate, engage, and prepare the current generation of students who depend on the immediacy of the world around them? The challenge lies in

the fact that their system of thinking from neural to practical is instant and problem based—the opposite of preceding generations.

In this session, Brandon Jones compares 21st century learning and traditional practices that have significant impacts on student motivation and learning.

Participants can expect to:

- Compare significant differences between this generation of students and past generations, including those of educators.
- Identify archaic practices that demotivate students.
- Identify 21st century learning practices that motivate and prepare students for their future.

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.

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.

Joshua Ray

Eating the PLC Elephant: Practical Steps to Make Our New Learning Come to Life

With a head full of new knowledge and newfound excitement, you may quickly find yourself wondering how to take all the new learning and practically apply it on your campus. In this session, Josh Ray gives participants practical ideas for how to begin shifting the school culture, adjusting the structures, and practicing the collaborative work that will transform their campus into a PLC at Work. While no two schools are the same, participants leave with a practical game plan for how to begin the process of changing their campus.

Participants in this session:

- Learn ways to sequentially begin implementing new learning at their site.
- Leave with structures for prioritizing new learning to avoid overwhelming staff in the change process.
- Understand who should be part of planning next steps and how to utilize these people to own the change process as a campus.

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.

KEYNOTE

Brandon Jones

Coming soon!