PLC at Work Institute Agenda
Fort Smith, AR • July 26–28, 2023

Wednesday, July 26

6:30–8:00 a.m.	Registration	Main Foyer
	Continental Breakfast	Cafeteria
8:00–9:45 a.m.	**Keynote**—Eric Twadell *Relentless: Initiating and Sustaining the PLC at Work Process*	Arena
9:45–10:05 a.m.	Break	
10:05–11:35 a.m.	**Breakout Sessions**	See pages 2–4.
11:35 a.m.–12:35 p.m.	Lunch (provided)	Cafeteria
12:35–2:05 p.m.	**Breakout Sessions**	See pages 2–4.
2:05–2:25 p.m.	Break	
2:25–3:25 p.m.	**Panel Discussion**—*Presenters answer your most pressing questions.*	Arena

Thursday, July 27

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Registration	Main Foyer
	Continental Breakfast	Cafeteria
8:00–9:45 a.m.	**Keynote**—Anthony Muhammad *The Way Forward: PLC at Work and the Bright Future of Education*	Arena
9:45–10:05 a.m.	Break	
10:05–11:35 a.m.	**Breakout Sessions**	See pages 2–4.
11:35 a.m.–12:35 p.m.	Lunch (provided)	Cafeteria
12:35–2:05 p.m.	**Breakout Sessions**	See pages 2–4.
2:05–2:25 p.m.	Break	
2:25–3:25 p.m.	**Team Time**—*Presenters aid in your collaborative team discussions.*	Arena

Friday, July 28

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Continental Breakfast	Cafeteria
8:00–9:30 a.m.	**Breakout Sessions**	See pages 2–4.
9:30–9:50 a.m.	Break	
9:50–11:50 a.m.	**Keynote**—Heather Friziellie *Yes We Can … and the Time Is Now!*	Arena

Agenda is subject to change.

Breakout Sessions at a Glance

Presenters & Titles	Wednesday, July 26		Thursday, July 27		Friday, July 28
	10:05–11:35 a.m.	12:35–2:05 p.m.	10:05–11:35 a.m.	12:35–2:05 p.m.	8:00–9:30 a.m.
Jason A. Andrews					
Leveraging the Four Pillars to Guide Your Leadership	Choir				Choir
Creating a Culture of Collective Responsibility: An RTI at Work Process Prerequisite		Choir			
Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Secondary Schools			East Shelter		
Turning Common Formative Assessment Data Into Action in a PLC				Choir	
Tim Brown					
Building a Commitment to Learning in Students	East Shelter			East Shelter	
How to Build Student Ownership, Motivation, and Efficacy Through the Four Questions of a Collaborative Team		East Shelter			
Grading: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly			Freshman Center		East Shelter
Luis F. Cruz					
Task Forces: The Secret Weapon PLCs Use to Close Opportunity Gaps in Learning	Band				
Embracing the Five Vessels: Learning the Non-Negotiables to Becoming a High-Functioning PLC		South Gym			
English Learners and PLCs			Band		
Taping Before Painting: Blending the PLC and RTI Processes to Collectively Respond When Students Don't Learn				Arena	
I Am Sold on PLCs: Practical Tools and Directions to Be Successful					South Gym

Presenters & Titles	Wednesday, July 26		Thursday, July 27		Friday, July 28
	10:05–11:35 a.m.	12:35–2:05 p.m.	10:05–11:35 a.m.	12:35–2:05 p.m.	8:00–9:30 a.m.
Wendy Custable					
High-Performing Professional Learning Communities for Career and Technical Education and Other Elective Programs	1114			1114	
What About Me? Singletons and Collaboration in a PLC		1114			
Embedding Social-Emotional Learning Skills Into Instructional Practices			1114		1114
Heather Friziellie					
Yes We Can: Collaboration by All, for All!	Freshman Center				
The Conundrum: Balancing Life and Leadership		West Shelter			
Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Elementary Schools			South Gym		
Inclusive Instruction: Learning for *All*!				South Gym	
Braving Difficult Conversations					Arena
Michael J. Maffoni					
Energize Your Teams: Coaching Collaborative Teams From Next Practice to Best Practice	South Gym				Band
I Think They Are, Aren't They? The Role of Leadership in Monitoring the Development of PLCs		Freshman Center		Band	
The Five Keys to Effective Team Meetings: Keeping Focused on the Right Work			West Shelter		
Anthony Muhammad					
Transforming School Culture: New Insights	West Shelter				
Bringing the Four PLC Questions to Life: Systems That Ensure All Students Learn		Arena			

