

# Agenda

## Seattle, WA • August 19–21, 2024

### Monday, August 19

6:30–7:50 a.m.	Registration	Rooms/Locations TBD
	Continental Breakfast	
7:50–9:45 a.m.	<b>Keynote</b> —Mike Mattos <i>Proven, Practical, and Doable: Making the Case for PLCs at Work</i>	
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:30 a.m.	<b>Breakout Sessions</b>	See pages 2–4.
11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)	
1:00–2:30 p.m.	<b>Breakout Sessions</b>	See pages 2–4.
2:30–2:45 p.m.	Break	
2:45–3:45 p.m.	<b>Panel Discussion</b> —Presenters answer your most pressing questions.	

### Tuesday, August 20

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Registration	Rooms/Locations TBD
	Continental Breakfast	
8:00–9:45 a.m.	<b>Keynote</b> —Luis F. Cruz <i>Let's Get Deeper: Understanding the Difference Between Becoming a PLC and Engaging in the PLC Process</i>	
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:30 a.m.	<b>Breakout Sessions</b>	See pages 2–4.
11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)	
1:00–2:30 p.m.	<b>Breakout Sessions</b>	See pages 2–4.
2:30–2:45 p.m.	Break	
2:45–3:45 p.m.	<b>Team Time</b> —Presenters aid in your collaborative team discussions.	

### Wednesday, August 21

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Continental Breakfast	Rooms/Locations TBD
8:00–9:30 a.m.	<b>Breakout Sessions</b>	See pages 2–4.
9:30–9:45 a.m.	Break	
9:45–11:45 a.m.	<b>Keynote</b> —Janel Keating <i>Doing the Right Work at the Right Time for the Right Reasons</i>	

Agenda is subject to change.

## Breakout Sessions at a Glance

Presenters & Titles	Monday, August 19		Tuesday, August 20		Wednesday, August 21
	10:00–11:30 a.m.	1:00–2:30 p.m.	10:00–11:30 a.m.	1:00–2:30 p.m.	8:00–9:30 a.m.
<b>Tim Brown</b>					
Building a Commitment to Learning in Students	X				
How to Build Student Ownership, Motivation, and Efficacy Through the Four Questions of a Collaborative Team		X			
Developing Shared Leadership: Forming Your Guiding Coalition			X		
Grading: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly				X	X
<b>Luis F. Cruz</b>					
Task Forces: Collectively Using PLC Characteristics to Serve Underperforming Student Cohorts	X				
When the Staff Says No to PLCs: Dealing With Resistance to the PLC Process in Your School or District		X			
English Learners and PLCs			X		
Taping Before Painting: Blending the PLC and RTI Processes to Collectively Respond When Students Don't Learn				X	
I Am Sold on PLCs: Practical Tools and Directions to Be Successful					X
<b>Aaron Hansen</b>					
Owning Their Learning: Rethinking Students' Role in Intervention and Extension	X		X		
Heroes Within: A PLC Framework for Empowering Students to Own Their Learning Journey Through Hope, Self-Efficacy, and Motivation		X			X
How to Develop PLCs for Singletons and Small Schools				X	

Presenters & Titles	Monday, August 19		Tuesday, August 20		Wednesday, August 21
	10:00–11:30 a.m.	1:00–2:30 p.m.	10:00–11:30 a.m.	1:00–2:30 p.m.	8:00–9:30 a.m.
<b>Timothy D. Kanold</b>					
Your Physical and Mental Wellness: Thriving at Work and at Home!	X				
Leading the PLC Life: Eliminating Barriers by Teaching the Loose-Tight Culture!		X			
Your PreK–12 PLC Mathematics Focus: Instruction and Tasks!			X		
Mindfulness, Trust, and Relationship-Building Routines: Strategies for Living the PLC Life!				X	
Heart & Soul: Living a Fully Engaged, High-Energy, Well-Balanced Professional Life!					X
<b>Janel Keating</b>					
This Is Where It All Fits! The Well-Designed Unit Plan: From Standards to Assessments, Unit by Unit	X		X		
Are the Kids Learning and How Do We Know? Data-Based Decision Making in High-Performing Teams		X			
Aligning PLCs Districtwide: From the Boardroom to the Classroom				X	
Daunting Yet Doable: The Role of a Principal Leading Collaborative Teams					X
<b>Sharon V. Kramer</b>					
Acceleration: The Path to Closing the Achievement Gap	X			X	
Is the Central Office Central to PLCs? Yes!		X			
Learning for All Requires Differentiation			X		X
<b>Mike Mattos</b>					
Are We a Group or a Team?	X				
Taking Action: How to Create a Highly Effective, Multitiered System of Supports		X			
Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Secondary Schools			X		

