

Culture Keepers Institute Agenda

Bryant, AR • July 18–20, 2023

Tuesday, July 18

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Registration	Cafeteria
	Continental Breakfast	
8:00–9:45 a.m.	Keynote —Jack Baldermann <i>Building a Compassionate Culture, Championship Vision, and Joyous Results</i>	Auditorium
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:30 a.m.	Breakout Sessions	See page 3.
11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	Lunch (provided)	Cafeteria
12:30–2:00 p.m.	Breakout Sessions	See page 3.
2:00–2:15 p.m.	Break	
2:15–3:15 p.m.	High-Impact Talks by Principals (Each Session A HIT will be repeated in Session B.)	
	Session A • 2:15–2:35 p.m.	See page 4.
	Session B • 2:50–3:15 p.m.	

Wednesday, July 19

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Registration	Cafeteria
	Continental Breakfast	
8:00–9:45 a.m.	Keynote —Jeanne Spiller <i>Brave Leaders Pave the Way</i>	Auditorium
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:30 a.m.	Breakout Sessions	See page 5.
11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	Lunch (provided)	Cafeteria
12:30–2:00 p.m.	Breakout Sessions	See page 5.
2:00–2:15 p.m.	Break	
2:15–3:15 p.m.	Leadership Forums	
	<i>Aspiring Leaders</i> —Anisa Baker-Busby	122 – Band Room 1
	<i>Schools That Defy Zip Code</i> —Jeanne Spiller & Matthew Treadway	Auditorium
	<i>Moving From PLC Lite to Right</i> —Jack Baldermann	Black Box Theater
	<i>Duties as Assigned: Assistant Principals, Instructional Coaches, Etc.</i> —Amanda Ziaer	150 – Band Room 2

Thursday, July 20

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Continental Breakfast	Cafeteria
8:00–9:30 a.m.	Breakout Sessions	See page 6.
9:30–9:45 a.m.	Break	
9:45–11:45 a.m.	Keynote —Matthew Treadway <i>An Ode to Top-Down Leadership</i>	Auditorium

Agenda is subject to change.

Breakout Sessions at a Glance—Day 1

10:00–11:30 a.m.

Elementary (K–5)

Anisa Baker-Busby	
What Do Your Hallways Say About Your School's Climate and Culture?	Auditorium
Jeanne Spiller	
Leading Your PLC With Intention: Four Important Considerations	Black Box Theater

Middle (6–8)

Amanda Ziaer	
Is Your School Future Ready?	150 – Band Room 2

High (9–12)

Jack Baldermann	
How Westmont High Became a Most-Improved School and Won the DuFour Award	142 – Vocal Rehearsal
Matthew Treadway	
Developing a Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum: How Critical Question One Lays the Foundation for a PLC at Work	122 – Band Room 1

12:30–2:00 p.m.

Elementary (K–5)

Anisa Baker-Busby	
What Are You Doing All Day?	Auditorium
Jeanne Spiller	
Reading and Writing Strategies to Ignite Learning	Black Box Theater

Middle (6–8)

Amanda Ziaer	
Developing and Monitoring the Work of a Collaborative Team	150 – Band Room 2

High (9–12)

Jack Baldermann	
PLCs, Strategic Leadership, and Outstanding Results	142 – Vocal Rehearsal
Matthew Treadway	
Culture, Culture, Culture: How to Develop Collaboration in Your School	122 – Band Room 1

High-Impact Talks—Day 1

Session A • 2:15–2:35 p.m.

Session B • 2:50–3:15 p.m.

Anisa Baker-Busby	
Dealing With Difficult Parents: Who Wants to Do That?	Auditorium
Jack Baldermann	
Why I Am Obsessed With SMART Goals and How They Drive Results	142 – Vocal Rehearsal
Jeanne Spiller	
Get Them to the Cabin	Black Box Theater
Matthew Treadway	
Leading Change With the End in Mind	122 – Band Room 1
Amanda Ziaer	
What's in Your Backpack?	150 – Band Room 2

Breakout Sessions at a Glance—Day 2

10:00–11:30 a.m.