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	10:05–11:35 a.m.	12:35–2:05 p.m.	10:05–11:35 a.m.	12:35–2:05 p.m.	8:00–9:30 a.m.
Overcoming the Achievement Gap Trap: Liberating Mindsets to Effect Change			Arena		
Collaboration Is a Lifestyle, Not a Meeting!				West Shelter	
Beyond Test Scores! The PLC at Work Process and Serving the Whole Child					West Shelter
Cristi Parsons					
Let's Talk Instruction: Using the Teaching-Assessing-Learning Cycle to Impact Tier 1 Practices	1112		1112		
Success Breeds Success: Celebrate Your Way to Improvement		1112			1112
Coblaboration or Collaboration: Getting Down to the Right Work of Collaborative Teams				1112	
Joshua Ray					
Crumbling Foundations: Rebuilding Educators Through a Collaboration Culture	Orchestra				
Eating the PLC Elephant: Practical Steps to Make Our New Learning Come to Life		Orchestra			
What Great Teams Do Differently			Orchestra	Orchestra	
From Compliance to Commitment: Understanding and Overcoming Resistance Through Collective Commitments					Orchestra
Eric Twadell					
Social and Emotional Learning in a PLC at Work	Arena			Freshman Center	
Leadership by Design: Four Essential Conversations for District, School, and Team Leaders		Band			
Through New Eyes: Examining the Culture of Your School			Choir		Freshman Center

Session Descriptions—Day 1

Eric Twadell

Relentless: Initiating and Sustaining the PLC at Work Process

The first step in the never-ending journey of continuous improvement of a PLC at Work is building a strong foundation on the three big ideas: learning, collaboration, and results. The second step is doing that same work over and over and over again. In this keynote, Eric Twadell highlights the work that Adlai E. Stevenson High School (the "birthplace of the PLC at Work process") has done to stay focused on the fundamental components of their PLC at Work culture and drive a steady increase in student learning and achievement.

MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS
Jason A. Andrews

Leveraging the Four Pillars to Guide Your Leadership

In *Learning By Doing* (2016), DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, Many, and Mattos describe the four pillars of a PLC—the mission, vision, values (collective commitments), and goals—as the foundation of a PLC. The work of collaborative teams rests upon this foundation. In order to effectively lead teams, schools, and districts, leaders must have a clear understanding of the four pillars and leverage them to provide effective leadership.

Participants in this session:
- Understand the four pillars of a professional learning community.
- Review the research supporting each of the four pillars.
- Develop strategies to leverage the four pillars in leading districts, schools, and teams.

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). Muhummad 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.

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*

Wendy Custable

High-Performing Professional Learning Communities for Career and Technical Education and Other Elective Programs

Wendy Custable designed this hands-on session to support career and technical education and identify elective and singleton educators' goals, team processes, and action steps that will enable them to be high-performing professional learning communities.

Heather Friziellie

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.

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.

Anthony Muhammad

Transforming School Culture: New Insights
In this session, Anthony Muhammad addresses the issue of conflicting agendas within schools. A high-performing school has a very clear purpose—high levels of learning for all students. Participants examine the barriers to aligning individual agendas with the organization's agenda and what *all* parties must do to develop the synergy necessary to guarantee learning. The theoretical framework developed by Anthony in the book *Transforming School Culture: How to Overcome Staff Division, 2nd Edition* (Solution Tree, 2018) is examined as the basis for developing a collaborative culture.