Presenters & Titles	Monday, August 19		Tuesday, August 20		Wednesday, August 21
	10:00–11:30 a.m.	1:00–2:30 p.m.	10:00–11:30 a.m.	1:00–2:30 p.m.	8:00–9:30 a.m.
Behavior Solutions: Leveraging the PLC at Work Process to Teach Essential Behaviors				X	
Guiding Principles for Principals: Tips and Tools for Leading the PLC at Work Process					X
<b>Maria Nielsen</b>					
The 15-Day Challenge: Win Quick, Win Often!	X				X
Show Me What Ya Got: Student Engagement Strategies to Keep the Pulse on Learning		X			
Help Your Team: Overcoming Common Collaborative Challenges in a PLC at Work			X		
Elementary ELA Strategies to Keep Your Students on Track				X	
<b>Jeanne Spiller</b>					
We Need a Reboot: Reenergizing the Work of Professional Learning Communities	X				
Yes We Can! Moving Beyond Labels Through the Partnership Between General and Special Educators		X			
Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Elementary Schools			X		
Intentional, Courageous Leadership Starts With You!				X	
Protocols for Results: Using Data Discussions to Achieve Higher Levels of Learning for All					X

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# Session Descriptions—Day 1

## KEYNOTE

### Mike Mattos

#### **Proven, Practical, and Doable: Making the Case for PLCs at Work**

As a profession, we are facing unprecedented times. Never in our history has success in K–12 education been more vital to every child’s success, and never have educators faced such daunting challenges amplified by a global pandemic and social strife. How we, as educators, respond to these realities will have a profound impact for generations. In this keynote, Mike Mattos makes the case that our best hope to overcome these obstacles and ensure all our students succeed is to become a true professional learning community. Participants learn the guiding principles and essential actions of the PLC at Work process, assess their progress, and consider next steps in their PLC journey.

## MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS

### Tim Brown

#### **Building a Commitment to Learning in Students**

The educators in a learning-centered school deliberately identify strategies for building and communicating high expectations with their students. The importance of this is reinforced by Anthony Muhammad’s research for his book, *Transforming School Culture: How to Overcome Staff Division* (2017). Muhammad discovered that students will learn more and be more successful in an environment where all educators believe they can learn at high levels, and those educators work together to convince the students they can achieve lofty academic goals teachers set for them.

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

Participants can expect to:

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

## Luis F. Cruz

### **Task Forces: Collectively Using PLC Characteristics to Serve Underperforming Student Cohorts**

A strong and focused PLC ensures high levels of learning for all students. To achieve this goal, PLCs acknowledge that achievement gaps result when traditional school systems don't give historically marginalized students the opportunity to learn. Task forces assemble teams of educators to confront systemic barriers that hinder English learners, students with individual education plans, and economically disadvantaged students, to name a few disenfranchised student cohorts. Luis F. Cruz shares how task forces redesign systems in seven steps to ensure all students learn at high levels, including those traditionally excluded from optimal opportunities.

Participants in this session learn:

- Why our traditional school system was designed to produce achievement gaps
- How collective leadership in the form of a task force initiates the required action to effectively address gaps in learning
- How the PLC process is synonymous with equity and redesigning a system never originally designed for today's definition of *all*

## Aaron Hansen

### **Owning Their Learning: Rethinking Students' Role in Intervention and Extension**

Students must become owners of their learning in order to truly reach the levels of rigorous learning being demanded of them. Participants are challenged to rethink the traditional role of a "teacher" who delivers lessons, and begin taking on the role of a leader of learning who coaches and leads learners ... all by embedding PLC and RTI concepts into their daily practice.

