

Level Up Learning Institute Agenda

St. Louis, MO • July 11–13, 2023

Tuesday, July 11

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Registration	Locations TBD
	Continental Breakfast	
8:00–9:45 a.m.	Keynote —Sharon V. Kramer <i>Leveling Up Learning for All</i>	
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:30 a.m.	Breakout Sessions	See pages 3–4.
11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)	
1:00–2:30 p.m.	Breakout Sessions	See pages 3–4.
2:30–2:45 p.m.	Break	
2:45–3:45 p.m.	High-Impact Strategies That Level Up Learning	See pages 9–10.
	Anisa Baker-Busby— <i>All Aboard: All Means All</i>	Locations TBD
	Joe Cuddemi— <i>Each One, Reach One</i>	
	Sharon V. Kramer— <i>Audaciously Attainable Goals</i>	
	Sarah Schuhl— <i>Step Up and Transition Planning for Continuous Improvement</i>	
	Jeanne Spiller— <i>Level Up Your Team</i>	

Wednesday, July 12

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Registration	Locations TBD
	Continental Breakfast	
8:00–9:45 a.m.	Keynote —Sarah Schuhl <i>Leveling Up Learning for All: The Question Is Not If, but How</i>	
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:30 a.m.	Breakout Sessions	See pages 3–4.
11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.	Lunch (provided)	
1:00–2:30 p.m.	Breakout Sessions	See pages 3–4.
2:30–2:45 p.m.	Break	
2:45–3:45 p.m.	Team Time —Presenters aid in your collaborative team discussions.	

Thursday, July 13

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Continental Breakfast	Locations TBD
8:00–9:45 a.m.	Seminars — <i>Time for Action: Leveling Up Learning Starts With a Plan</i>	See page 15.
	Anisa Baker-Busby & Jeanne Spiller—Elementary	
	Joe Cuddemi & Sarah Schuhl—Secondary	
	Sharon V. Kramer—District Level	
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:30 a.m.	Keynote —Joe Cuddemi <i>Who's Your Guna?</i>	

Agenda is subject to change.

Breakout Sessions at a Glance

Presenters & Titles	Tuesday, July 11		Wednesday, July 12	
	10:00–11:30 a.m.	1:00–2:30 p.m.	10:00–11:30 a.m.	1:00–2:30 p.m.
Anisa Baker-Busby				
Now What? Getting Started on Leading the Right Work	X			
Day One Sets the Tone		X		
Do Your Actions Align With Your Values? Thinking Outside the Box to Create a Master Schedule			X	
You Can't Tier 2 and Tier 3 Your Way Out of Poor Instruction				X
Joe Cuddemi				
Emotional Intelligence Strengthens Relationships	X			
Shifting From a Culture of Blame and Shame to a Culture of Dignity and Respect		X		
Ten Minutes to Learn and a Lifetime to Practice			X	
Creating a Healthy Classroom Culture: Strategies for Increasing Student Engagement				X
Sharon V. Kramer				
Change Is Good: You Go First!	X			
From Challenges to Opportunities		X		
We Cannot Intervene Our Way to Better Academic Outcomes			X	
The Cycle of Learning in Action				X
Sarah Schuhl				
Mathematics Lessons Designed to Accelerate Learning	X			
Effective Mathematics Interventions		X		

Presenters & Titles	Tuesday, July 11		Wednesday, July 12	
	10:00–11:30 a.m.	1:00–2:30 p.m.	10:00–11:30 a.m.	1:00–2:30 p.m.
Leveling Up Learning With Common Assessments			X	
Turning Hope Into a Plan				X
Jeanne Spiller				
Four for <i>All</i> : Four Practices to Ensure High Levels of Learning for <i>All</i> Students	X			
Igniting Instruction Through Data		X		
Effective Literacy Scaffolds and Interventions			X	
Reading and Writing Lesson Design to Engage Students and Accelerate Learning				X

Agenda is subject to change.