Participants can expect to learn:
- How staff division develops and how to prevent it
- Strategies that heal old social and professional wounds
- To create an environment where every professional can thrive

Cristi Parsons

Let's Talk Instruction: Using the Teaching-Assessing-Learning Cycle to Impact Tier 1 Practices

Do walkthroughs and feedback make a difference? Yes, by determining essential instructional practices, providing mini professional development around the essentials, collecting data, and collaboratively determining action steps for intervention and extensions. Participants learn how to implement a focused process to continually improve instruction.

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.

Eric Twadell

Social and Emotional Learning in a PLC at Work

In most schools, social and emotional learning (SEL) is little more than canned programs that highlight cliché-driven posters and flyers. Schools that take SEL seriously learn quickly that we can teach and assess SEL just like any other subject and content area. In this session, Eric Twadell explores the CASEL social-emotional learning competencies and develops strategies and best practices for teaching and learning.

Participants in this session:
- Explore the CASEL social-emotional learning competencies—self-management, self-awareness, social awareness, responsible decision-making, and relationship skills.
- Learn strategies for the explicit assessment of these competencies.
- Understand how these competencies can impact student learning.
- Learn how to assess the impact of social and emotional learning instruction.

Jason A. Andrews

Creating a Culture of Collective Responsibility: An RTI at Work Process Prerequisite

Collective responsibility means that all staff members believe all students are capable of learning at high levels and share a commitment to ensuring the success of each student. In order to build an effective and systematic response to providing students with additional time and support, a culture of collective responsibility must exist. Participants in this session gain practical strategies to assess their current culture and build collective responsibility in their schools.

Participants can expect to:
- Identify the four Cs of the RTI at Work process.
- Define collective responsibility and evaluate the current reality of culture in their school.
- Develop action steps to enhance culture in their school.

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.

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

Wendy Custable

What About Me? Singletons and Collaboration in a PLC
In this session, Wendy Custable explores the roadblocks, benefits, and how-to's of collaborating in diverse and blended curricular teams to address the uniqueness of being the only teacher of a course or program.

Heather Friziellie

The Conundrum: Balancing Life and Leadership
Participants examine leadership by studying powerful leaders and connecting their journeys to the challenges of leading while also fulfilling other roles in their lives. Participants engage in structured conversations and tasks that focus on current realities and strategically plan how to move forward with greater balance while still spinning all the plates!

Participants in this session:
- Hear and reflect on stories of leadership.
- Share stories of leadership experiences and lessons learned en route.
- Identify ways we can all more effectively support each other in educational leadership.

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.

Anthony Muhammad

Bringing the Four PLC Questions to Life: Systems That Ensure All Students Learn

Anthony Muhammad focuses on the systemic implementation of a PLC at Work's four critical questions. Participants learn what it takes to move from theory to practical, systemic implementation. Dr. Muhammad's strategies are immediately usable when participants return to their schools.

Participants in this session:
- Practice developing essential standards and student outcomes.
- Learn to create valuable and valid common assessments.
- Discover how to establish an intervention system that meets all students' needs.

Cristi Parsons

Success Breeds Success: Celebrate Your Way to Improvement

Having difficulty motivating staff? Are your colleagues burning out? Decide ahead of time what to celebrate, determine success criteria, visit data often, and make room for risk-taking. Watch your teams become empowered by success!

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.

Eric Twadell

Leadership by Design: Four Essential Conversations for District, School, and Team Leaders

District, school, and team leaders play an important role in developing PLCs. This session explores the essential characteristics and roles of leaders in creating and sustaining a culture of collaboration and shared responsibility in a PLC.

Participants in this session:

- Take part in four leadership conversations that focus on building coherence and clarity for the work of leaders in a PLC.
- Discover how effective leaders facilitate a culture of shared responsibility.
- Examine strategies effective leaders must utilize to develop a learning-centered culture in districts, schools, and teams.

Session Descriptions—Day 2

Anthony Muhammad
The Way Forward: PLC at Work and the Bright Future of Education

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

Participants in this session learn that:

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

MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS
Jason A. Andrews
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, Jason A. Andrews 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.

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.