Participants can expect to:

- Learn how to collect the type of information needed to make smart intervention decisions, how to help students track their own progress, and how to structure intervention so students have some voice, choice, and mobility in the intervention and extension process.
- Be re-inspired!

## Timothy D. Kanold

### **Your Physical and Mental Wellness: Thriving at Work and at Home!**

In this decade, teaching and leading in pursuit of improved student achievement is hard to do well day in and day out. The work at hand takes its toll physically and mentally. During this highly interactive, sometimes funny, sometimes serious, and always engaging session, Timothy D. Kanold uses the Wellness Solutions for Educators™ framework to take a deep dive into the physical and mental wellness challenges that exist in the daily life of an educator. Improved sleep and rest, food and hydration, and movement are interwoven together as a result of daily decision making and

intentionally planning. Participants find themselves (re)invigorated, (re)inspired, and (re)connected to the benefits of a sustainable and thriving home and work life.

Participants can expect to:

- Discover brain research associated with sleep, rest, hydration, movement, and decision fatigue.
- Consider specific strategies for incorporating improved sleep, rest, hydration, movement, and decision-making routines into daily life.
- Explore a concrete plan for reducing, automating, and regulating decisions to avoid decision fatigue and mental exhaustion as part of educator renewal.

## Janel Keating

### **This Is Where It All Fits! The Well-Designed Unit Plan: From Standards to Assessments, Unit by Unit**

Unit planning is one of the most important activities in which collaborative teams engage. While there is no “right” way for teams to plan instructional units, teams must pay attention to numerous things in the process. Participants discuss examples and view video clips of teacher teams effectively planning units of instruction—from standards and learning targets to end-of-unit common formative assessments.

Janel Keating walks participants through each step of the PLC at Work process. Teams learn to plan a unit of instruction from beginning to end and understand how a unit-of-instruction plan is tied to analyzing the data at the end of the unit. This session illustrates the continuous improvement cycle in action.

## Sharon V. Kramer

### **Acceleration: The Path to Closing the Achievement Gap**

Acceleration is the path less traveled in most schools and classrooms, especially those in which students are reading and writing far below grade level. The usual approach is to help students catch up by remediating learning or going backward to go forward. Through the examination of specific and practical strategies that administrators, teachers, teams, and schools can implement, Sharon V. Kramer takes the participants on an alternate journey through the acceleration pathway that closes the achievement gap quickly enough to access grade- and course-level learning for all students.

Participants examine ways to:

- Develop an acceleration mindset.
- Build the foundation for acceleration.
- Dig into the real work of acceleration.

## Mike Mattos

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

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

Participants in this session:

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

## Maria Nielsen

### **The 15-Day Challenge: Win Quick, Win Often!**

This interactive session establishes, reboots, or re-energizes the work of collaborative teams. Schools nationwide are using this simple learning-assessing process to connect the dots of a PLC. Maria Nielsen helps teams see the big picture of a PLC and put it all together in a recurring cycle of collective inquiry. The 15-day challenge is a practical way to bring the PLC process to life.

Participants in this session:

- Clarify the work of collaborative teams.
- Establish steps for a guaranteed and viable curriculum.
- Explore the learning-assessing cycle in a unit of study.

## Jeanne Spiller

### **We Need a Reboot: Reenergizing the Work of Professional Learning Communities**

This session is for schools, districts, and teams that have been implementing the work of professional learning communities and feel the need to reignite that work to foster higher levels of collaboration, growth, and success for educators and students. Participants dive deep into the core principles of PLCs, explore innovative strategies to enhance collaboration, and foster a culture of continuous learning. Participants leave with renewed energy, a clear vision, and practical strategies to revitalize their PLC and drive positive change in their educational community.