Session Descriptions—Day 1

KEYNOTE

Sharon V. Kramer

Leveling Up Learning for All

Many articles, blogs, books, podcasts, and webinars have been written and shared for the purpose of reiterating the need to close student achievement gaps. And yet, the process and progress in closing the gaps has been out of reach. Closing achievement gaps is multifaceted and requires specific actions focused on acceleration and leveling up strategies that grow student learning to proficiency and beyond. Rather than remediation which goes backwards before moving forwards, acceleration is the pathway to closing the achievement gap. Participants discover how to erase inequities in student learning while building hope and confidence in both teachers and students. This is equity in action!

Participants in this session:

- Understand the rationale for shifting from remediation to an acceleration model for *all* students.
- Build a strengths-based response to teaching and learning.

MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Anisa Baker-Busby

Now What? Getting Started on Leading the Right Work

Have you ever attended a conference and everything you heard and learned sounded amazing? Did you leave on fire to lead change? Were you excited to implement everything you learned? Yet when you arrived at your school, you did not know how to start. Then this session is just for you. Anisa Baker-Busby focuses on getting started with the right work and staying focused.

Participants in this session:

- Reflect on current practices that need to change.
- Create an action plan with doable steps to get started on the right work.
- Create action steps to get teams on board with sustainability.

Joe Cuddemi

Emotional Intelligence Strengthens Relationships

We know that healthy relationships with adults and peers have a positive impact on student learning. How can we strengthen the emotional intelligence of the adults to build positive and supportive relationships with our students? The first step is to understand and embrace a common framework that describes the essential competencies needed to build healthy relationships. And yes, this is a process, not another program!

Participants in this session:

- Explore the five essential emotional intelligence competencies using the CASEL framework.
- Learn practical strategies and applications that can be used to address and strengthen adult and student emotional intelligence.

Sharon V. Kramer

Change Is Good: You Go First!

Everyone can agree that we live in a fast-paced, ever-changing world and that change is inevitable. The reality is that although change may be necessary, it is never easy and is often met with resistance or silent belligerence. Shifting from the traditional practice of remediation to acceleration is a change that may not be met with enthusiasm. In this session, Sharon V. Kramer outlines a practical way to manage complex change that is proactive not reactive.

Participants in this session:

- Understand the difference between first- and second-order change.
- Examine a proactive process for managing complex change and responding to resistance.

Sarah Schuhl

Mathematics Lessons Designed to Accelerate Learning

Each daily lesson is an opportunity to grow a student's mathematical understanding and learning. How do teachers effectively plan for that learning? What key criteria should be considered when designing mathematics lessons each day to include prior knowledge and grade level learning? Consider what the teacher and students are doing during each part of the lesson and how learning grows using feedback generated and shared throughout the lesson.

Participants in this session:

- Explore ways to Level Up learning through connections, task selection, problem solving, and student discourse.
- Examine quality lesson design focused on the engagement and learning of every student.

Jeanne Spiller

Four for All: Four Practices to Ensure High Levels of Learning for All Students

When teams commit to the following four practices, learning is enhanced for educators, and most importantly, for their students. The four practices include aligning team actions to beliefs, inclusive collaboration focused on learning, instruction and assessment practices that are aligned to essential standards, and instructional practices that build bridges and scaffolds to grade-level content, instruction, and assessment. This session provides an overview of these four core practices and aligned steps educators can take to live these practices.

Participants in this session:

- Reflect on current local beliefs and practices and whether or not there is alignment between beliefs and actions.
- Consider the value of inclusive collaboration between general educators, special educators, and any educator who works with students in that grade level or course.
- Learn how to ensure that instruction and assessment are focused on essential standards and how to ensure access to grade-level content for all students.

AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Anisa Baker-Busby

Day One Sets the Tone

The first day of school is always exciting! In this session, Anisa Baker-Busby focuses on using the end-of-the-year post-planning days to *kickstart* learning for the upcoming school year.

