

# PLC at Work Institute Agenda

## Kirtland, NM • August 3–4, 2023

### Thursday, August 3

|                       |  |                        |
|-----------------------|--|------------------------|
| 7:00–8:00 a.m.        | Registration   | Aux. Gym Commons       |
|                       | Continental Breakfast  | High School Cafeteria  |
| 8:00–9:45 a.m.        | <b>Keynote</b> —Mike Mattos<br><i>The Urgency of the Moment</i>                  | Performing Arts Center |
| 9:45–10:00 a.m.       | Break  |                        |
| 10:00–11:30 a.m.      | <b>Breakout Sessions</b>   | See pages 2–3.         |
| 11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. | Lunch (provided)   | High School Cafeteria  |
| 12:30–2:00 p.m.       | <b>Breakout Sessions</b>   | See pages 2–3.         |
| 2:00–2:15 p.m.        | Break  |                        |
| 2:15–3:15 p.m.        | <b>Panel Discussion</b> — <i>Presenters answer your most pressing questions.</i> | Performing Arts Center |

### Friday, August 4

|                       |   |                        |
|-----------------------|---|------------------------|
| 7:00–8:00 a.m.        | Registration  | Aux. Gym Commons       |
|                       | Continental Breakfast   | High School Cafeteria  |
| 8:00–9:30 a.m.        | <b>Breakout Sessions</b>  | See pages 2–3.         |
| 9:30–9:45 a.m.        | Break   |                        |
| 9:45–11:15 a.m.       | <b>Breakout Sessions</b>  | See pages 2–3.         |
| 11:15 a.m.–12:15 p.m. | Lunch (provided)  | High School Cafeteria  |
| 12:15–1:15 p.m.       | <b>Team Time</b> — <i>Presenters aid in your collaborative team discussions.</i>          | Performing Arts Center |
| 1:15–1:30 p.m.        | Break   |                        |
| 1:30–3:15 p.m.        | <b>Keynote</b> —William M. Ferriter<br><i>Progress-Driven Leadership in a PLC at Work</i> | Performing Arts Center |

Agenda is subject to change.

## Breakout Sessions at a Glance

| Presenters & Titles   | Thursday,<br>August 3    |                          | Friday,<br>August 4      |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
|   | 10:00–11:30 a.m.         | 12:30–2:00 p.m.          | 8:00–9:30 a.m.           | 9:45–11:15 a.m.          |
| <b>Scott Carr</b>   |                          |                          |                          |                          |
| Creating a Culture of Celebration   | High School Media Center |                          |                          |                          |
| Innovation That Leads to Learning: Engaging Students in Authentic Experiences         |                          | High School Media Center |                          | High School Media Center |
| Learning Leaders: Creating a Personalized Professional Development Program            |                          |                          | High School Media Center |                          |
| <b>Jason Hillman</b>  |                          |                          |                          |                          |
| A PLC Journey: How a School Transformed Into an Award-Winning Model PLC School        | Middle School Band       |                          |                          |                          |
| What You Do Matters! Taking Charge of Your School's Culture                           |                          | Middle School Band       |                          | Middle School Band       |
| Don't Get Stuck! Getting the Most Out of Collaborative Team Meetings                  |                          |                          | Middle School Band       |                          |
| <b>Brig Leane</b>   |                          |                          |                          |                          |
| KISS (Keep It Simple, Schools): Seven Steps for Team Success                          | High School Band         |                          |                          | High School Band         |
| Singletons in a PLC: Navigating On-Ramps to Meaningful Collaboration                  |                          | High School Band         |                          |                          |
| The Learning Dashboard: Successfully Starting and Sustaining the PLC Process          |                          |                          | High School Band         |                          |
| <b>Mike Mattos</b>  |                          |                          |                          |                          |
| Are We a Group or a Team?   | Performing Arts Center   |                          |                          |                          |
| Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Elementary Schools          |                          | Performing Arts Center   |                          |                          |
| Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Secondary Schools           |                          |                          | Performing Arts Center   |                          |
| Guiding Principles for Principals: Tips and Tools for Leading the PLC at Work Process |                          |                          |                          | Performing Arts Center   |

| Presenters & Titles   | Thursday,<br>August 3   |                         | Friday,<br>August 4     |                         |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
|   | 10:00–11:30 a.m.        | 12:30–2:00 p.m.         | 8:00–9:30 a.m.          | 9:45–11:15 a.m.         |
| <b>Joshua Ray</b>   |                         |                         |                         |                         |
| Crumbling Foundations: Rebuilding Educators Through a Collaboration Culture                           | Middle School Cafeteria |                         |                         |                         |
| Eating the PLC Elephant: Practical Steps to Make Our New Learning Come to Life                        |                         | Middle School Cafeteria |                         |                         |
| What Great Teams Do Differently   |                         |                         | Middle School Cafeteria |                         |
| From Compliance to Commitment: Understanding and Overcoming Resistance Through Collective Commitments |                         |                         |                         | Middle School Cafeteria |

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# Session Descriptions—Day 1

## **KEYNOTE**

### **Mike Mattos**

#### **The Urgency of the Moment**

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

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

## **MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS**

### **Scott Carr**

#### **Creating a Culture of Celebration**

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

Participants in this session learn about:

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

### **Jason Hillman**

#### **A PLC Journey: How a School Transformed Into an Award-Winning Model PLC School**

Award-winning principal Jason Hillman presents the story and action steps he took with his staff as their school transformed into a model PLC school and a National Blue Ribbon Award winner. He discusses the collaborative vision and mission-building process his staff went through that ultimately changed the culture of the building. Attendees can expect to see authentic PLC strategies and processes that they can utilize within their own buildings. Jason shares authentic video of collaboration with a focus on student and adult learning. This powerful story of his school is both informative and motivational.