Participants in this session:

- Reflect on past PLC experiences and gain insights into how to leverage these experiences to create a more impactful and effective PLC.



- Explore ways to encourage ongoing professional development, share research and best practices, and stay up-to-date with the latest trends and innovations in education.
- Learn how to effectively share ideas, resources, and best practices, and leverage the collective expertise of the group to drive professional growth and student success.
- Create a roadmap for ongoing improvement and growth within the PLC, ensuring that goals are translated into actionable steps.

## **AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS**

### **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 judgments.

### **Luis F. Cruz**

#### **When the Staff Says No to PLCs: Dealing With Resistance to the PLC Process in Your School or District**

The most challenging aspect of implementing PLCs is not the work but instilling within the members of the staff an intrinsic commitment to do the work. Every school seeking to implement PLCs with depth and duration experiences resistance to its implementation. How do leaders (not just administrators) confront resistance in a tactful and intentional manner? Are there forms of resistance that must be addressed differently? Join Luis F. Cruz as he uses findings from his best-selling book coauthored with Anthony Muhammad, *Time for Change: Four Essential Skills for Transformational School and District Leaders* (Solution Tree, 2019) to teach participants how best to take a proactive and reactive stance to resistance by staff when implementing PLCs.

Participants in this session learn how:

- To differentiate between rational and irrational forms of staff resistance

- Teachers and administrators work together to support and hold the staff accountable when implementing the PLC process
- To establish a culture of accountability and initiate direct accountability when needed

## Aaron Hansen

### **Heroes Within: A PLC Framework for Empowering Students to Own Their Learning Journey Through Hope, Self-Efficacy, and Motivation**

All too often, students sit passively in compliance doing assignments, but they aren't really *learning* what is intended. Others refuse to even try. Participants learn how to shift students' mindsets from one of compliance, apathy, and even victimization, to a story of hope where they are the hero! It's a new story where students have the courage to try, face failure, and try again. It's also a new story for teachers and leaders. It's a story of renewed fulfillment, purpose, and excitement for their work as they use the seven-step framework for helping students develop self-efficacy and motivation.

Participants can expect to:

- Learn how to use the seven-step framework for helping students take ownership, set goals, develop the courage to try, self-assess and track their progress, course correct, engage in metacognition, and create a vision for the future, all to cultivate a strong sense of self-efficacy.
- Understand why the PLC process is the foundation that makes new stories possible about themselves and school.
- Become re-inspired and recommitted to making a difference!

## Timothy D. Kanold

### **Leading the PLC Life: Eliminating Barriers by Teaching the Loose-Tight Culture!**

School-site administrators and leaders, guiding coalition members, instructional coaches, school district or central office administrators, and leaders face the challenge of guiding others into PLC life expectations. They help those they lead to overcome obstacles for a sustained daily implementation of the PLC process.

Timothy D. Kanold reveals how to become dynamic and inspiring decision makers others will want to follow. As participants identify primary barriers to the PLC life, Dr. Kanold facilitates dialogue to find meaningful solutions based on understanding what is "loose" and "tight" in a PLC at Work culture. He reveals how to use a loose-tight vision to impact positive change. And, he examines how to effectively monitor the quality of the PLC process by celebrating actions that advance the shared values (commitments) of your leadership life.

Participants can expect to:

- Identify school-site and district-level barriers to full PLC process implementation.
- Use a loose-tight PLC at Work model to overcome barriers and focus collective teacher action for improved student achievement.

- Consider radical and ongoing celebration as the antidote to a PLC culture of continuous improvement.

## Janel Keating

### **Are the Kids Learning and How Do We Know? Data-Based Decision Making in High-Performing Teams**

In a PLC, two important reasons for reviewing data are to determine whether kids are learning and to improve professional practice. Janel Keating highlights how high-performing teams quickly examine data to make decisions that impact kids in the classroom. Participants receive a user-friendly data analysis tool to facilitate this work.