Elementary (K–5)

Anisa Baker-Busby	
How Do You Define Your Job? Consistency From Start to Finish	142 – Vocal Rehearsal
Jeanne Spiller	
Four for All: Four Practices to Ensure High Levels of Learning for All Students	Black Box Theater

Middle (6–8)

Amanda Ziaer	
A Model PLC Journey	150 – Band Room 2

High (9–12)

Jack Baldermann	
Motivating Disengaged Students: Supporting Champions of Hope and Learning for All	Auditorium
Matthew Treadway	
Using Data to Drive Collaboration in a Professional Learning Community	122 – Band Room 1

12:30–2:00 p.m.

Elementary (K–5)

Anisa Baker-Busby	
Developing the Talents of Your Staff	122 – Band Room 1
Jeanne Spiller	
Administering Assessments: What to Consider Before and After	Black Box Theater

Middle (6–8)

Amanda Ziaer	
What Do We Do When Our Kids Don't Learn?	150 – Band Room 2

High (9–12)

Jack Baldermann	
SMART Goals, Growth Mindset, and Confident Minds	142 – Vocal Rehearsal
Matthew Treadway	
Improving Achievement Through Focused Interventions	Auditorium

Breakout Sessions at a Glance—Day 3

8:00–9:30 a.m.

Elementary (K–5)

Anisa Baker-Busby	
Celebrate Good Times	Black Box Theater
Jeanne Spiller	
Lead Like a Coach	Auditorium

Middle (6–8)

Amanda Ziaer	
Building a Solid Foundation for PLC at Work	150 – Band Room 2

High (9–12)

Jack Baldermann	
Successful Implementation Plans and Ideas for Fledgling PLCs	142 – Vocal Rehearsal
Matthew Treadway	
Collective Teacher Efficacy	122 – Band Room 1

Keynote Session Descriptions

DAY 1

Jack Baldermann

Building a Compassionate Culture, Championship Vision, and Joyous Results

Westmont High School became the most improved and one of the top-performing high schools in the nation by successfully implementing PLC and RTI/MTSS concepts and practices. In 2020, Jack and his team at Westmont won the DuFour Award as the best PLC in the country and in 2021 won the National Blue Ribbon Award as the most diverse regular high school to win the honor in Illinois in the last 25 years. These accomplishments were achieved because the team is passionately dedicated to creating a culture that is focused on compassion for all people, collaboratively building and developing an intense commitment to a championship vision, and making certain that joy and having fun are present on the way to exceptional results.

Participants learn:

- Why compassion must be the driving force in a school's culture, how to build a compassionate culture, and how it leads to outstanding results
- How to collaboratively build and gain a passionate commitment for your "championship vision" or "educational promised land"
- Ways to lead that will inspire your team and create more joy in the work you do together
- Practical and impactful ideas to improve your PLC and RTI/MTSS implementation that will produce real growth for your entire school community

DAY 2

Jeanne Spiller

Brave Leaders Pave the Way

In this keynote, Jeanne Spiller addresses how courage and vulnerability are critical components of effective leadership. Participants explore how vulnerable and courageous leaders can positively impact the culture of districts, schools, and teams. Specific and actionable steps to become more courageous and vulnerable are shared, discussed, and highlighted through examples and stories.

Participants in this session:

- Explore how courage and vulnerability are critical components of effective leadership.
- Learn what vulnerability is and is not by exploring the six myths of vulnerability.
- Discover strategies for opening the door to vulnerable and courageous leadership.
- Reflect on the ways in which they are vulnerable and courageous in their leadership and how they can grow.