Participants in this session can expect to:

- Establish a practical approach in creating a shared vision and mission or mantra.
- Obtain a process that will lead to the creation of clear goals, and a system of how to achieve continuous progress toward goals.
- Learn how to systematically embed professional development through the PLC process.

## Brig Leane

### **KISS (Keep It Simple, Schools): Seven Steps for Team Success**

You believe in PLCs and are ready to follow the process with more structure. Teachers and administrators need clarity on what is expected, and this session answers the question: What exactly should effective teams produce? This session is for educators looking for specifics on the tasks that guide effective collaborative teams through the PLC process and it gives administrators insight into what they should track to know which teams need more support.

Participants in this session can expect to:

- Explore collaborative team steps.
- Examine templates to guide teams.
- Develop actionable next steps.

## Mike Mattos

### **Are We a Group or a Team?**

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

Participants in this session:

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

## 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.

## **AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS**

### **Scott Carr**

#### **Innovation That Leads to Learning: Engaging Students in Authentic Experiences**

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

Outcomes from this session include:

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

### **Jason Hillman**

#### **What You Do Matters! Taking Charge of Your School's Culture**

School culture has to be purposefully and systematically developed. If educators do not have a plan to develop the culture of their schools, it will develop on its own—and it may not be the culture they want. In order to create a positive and productive culture, educators need to get the voices of positive and productive leaders in the room. Often, these leaders are not vocal and feel isolated. This session provides a practical approach—including activities—to develop and maintain a positive school culture.

Learning outcomes from this session include:

- Understanding school culture
- Gaining practical strategies to develop the culture in their schools
- Creating and sustaining a collaborative culture through shared leadership
- Clearly understanding the importance of their role in developing school culture

## Brig Leane

### **Singletons in a PLC: Navigating On-Ramps to Meaningful Collaboration**

Singletons—teachers who are the only ones teaching a specific course or subject—often ask how they can effectively participate on a collaborative team. Additionally, leaders frequently ask what they should be doing to guide and support singletons. Brig Leane provides participants clear direction to help singletons engage in meaningful collaboration. Teachers and leaders receive templates they can immediately implement.

Participants in this session can expect to:

- Examine the singleton dilemma.
- Explore on-ramps to meaningful collaboration and guiding templates.
- Develop actionable next steps.

## Mike Mattos

### **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.

## 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.



## Session Descriptions—Day 2

### MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS

#### Scott Carr

##### **Learning Leaders: Creating a Personalized Professional Development Program**

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

Outcomes for this session include:

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

#### Jason Hillman

##### **Don't Get Stuck! Getting the Most Out of Collaborative Team Meetings**

A collaborative culture is one of the three big ideas in the PLC model, and collaborative teams are a cornerstone of the PLC process. Getting started and maintaining productive collaborative sessions can be a daunting task. This session provides real-world applications of strategies and tools to help get teams started and avoid getting stuck in the process. Jason Hillman discusses strategies and tools his teams use to aid them on their PLC journey that ultimately propelled them to become a model PLC school through Solution Tree.

Participants in this session can expect to:

- Learn to understand the makeup of a positive and productive collaborative team session.
- Gain practical tools and strategies to help their collaborative teams get started and keep moving forward.
- Master how to systematically build collaboration throughout their buildings.

#### Brig Leane

##### **The Learning Dashboard: Successfully Starting and Sustaining the PLC Process**

This session is for leaders who are eager to begin the PLC process back on campus and want to start in a way that is focused, will produce quick wins, and will be sustainable for busy educators. This session answers the question: What exactly should effective teams produce and what should leaders monitor?

Brig Leane explores the specific tasks that guide effective collaborative teams through the PLC process and gives administrators insight into how and why they should monitor team progress.

Participants in this session:

- Gain clarity of expected team products.
- Examine methods to effectively monitor team progress.
- Address resistance.
- Develop actionable next steps.

## Mike Mattos

### **Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Secondary Schools**

If the fundamental purpose of being a professional learning community is to ensure all students learn at high levels, then there must be time embedded during the school day to provide students extra time and support to succeed. In this session, Mike Mattos provides real examples showing how to create time for supplemental and intensive interventions.

Participants learn specific steps to implement a flexible secondary intervention period, including how to:

- Learn specific steps to implement a flexible intervention period.
- Determine what interventions to offer each week.
- Require students to attend specific interventions.
- Monitor student attendance.
- Allocate staff.
- Extend student learning.
- Address potential obstacles.
- Do all this within teachers' contractual obligations.

## 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.

## **AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS**

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## Mike Mattos

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

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

Participants learn how to:

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

## 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.

## **KEYNOTE**

## William M. Ferriter

### **Progress-Driven Leadership in a PLC at Work**

Possessing deep insight into the core work of collaborative teams, participants in Solution Tree's PLC Institutes are, in many ways, the most important leaders in any building. They bear responsibility for working together to identify next steps worth taking even as teachers faced with new challenges begin

to question just how doable those next steps really are. As Teresa Amabile and Steven Kramer demonstrate in *The Progress Principle* (2011), “The secret to amazing performance is empowering talented people to succeed at meaningful work” (p. 2). So, how can you empower talented people to succeed at meaningful work? The key rests in creating the conditions that make real progress possible—a process introduced in this keynote presentation by Solution Tree author and associate Bill Ferriter.

Participants can expect to:

- Explore the influences that impact the choices we make when driving change.
- Study the characteristics of successful change efforts in fields beyond education.
- Identify next steps worth taking to move their own schools forward.