## Sharon V. Kramer

### **Is the Central Office Central to PLCs? Yes!**

The demands of building and district leaders are extraordinary. While maintaining balance of the varied, demanding roles of educational leaders, how can the focus and responsibility of ensuring high levels of learning for every student be sustained? The central office is key to creating the conditions that support the implementation and evolution of the PLC framework in every school and classroom across the school system. Sharon V. Kramer discusses effective leadership strategies, mindsets, and practices that maximize the success of implementation of professional learning communities and ensure sustainability of the process.

Participants examine ways to:

- Identify techniques for leaders to cultivate the conditions that support the work of professional learning communities.
- Engage everyone in the right work.
- Explore strategies for leaders to manage inevitable hurdles on the journey.

## Mike Mattos

### **Taking Action: How to Create a Highly Effective, Multitiered System of Supports**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, educators face an unprecedented challenge: how to close the learning gaps created by months of school closures and uneven access to learning opportunities. In this breakout, Mike Mattos discusses specific steps that schools can take to create a highly effective, multitiered system of supports to target learning gaps and show how the PLC at Work process creates the larger, schoolwide framework required to successfully intervene.

Participants in this session:

- Gain an understanding of the guiding principles behind a multitiered system of interventions.
- Learn the essential actions that collaborative teams must complete at Tier 1 to effectively respond when students don't learn.
- Explore how to target preventions, interventions, extension, and remediation.
- Prioritize resources to best meet student needs.

## Maria Nielsen

### **Show Me What Ya Got: Student Engagement Strategies to Keep the Pulse on Learning**

Maria Nielsen helps teachers move past “sit and get” in the classroom to a place where all students actively participate in learning. She shares engagement strategies to assess student understanding throughout a lesson or unit of study.

Participants can expect to:

- Explore the *nifty-nine* best teaching strategies.
- Learn how to assess student learning by implementing engagement strategies.
- Identify the differences among assessment questions, open questions, and engagement questions.

## Jeanne Spiller

### **Yes We Can! Moving Beyond Labels Through the Partnership Between General and Special Educators**

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 personal and systemic beliefs about students, themselves, and learning. Then, ensure that all systems align, bringing this vision to life.

Focused on closing the gaps between all students and students with identified needs, this session provides an overview of the core concepts and associated strategies in the work of inclusive practices.

Participants in this session:

- Examine the core concepts and aligned practices that strengthen a collective commitment and the shared ownership required to ensure high levels of learning for *all*.
- Reflect on current practices that do and do not align with the belief that all students can learn at high levels and identify key next steps for moving forward.

## Session Descriptions—Day 2

### KEYNOTE

#### **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

#### **Tim Brown**

##### **Developing Shared Leadership: Forming Your Guiding Coalition**

Many guiding coalitions are slowed in their efforts to become highly effective because they skip the important “forming” stage of a team. With clear purpose, goals, roles, and commitments, the guiding coalition can accelerate their movement from a group to a team with a common goal. This session is designed to have attendees participate in a variety of processes that they can take back and do with their guiding coalition. Examples from the field are provided, but the design of the workshop is for participants to experience and reflect using tools that have been specifically designed to align a guiding coalition to a single purpose.

Participants can expect to:

- Develop an understanding of the forming stage as described in the four stages of teams by Bruce Tuckman.
- Participate in strategies to successfully form a guiding coalition or enhance your current guiding coalition.

#### **Luis F. Cruz**

##### **English Learners and PLCs**

Luis F. Cruz shares how schools use PLC strategies to help English learner populations flourish. By effectively using PLC components, administrative and teacher leaders close achievement gaps for

students learning English as an additional language. Dr. Cruz shows how EL task-force leaders reculture and restructure, while introducing best practices to increase learning outcomes for all students.

Participants in this session learn:

- Why students learning English as an additional language are an asset and not a deficit
- How teacher-led task forces increase academic performance for students learning English as an additional language
- How the PLC process is tweaked to more effectively address the learning needs of EL students

## Aaron Hansen

### **Owning Their Learning: Rethinking Students' Role in Intervention and Extension**

Students must become owners of their learning in order to truly reach the levels of rigorous learning being demanded of them. Participants are challenged to rethink the traditional role of a “teacher” who delivers lessons, and begin taking on the role of a leader of learning who coaches and leads learners ... all by embedding PLC and RTI concepts into their daily practice.