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

Wendy Custable

Embedding Social-Emotional Learning Skills Into Instructional Practices

In many schools, social-emotional learning (SEL) skills are either taught as standalone events or not formally addressed at all. However, SEL skills and academic curriculum should go hand-in-hand with research showing that SEL learning and interventions can increase student academic performance. In this session, Wendy Custable provides ideas and instructional strategies for authentically embedding SEL skill development into classroom instruction.

Heather Friziellie

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.

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.

Anthony Muhammad

Overcoming the Achievement Gap Trap: Liberating Mindsets to Effect Change
Anthony Muhammad explores the connection between personal and institutional mindsets and academic achievement gaps. The issue of inequality in student learning outcomes has been studied and debated for many years, but this session seeks to establish that the primary culprit in the fight to overcome the achievement gap is our thinking.

Participants can expect to:
- Understand the true meaning and value of school culture.
- Understand the power of mindsets and their influence on educator effectiveness.
- Understand how to shift from damaging mindsets (Superiority and Inferiority) to high levels of efficacy (Liberation mindset).

Cristi Parsons

Let's Talk Instruction: Using the Teaching-Assessing-Learning Cycle to Impact Tier 1 Practices

Do walkthroughs and feedback make a difference? Yes, by determining essential instructional practices, providing mini professional development around the essentials, collecting data, and collaboratively determining action steps for intervention and extensions. Participants learn how to implement a focused process to continually improve instruction.

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.

Eric Twadell

Through New Eyes: Examining the Culture of Your School

The PLC at Work process is all about culture—not structure. A school culture is founded upon the assumptions, beliefs, values, expectations, and habits that drive its day-to-day work and share how its people think, feel, and act. This session provides participants with the opportunity to examine the culture of two very different schools and explores common practices and conventional wisdom with a critical eye.

Participants in this session:
- Examine the culture of two different schools and the experiences of a student.
- Assess the practices and procedures of a traditional school versus a school that works as a professional learning community.
- Develop an understanding of the important difference between culture and structure in initiative and sustain the PLC at Work process.

AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Jason A. Andrews

Turning Common Formative Assessment Data Into Action in a PLC

Why do you give CFAs in the first place? What do we do with all of the data? If your school is working to sustain the PLC process, but teams are struggling to leverage data for action planning and interventions and extensions of learning, it may be that they are utilizing the wrong types of data or analyzing them

in the wrong way. This session assists teams with determining the purpose of CFAs and data collection, provides tools to assist in analyzing data, and ensures that data can be turned into actionable information to leverage into high levels of learning for students.

Participants in this session:
- Review the purpose of common formative assessments and types of data utilized by collaborative teams.
- Develop strategies and utilize protocols to analyze student data.
- Explore tools to assist collaborative teams in developing action plans.

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). Muhummad 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.

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- 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.

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

Wendy Custable

High-Performing Professional Learning Communities for Career and Technical Education and Other Elective Programs
Wendy Custable designed this hands-on session to support career and technical education and identify elective and singleton educators' goals, team processes, and action steps that will enable them to be high-performing professional learning communities.

Heather Friziellie

Inclusive Instruction: Learning for *All*!
When we dig into the research, it's pretty easy to identify two things: We can't keep doing what we've always done and expect to get better results, *and* there are some clear high-leverage strategies we can employ to lead to higher levels of learning for *all* students.

Outcomes from this session include:
- Building an understanding of key research findings
- Using these findings to identify five essential instructional strategies that—regardless of grade level or content area—*will* help more learners learn at higher levels than ever before!

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.

Anthony Muhammad

Collaboration Is a Lifestyle, Not a Meeting!

This session addresses the collaborative characteristics of a high-performing PLC. Learn how teachers, support staff, school administrators, and central office all work together to improve school performance. Anthony Muhammad addresses the issue of staff resistance to change and the leader's role in building consensus. Two key areas are explored: creating a culture of collaboration and creating an environment in which people embrace collective responsibility.