DAY 3

Matthew Treadway

An Ode to Top-Down Leadership

In this keynote, Matthew Treadway explores RTI at Work from a leadership perspective. Truly effective schoolwide systems of support require leadership that is top-down, bottom-up, and widely dispersed. Participants consider the role of leadership in developing schoolwide systems, reflect on their school or district, and develop action steps to take back to their team.

Breakout Session Descriptions—Day 1

10:00–11:30 a.m.

Elementary (K–5)

[Anisa Baker-Busby](#)

What Do Your Hallways Say About Your School's Climate and Culture?

We all know that “What gets monitored gets done.” Leaders know the impact of clear and consistent communication.

Participants in this session:

- Discuss strategies to create a school culture and climate that reflects the priorities of the leader and organization.
- Understand the importance of monitoring products that reflect the school's priorities.
- Develop strategies to lead and create a safe learning culture.
- Cultivate a focus on the right work.

[Jeanne Spiller](#)

Leading Your PLC With Intention: Four Important Considerations

Implementing and sustaining the PLC process requires diligent leaders who persist in ensuring that their school is where leaders and teachers collaborate, make evidence-based decisions, understand that students are the top priority, communicate effectively, and cultivate trusting relationships.

Participants in this session explore four areas of focus to consider in effectively leading the PLC at Work process.

1. Achieving focus and staying intentional
2. Building shared leadership
3. Using evidence for decision making and action
4. Prioritizing the student

Middle (6–8)

[Amanda Ziae](#)

Is Your School Future Ready?

Are you leading a campus that prepares students for a future they will create? This session emphasizes the need to “up our game” as educators and leaders to best serve our Gen Z learners. Participants in this session gain strategies to empower their guiding coalitions to 1) create learner profiles to inform future-ready skills, 2) develop educator profiles to inform hiring practices, 3) promote continuous learning and improved practices, and 4) coordinate and sustain regular collaborative team time.

Participants in this session:

- Examine weekly and monthly team schedules.
- Engage in a critical friends protocol.
- Learn a quick brainstorming strategy to create educator and learner profiles.
- Discover the benefits of learning walks and brag boards.

High (9–12)

Jack Baldermann

How Westmont High Became a Most-Improved School and Won the DuFour Award

Jack Baldermann shares the ideas, programs, strategies, and tools that Westmont High School (a Title I school in Illinois) used to become the most improved and one of the top-performing schools in the nation. In every student achievement category, Westmont has achieved exceptional and sustained results. The specific and practical action steps that led to these student learning performance gains are shared. Participants leave this session with a framework to successfully implement PLC and RTI concepts that will lead to real student success.

Matthew Treadway

Developing a Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum: How Critical Question One Lays the Foundation for a PLC at Work

Matthew Treadway examines critical question one of collaborative teams. Participants explore the concept of a guaranteed and viable curriculum and study what this looks like in practice. They then assess their own school or district practices and develop next steps.

12:30–2:00 p.m.

Elementary (K–5)

Anisa Baker-Busby

What Are You Doing All Day?

Effective leaders must do more than state expectations; they must make it a priority to help teams succeed and focus on the right work. They take pride in engaging teams in quality job-embedded professional learning, collaboration, and support.

Participants in this session:

- Learn what constitutes a PLC.
- Understand that their responsibility as leaders is to help educators succeed in doing the right work.
- Develop strategies that support educators in their schools through ongoing job-embedded collaborative learning.
- Gain strategies to create a learning culture that has effective systems, procedures, and high expectations.

Jeanne Spiller

Reading and Writing Strategies to Ignite Learning

In this session, Jeanne Spiller highlights how educators can work collaboratively to combat literacy concerns and improve student skill development across content areas. Participants learn literacy-based strategies that can be immediately integrated into the classroom. Jeanne shares a range of strategies covering primary to secondary.

Participants can expect to:

- Discover ready-to-use, research-based teaching strategies to develop students' prereading, during-reading, and post-reading skills and ensure all students can access grade-level instruction.
- Study techniques for providing immediate assistance and feedback to students.