Outcomes for this session include:

- Teams collaborating vertically across the school to get a jump start on planning for learning for the upcoming school year.
- Creating processes for teams to become crystal clear on prerequisites and essential learning outcomes for the current year

Joe Cuddemi

Shifting From a Culture of Blame and Shame to a Culture of Dignity and Respect

It's impossible to find a high-performing school, that is sustaining excellence over time, where educators are divided into cliques, distracted by adult drama, blaming others, or behaving as independent contractors. How can we behave as an organization and still honor our individual autonomy?

Participants in this session:

- Examine how school culture impacts adult and student learning.
- Explore strategies that educators can use to build and sustain a healthy school environment and culture.

Sharon V. Kramer

From Challenges to Opportunities

This session outlines proven strategies that ensure learning for all. Sharon V. Kramer uses the PLC model to highlight and deconstruct the five challenges—or greatest opportunities—to successful and sustainable school-improvement results. Educators who face the unique challenges of serving at-risk youth gain practical solutions to these real-world issues.

Participants examine ways to:

- Support a culture of success.
- Engage everyone in the right work.

Sarah Schuhl

Effective Mathematics Interventions

Not all students learn at the same rate or speed. How will you level up learning through your use of strong first-best instruction and ensure the learning through your use of intervention? Explore how to coordinate student Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 learning experiences to accelerate learning of mathematics. This session focuses on team-designed Tier 2 learning experiences and considerations for Tier 3.

Participants in this session:

- Explore strategies for teaching targeted content in Tier 2 interventions.
- Examine considerations for Tier 3 mathematics interventions.

Jeanne Spiller

Igniting Instruction Through Data

Are you surrounded by data but starved for insights? Is the purpose of assessment and the data it provides clear to those who are examining it? Do teams know what they will do with data before collecting it? In this session, participants examine tools that empower teams to clarify the purpose of the data they collect, use data to drive instruction, and ultimately impact student learning.

Participants in this session:

- Review why data is critical in our efforts to ensure students meet grade-level expectations.
- Apply multiple strategies and protocols for data analysis with a focus on taking action.

HIGH-IMPACT STRATEGIES

Anisa Baker-Busby

All Aboard: All Means All

Does your school struggle to get parents involved? Do your parents truly understand your mission, vision, and values? In this presentation, Anisa Baker-Busby focuses on how the written and spoken language we use in our schools can influence and set the stage for family, school, and community partnerships to embrace “learning is required” school cultures.

Participants in this session:

- Define the characteristics and importance of parent engagement in a “learning is required” school culture.

- Create action steps your school’s learning team can implement to increase positive parent partnerships and authentic parental engagement activities centered on creating a learning for all mantra.

Joe Cuddemi

Each One, Reach One

Every school has students who are considered the most at risk and disengaged. While there is no single intervention or program that meets the individual and varied needs for each student, we can make a positive difference in their lives when we embrace an all-hands-on-deck mindset and approach. In this session, participants learn a proven strategy that addresses the needs of our most vulnerable students.

Sharon V. Kramer

Audaciously Attainable Goals

Writing and implementing SMART goals is not new to educators. However, the common practice is to set safe goals, not audaciously attainable goals. This Level Up session demonstrates a way to write goals that are attainable and instill a sense of hope and confidence in teachers and students.

Sarah Schuhl

Step Up and Transition Planning for Continuous Improvement

Every year, plans can be made at the end of the school year to inform effective summer school or start-of-the-year learning. Come learn about step up and transition planning to start each school year on day one with a plan to Level Up learning.

Jeanne Spiller

Level Up Your Team

Whether your team is establishing, flourishing, or somewhere in between, improvement is always an option. Learn how to use a continuum to identify ways to Level Up your team The continuum defines what it looks like when collaborative teams are intentionally focused on learning and results and provides the next steps for teams and those who lead them to move team practice to *flourishing* so that more students learn at grade level or higher.