Participants in this session learn:

- How to construct and protect productive collaborative relationships
- How to create organizational coherence and ensure collaboration at every level of the school community
- The balance between support and accountability

Cristi Parsons

Coblaboration or Collaboration: Getting Down to the Right Work of Collaborative Teams

Do your collaboration times feel like a chore, a checklist, or compliance? In this session, Cristi Parsons helps participants get crystal clear on what collaboration looks like and sounds like and how to lead a team to effective outcomes. The right work moves your teams from compliance to commitment.

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.

Eric Twadell

Social and Emotional Learning in a PLC at Work

In most schools, social and emotional learning (SEL) is little more than canned programs that highlight cliché-driven posters and flyers. Schools that take SEL seriously learn quickly that we can teach and assess SEL just like any other subject and content area. In this session, Eric Twadell explores the CASEL social-emotional learning competencies and develops strategies and best practices for teaching and learning.

Participants in this session:

- Explore the CASEL social-emotional learning competencies—self-management, self-awareness, social awareness, responsible decision-making, and relationship skills.
- Learn strategies for the explicit assessment of these competencies.
- Understand how these competencies can impact student learning.
- Learn how to assess the impact of social and emotional learning instruction.

Session Descriptions—Day 3

Jason A. Andrews

Leveraging the Four Pillars to Guide Your Leadership

In *Learning By Doing* (2016), DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, Many, and Mattos describe the four pillars of a PLC—the mission, vision, values (collective commitments), and goals—as the foundation of a PLC. The work of collaborative teams rests upon this foundation. In order to effectively lead teams, schools, and districts, leaders must have a clear understanding of the four pillars and leverage them to provide effective leadership.

Participants in this session:
- Understand the four pillars of a professional learning community.
- Review the research supporting each of the four pillars.
- Develop strategies to leverage the four pillars in leading districts, schools, and teams.

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.

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

Wendy Custable

Embedding Social-Emotional Learning Skills Into Instructional Practices
In many schools, social-emotional learning (SEL) skills are either taught as standalone events or not formally addressed at all. However, SEL skills and academic curriculum should go hand-in-hand with research showing that SEL learning and interventions can increase student academic performance. In this session, Wendy Custable provides ideas and instructional strategies for authentically embedding SEL skill development into classroom instruction.

Heather Friziellie

Braving Difficult Conversations
All leaders face situations in which difficult conversations must occur to ensure necessary progress and improvement. Participants in this session define crucial conversations and practice engaging in both sides of the dialogue to build toolboxes and increase comfort levels with this task moving forward.

Participants in this session:
- Understand the *what* and *why* of a brave conversation.
- Learn about essential steps for having brave conversations.
- Practice these steps during a structured activity, taking time to reflect and plan for action moving forward.

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.

Anthony Muhammad

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

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

Participants can expect to learn:

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

Cristi Parsons

Success Breeds Success: Celebrate Your Way to Improvement

Having difficulty motivating staff? Are your colleagues burning out? Decide ahead of time what to celebrate, determine success criteria, visit data often, and make room for risk-taking. Watch your teams become empowered by success!

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.

Eric Twadell

Through New Eyes: Examining the Culture of Your School

The PLC at Work process is all about culture—not structure. A school culture is founded upon the assumptions, beliefs, values, expectations, and habits that drive its day-to-day work and share how its people think, feel, and act. This session provides participants with the opportunity to examine the culture of two very different schools and explores common practices and conventional wisdom with a critical eye.

Participants in this session:
- Examine the culture of two different schools and the experiences of a student.
- Assess the practices and procedures of a traditional school versus a school that works as a professional learning community.
- Develop an understanding of the important difference between culture and structure in initiative and sustain the PLC at Work process.

KEYNOTE

Heather Friziellie

Yes We Can ... and the Time Is Now!

The journey to becoming a high-performing PLC is not for the faint of heart, but it's also a call to action for equity for *all* learners. As leaders in the field, we are called to make change *now* for the students we are called to serve.

Participants in this session focus on:
- The connections between the three big ideas and four critical questions and equity for all learners in a system
- Actionable steps to take immediately to bridge the learning from the institute with the essential first next steps—or, perhaps, first next "stops"—for your context
- Ways to keep commitment to and energy around PLC efforts high to lead forward for students