Middle (6–8)

Amanda Ziaer

Developing and Monitoring the Work of a Collaborative Team

Collaborative teams are the linchpin of change on a school campus, but the work must be monitored and supported by the right people. Participants in this session hear how a particular principal participated in collaborative team time to help lead teacher teams to success and establish campus priorities. Training instructional coaches and teams proved critical in developing collaborative and leadership teams at this school.

Outcomes from this session include:

- Discovering ways to use data with leadership and collaborative teams
- Creating and monitoring schoolwide SMART goals to drive the work of teams
- Understanding the function of job-embedded professional learning and how the building leader teaches and models this practice

High (9–12)

Jack Baldermann

PLCs, Strategic Leadership, and Outstanding Results

Jack Baldermann, 2017 Illinois Principal of the Year and 2018 Finalist for National Principal of the Year, shares specific programs, ideas, plans, and tools used to transform schools. After four years of implementing PLC concepts, Westmont High School (a Title I school) became the most improved high school in Illinois in 2014 and 2015 with a graduation rate of 99 percent, a graduation rate of 100 percent for Latino and African American students, double-digit increases on every NCLB exam, a dramatic reduction in suspensions, achievement of adequate yearly progress for the first time in seven years, and one of the most improved advanced placement programs in the country. Riverside Brookfield High School achieved similar results using PLC concepts and employing strategic leadership.

Participants gain:

- Specific strategies to implement PLC concepts that are proven to result in significant student achievement
- Practical tools to help establish a high-functioning PLC school
- Useful information and inspiration to improve students' academic performance

Matthew Treadway

Culture, Culture, Culture: How to Develop Collaboration in Your School

Participants in this session learn about the three big ideas that drive a professional learning community. After learning about each, participants assess their own school culture and develop plans of action. Along the way, Matthew Treadway shares examples and ideas for action from national model PLCs.

High-Impact Talks

Session A • 2:15–2:35 p.m. | Session B • 2:50–3:15 p.m.

Anisa Baker-Busby

Dealing With Difficult Parents: Who Wants to Do That?

Having parents as partners in your PLC is magical, but how do we get difficult parents on board?

Participants in this session:

- Learn how to be proactive and communicate effectively and positively to parents.
- Recognize the importance of understanding family cultures and their individual situations.
- Discuss strategies to build strong relations with students, staff, parents, and the community.
- Ensure teachers are confident, empowered, and supported when dealing with difficult parents.

Jack Baldermann

Why I Am Obsessed With SMART Goals and How They Drive Results

In addition to quickly establishing the *why* of SMART goals, this brief talk outlines specific actions to ensure the process leads to collaboratively built and passionately agreed-upon SMART goals.

The power of SMART goals lies in pulling together a cohesive team, bringing the shared mission, vision, and values to life, and celebrating the efforts that lead to increases in student achievement.

The process described in this talk led to an average graduation rate of 99 percent at Westmont High School, Illinois (a Title I school). The SMART goal process Westmont employs also led to increased state test scores and the most improved Advanced Placement program in Illinois and one of the most improved in the nation.

Jeanne Spiller

Get Them to the Cabin

As educators, we must do everything in our power to ensure that all students learn at grade level or higher. In this session, Jeanne Spiller explores the importance of overcoming obstacles using a journey to a remote cabin as an analogy.

Matthew Treadway

Leading Change with the End in Mind

The change process is difficult work. In this high-impact talk, Matthew Treadway focuses on the importance of leaders beginning with the end in mind to help ensure high levels of commitment and engagement by their teams.

[**Amanda Ziaer**](#)

What's in Your Backpack?

In this high-impact talk, Amanda Ziaer discusses leadership and the qualities of a leader that are needed at all times. Participants learn how to prioritize what to keep in their “backpack” as a leader when they have “baggage.” Leading the work of a PLC takes nonstop leadership, and balance is required in order to achieve your PLC goals.

Breakout Session Descriptions—Day 2

10:00–11:30 a.m.