Participants in this session:

1. Define the characteristics of high-functioning collaborative teams using a continuum of practice.
2. Discover action steps collaborative teams can take to enhance their practices.

Session Descriptions—Day 2

KEYNOTE

Sarah Schuhl

Leveling Up Learning for *All*: The Question Is Not *If*, but *How*

Leveling up learning starts on the first day of school and is a focus every day of the school year. Strengthening how teams plan for learning and respond to it in each learning cycle throughout the year requires collaborative teams in a PLC at Work. So, how does a focus on acceleration affect how teams answer each critical PLC question? Explore team actions needed to create the equity in learning every student deserves.

Participants in this session:

- Understand how to work in collaborative teams to Level Up learning.
- Explore strategies to accelerate learning through instruction and intervention.

MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Anisa Baker-Busby

Do Your Actions Align With Your Values? Thinking Outside the Box to Create a Master Schedule

Are all of your students performing on grade level? Do you have students who need additional time and support? Do you have students who demonstrate proficiency consistently? Do you have a classroom with a wide range of learning needs? In this session, Anisa Baker-Busby focuses on how to use or create a master schedule to support your learning priorities.

Participants in this session:

- Reflect on the current master schedule and identify whether or not it aligns with your mission, vision, values, and beliefs.
- Learn techniques and strategies for using the “vitamin approach” to help meet all the needs of your learners.

Joe Cuddemi

Ten Minutes to Learn and a Lifetime to Practice

We know that our students do not all come to school with the social and academic skills necessary to be successful in school, in work, and in life. High-performing schools Level Up learning for all students by engaging staff in a process to identify, teach, and monitor these essential behavioral skills. How can we teach these behavioral skills without it becoming one more thing to do?

Participants in this session:

- Explore a schoolwide process to identify a limited number of essential behavioral skills.
- Learn how collaborative learning teams can use the four PLC questions to teach and monitor the essential social and academic skills.

Sharon V. Kramer

We Cannot Intervene Our Way to Better Academic Outcomes

Intervention is necessary but cannot make up for solid core instruction every day. If high-quality instruction is happening in every classroom, there will be greater equality in students' opportunities, a higher chance that achievement will improve, and less need for interventions. What are the most impactful instructional practices to ensure that more students learn more every day in every classroom? Using the work of John Hattie and Robert Marzano, this session examines the core instructional practices that have the greatest effect on learning and acceleration. Sharon V. Kramer lays out a process for selecting core instructional practices with an implementation plan that works.

Participants in this session:

- Examine instructional practices that ensure authentic academic acceleration.
- Determine ways to implement high-quality instruction in every classroom every day.

Sarah Schuhl

Leveling Up Learning With Common Assessments

Quality common assessments provide teachers and students with evidence showing what students have learned and not learned yet. How does an assessment's structure affect how teachers analyze student learning and instructional practices? Determine what to consider when strengthening team-created common assessments. Additionally, how are students involved in the assessment process so they learn from each one? Leveling Up learning means assessments become a show-what-you-know experience for students and part of their learning story.

Participants in this session:

- Learn how to create common mid-unit and end-of-unit assessments for teacher and student learning.
- Explore student reflection structures to use common assessments as part of a student's learning experience.

Jeanne Spiller

Effective Literacy Scaffolds and Interventions

What does instruction look like for students who are not yet reading at grade level? Exposure to grade-level tasks using grade-level text at Tier 1 is part of the equation. The other part is to provide

specific, targeted interventions at both Tier 2 and Tier 3. Participants in this session consider strategies and examples to guide this work.

Participants:

- Explore strategies for effective Tier 1 instruction even when students are reading below grade level.
- Examine considerations for interventions for Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions.

AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Anisa Baker-Busby

You Can't Tier 2 and Tier 3 Your Way Out of Poor Instruction

Teams spend an excessive amount of time discussing how interventions work, how to monitor progress, and when to find time to do it all. In this session, Anisa Baker-Busby focuses on finding a balance, using your entire school to support what you value, and understanding the importance of Tier 1 instruction.

Participants in this session:

- Gain clarity on what you want students to know and do.
- Learn how to use assessment and your current schedule to meet the learning needs of your students.

Joe Cuddemi

Creating a Healthy Classroom Culture: Strategies for Increasing Student Engagement

It's tempting to try to manage student behaviors by removing students from the classroom and school; however, in most cases, the student doesn't return to class with new and improved behavioral skills. While punitive removal strategies might be necessary for the most egregious behavioral offenses, these *interventions* often worsen the behavior of our most vulnerable students. How can we create a classroom culture that proactively reduces disruptive behavior and increases student engagement?

Participants in this session:

- Examine the essential components of a healthy classroom environment and culture.
- Explore proven strategies to increase student engagement and improve student behavior.

Sharon V. Kramer

The Cycle of Learning in Action

The PLC framework is the foundation of school improvement. Teams are guided by the four questions of learning as they move through each unit of instruction. This session sets the four questions in motion and describes the implementation of data informed learning. Sharon V. Kramer describes the collaborative work that is completed before, during, and after each unit of instruction.

Participants in this session:

- Understand how the four learning questions are embedded in a unit of study.
- Examine their current team practices to validate their work and determine additional ways to improve the process.

Sarah Schuhl

Turning Hope Into a Plan

It is one thing to hope all students will learn, and quite another to create a plan for that learning. Acceleration requires a focus on priority standards (the essentials of the essentials) and a year-long plan so teams can guarantee what all students will learn to grade level and beyond. With intentional planning, teams provide equitable learning experiences and design more effective common assessments and daily lessons. Together, teams build a shared understanding of the standards students need to learn and a plan to ensure that learning. In this session, Sarah Schuhl shares practical tools and strategies for the planning required to Level Up learning.

Participants in this session:

- Learn a process for choosing priority standards and developing a year-long plan for unit planning.
- Practice unwrapping standards into learning ladders with prior knowledge skills to inform instruction, assessment, and student reflection.

Jeanne Spiller

Reading and Writing Lesson Design to Engage Students and Accelerate Learning

Every lesson, every day is essential if we are truly focused on all students learning at grade level or higher. In this session, Jeanne Spiller highlights how educators can design literacy lessons that are powerful, productive, and engaging for students at every level. Participants learn literacy-based design strategies that can be immediately integrated into planning and lesson design.

Participants in this session:

- Learn the elements of effective literacy lesson design focused on ensuring learning for all.
- Explore strategies for meeting the needs of learners at all levels of proficiency.

Session Descriptions—Day 3

SEMINARS

Time for Action: Leveling Up Learning Starts With a Plan

Leveling up learning requires intentional action. These seminars are designed for reflection on current thinking, practices, and processes along with the shifts that must occur to build equitable practices that close the achievement gap in every school and accelerate learning for *all*. Participants examine shifts as described in *Acceleration for ALL: How to Guide for Overcoming Learning Gaps* to determine next steps. Consider how you might begin your journey. What's *your* plan?

Please attend one of the following three levels of this session:

Elementary

[Anisa Baker-Busby & Jeanne Spiller](#)

Secondary

[Joe Cuddemi & Sarah Schuhl](#)

District Level

[Sharon V. Kramer](#)

KEYNOTE

[Joe Cuddemi](#)

Who's Your Guna?

We've heard it said that people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. Level Up learning is anchored on the belief that all children, without exception, deserve love, care, and a quality education. How do we help our students move from survival strategies (fight, flight, and freeze) to self-compassion, empowerment, and higher levels of learning?

Participants in this session:

- Explore how to help children overcome anxiety, shame, and abandonment through compassion and persistence.
- Reflect on how an educator can have an immediate impact on a child's well-being, education, and life.