Elementary (K–5)

Anisa Baker-Busby

How Do You Define Your Job? Consistency From Start to Finish

Effective leaders understand the difference between activity and productivity, and teams value collaboration more when they view it as constructive. Focusing on productivity allows leaders to develop teams that embody the four critical questions of a PLC. Productivity helps promote consistency from start to finish, which requires leaders to demonstrate an unwavering commitment to the right work.

Participants in this session:

- Develop strategies that support the leader in observing, supporting, leading, and monitoring effective instructional practices.
- Understand the importance of leaders modeling what they value.

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 can expect to:

- 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.

Middle (6–8)

Amanda Ziae

A Model PLC Journey

What is a *model PLC* and why should a school implement it? Amanda Ziae illustrates her school's journey, from one that was aimless in the midst of too many opposing initiatives that resulted in little

to no effect on learner achievement, to finding its North Star to guide the school to achieve model PLC status in a four-year span. Coppell Middle School North created processes and structures that teachers came to rely on and its new principal had to buy into. This journey exemplifies the steps needed to build a model PLC culture that thrives on learning, collaboration, and results orientation.

Participants in this session:

- Learn how to get started on a PLC journey.
- Explore what it means to have a focus on learning.
- Hear how this principal “led up” to share the benefits of PLC across her district.
- Take away resources and strategies to forward their PLC journey.

High (9–12)

Jack Baldermann

Motivating Disengaged Students: Supporting Champions of Hope and Learning for All

Jack Baldermann shares the findings of leading researchers and practitioners in education, including new research based on more than 300 interviews with students identified as underperforming. He shows the results of specific programs that are making a substantial difference in student achievement and facilitates a discussion about how to reach and engage unmotivated students.

Participants in this session:

- Learn about and discuss current research and best practices in education that positively impact the lives of all students.
- Examine research on why students disengage from the learning process and what educators can do to help them become more successful.
- Explore ideas and solutions that work in harmony with PLCs.
- Gain information and strategies to implement at their schools or districts.

Matthew Treadway

Using Data to Drive Collaboration in a Professional Learning Community

Data is a word commonly utilized in schools and among school teams but is often considered as just the averages we collect from student performance. Matthew Treadway leads participants in examining critical question two while exploring what data looks like in a PLC at Work. This session provides participants the opportunity to reflect on their current reality and plan next steps to move their schools forward.

12:30–2:00 p.m.

Elementary (K–5)

Anisa Baker-Busby

Developing the Talents of Your Staff

Everyone needs a team. No one person has the energy or expertise to do it all. The responsibility of leadership is too great in a professional learning community. Effective principals know how to promote shared leadership throughout the school by developing strong teacher leaders.

Participants in this session:

- Develop strategies for shared leadership throughout their school.
- Learn the value of shared team responsibility.
- Understand the importance of having a team leader structure.
- Acquire strategies to build staff leadership capacity.

Jeanne Spiller

Administering Assessments: What to Consider Before and After

Jeanne Spiller focuses on strategies teams can use before and after an assessment to ensure data is used effectively. Jeanne guides participants through strategies and protocols for using student assessment data to plan focused, differentiated instruction within the context of a continuum of assessments. Participants also learn how to use data from assessments to provide students targeted feedback and further their learning. This process applies to any content area standards.

Participants in this session learn:

- How a continuum of assessment can guide the teaching and learning process
- Factors to consider before assessments take place to ensure student data can direct next steps
- Strategies and protocols for examining student data and planning differentiated instruction

Middle (6–8)

Amanda Ziaer

What Do We Do When Our Kids Don't Learn?

How important is question three of the four critical questions of a PLC? Amanda Ziaer elucidates how she led two different middle schools in creating and using advisory time during the school day to address critical question three: What do we do when our kids do not learn? These schools, from different districts, that shared the common purpose of increasing learner achievement, focused on the intersection of PLCs and RTI and the principals' role in supporting teachers and utilizing best practices from their leaders and collaborative teams.

Participants in this session:

- Examine a sample advisory schedule and mastery schedule.
- Hear about an advisory's guidelines for its tight and loose culture.

- Explore the four essential elements of an effective intervention system.
- Consider the benefits and drawbacks of a collaborative team's use of data.
- Examine an example of a data protocol.

High (9–12)

Jack Baldermann

SMART Goals, Growth Mindset, and Confident Minds

This session focuses on building a positive mindset for all members of the school community, drawing on decades of research to develop practical tools to fire up students and staff.

Outcomes from this session include:

- Learning how to collaboratively build and get passionate agreement on SMART goals
- Understanding the power and joy in SMART goals and how they fuel the journey
- Exploring how to enhance a growth mindset for the staff and students
- Learning how to build more confidence in the staff and students
- Planning specific actions that lead to more growth, confidence, success, and joy in our work

Matthew Treadway

Improving Achievement Through Focused Interventions

In this session, Matthew Treadway delves into critical question three. Participants examine systemic intervention through a broader lens than just their individual classrooms. Participants evaluate their own practices and identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.

Breakout Session Descriptions—Day 3

8:00–9:30 a.m.

Elementary (K–5)

Anisa Baker-Busby

Celebrate Good Times

In order to sustain the school improvement process, leaders must convert the complex process of their PLC journey into small, publicly celebrated wins. This creates a culture of appreciation and shows that their progress is making a positive difference, which ultimately provides the momentum to stay focused on the right work—the communicated “tights” of the organization.

Participants in this session:

- Develop strategies for creating and implementing a strong recognition program for students and staff when goals are achieved.
- Learn how to create momentum.
- Understand the role of celebrations in a PLC.

Jeanne Spiller

Lead Like a Coach

Communication is key to effective leadership. In this session, Jeanne Spiller focuses on communication strategies to strengthen and support coherence, collaboration, and change in schools and districts.

Participants learn and practice techniques and strategies to implement immediately.

As a result of this session, participants will be better able to:

- Employ various listening and speaking skills to improve the outcomes of daily conversations with colleagues.
- Coach a staff member through a problem-solving conversation in a way that increases that person’s ability to take the initiative and resolve the issue.
- Provide constructive performance feedback in a way that influences a colleague’s thinking and behavior.

Middle (6–8)

Amanda Ziaer

Building a Solid Foundation for PLC at Work

How do principals get started with the work of a PLC? Building shared knowledge and creating consensus are key components of any kind of school change. It’s important that you have the consensus of staff before moving forward, or the structures and practices you put in place will be at the mercy of individual teachers. Your leadership team, guiding coalition, and collaborative teams are the linchpin of change on a campus, so their work must be explicit and clearly understood by all stakeholders.

Outcomes from this session include:

- Learning the qualities of a leader
- Building the capacity of a guiding coalition
- Developing a living mission and vision
- Getting buy-in for change
- Understanding the role of teams versus the role of a guiding coalition
- Assessing the PLC journey of teams and schools
- Aligning expectations and practices

High (9–12)

Jack Baldermann

Successful Implementation Plans and Ideas for Fledgling PLCs

Jack Baldermann provides innovative ideas and a step-by-step process for successful PLC implementation for educators whose schools are starting the PLC process or need a reboot. As a principal, Jack worked with his team to successfully develop PLCs in three schools, and he has consulted and supported effective PLC implementation at schools throughout the country. Participants can expect to receive practical information to launch or relaunch the PLC process and start designing a strategic plan to integrate PLC concepts.

Matthew Treadway

Collective Teacher Efficacy

John Hattie ranks collective teacher efficacy as being the single largest influence on student learning. In this session, Matthew Treadway explores that concept and details how the PLC process allows for it to flourish in a school building. Leaders reflect on their own school and develop next steps to ensure that collective teacher efficacy is a fundamental part of their school culture.