Participants can expect to:

- Learn how to collect the type of information needed to make smart intervention decisions, how to help students track their own progress, and how to structure intervention so students have some voice, choice, and mobility in the intervention and extension process.
- Be reinspired!

## Timothy D. Kanold

### **Your PreK–12 PLC Mathematics Focus: Instruction and Tasks!**

Timothy D. Kanold explores how collaborative teams can improve student achievement in mathematics through the balanced use of lower- and higher-level-cognitive-demand tasks and classroom discourse combined with meaningful formative feedback during instruction.

Dr. Kanold shares research-affirmed lesson design criteria essential to student perseverance, development of self-efficacy, and sustained effort in mathematics class every day. He shares sample mathematics tasks and online resources for teacher support.

Participants use the Mathematics at Work™ lesson design framework to:

- Examine research-affirmed teaching actions that maximize student learning during a mathematics lesson.
- Consider how to use prior knowledge activities effectively.
- Examine the balanced use of lower- and higher-level-cognitive-demand tasks during class.
- Embrace the balanced use of small-group student discourse as part of a formative feedback process that encourages student perseverance, engagement, effort, efficacy, and participation during the lesson.

## Janel Keating

### **This Is Where It All Fits! The Well-Designed Unit Plan: From Standards to Assessments, Unit by Unit**

Unit planning is one of the most important activities in which collaborative teams engage. While there is no “right” way for teams to plan instructional units, teams must pay attention to numerous things in the process. Participants discuss examples and view video clips of teacher teams effectively planning units of instruction—from standards and learning targets to end-of-unit common formative assessments.

Janel Keating walks participants through each step of the PLC at Work process. Teams learn to plan a unit of instruction from beginning to end and understand how a unit-of-instruction plan is tied to analyzing the data at the end of the unit. This session illustrates the continuous improvement cycle in action.

## Sharon V. Kramer

### **Learning for All Requires Differentiation**

To ensure all students learn at high levels, teachers need to respond to the needs of *each* student. Differentiation is a way to reach all students, but it is difficult for any teacher to do alone. Sharon V. Kramer demonstrates a collaborative team process for meeting the needs of all learners in a proactive rather than reactive manner.

In this session, Dr. Kramer guides participants to:

- Learn the difference between *proactive* and *reactive* differentiation.
- Understand how a team develops a learning plan that includes differentiation before, during, and after instruction.
- Identify tools and strategies for differentiation.

## 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. This session 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:

- Determine what interventions to offer each week.
- Require students to attend specific interventions.
- Monitor student attendance.
- Allocate staff.

- Extend student learning.
- Address potential obstacles.
- Do all this within teachers' contractual obligations.

## Maria Nielsen

### **Help Your Team: Overcoming Common Collaborative Challenges in a PLC at Work**

What should happen when a team starts to struggle? As teachers move toward becoming interdependent teams, challenges inevitably arise. Ensuring high levels of learning for every student requires a change in thinking and practice. Participants briefly review the work of highly effective teams, consider scenarios showing common team challenges, and work collaboratively to identify strategies for moving a team forward. This session is based on a book of the same title (Solution Tree, 2019), coauthored by Brandon Jones, Maria Nielsen, Bob Sonju, Jeanne Spiller and other educators who possess a wide range of backgrounds and experiences in all levels of education.

Participants in this session can expect to:

- Identify common challenges that limit a team's efficacy.
- Collaboratively resolve specific challenges and share strategies to help teams progress.
- Understand the elements of effective collaboration.

## Jeanne Spiller

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

Schools that function as PLCs must ultimately do two things: 1) foster an all-means-all culture of collective responsibility, and 2) create structures and systems that guarantee students additional time and support for learning when they need it.

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.

## AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS

### **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

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

Luis F. Cruz shows how to embrace the power of the word *and* versus the tyranny of the word *or*. It's not PLC or RTI, but instead, embracing both the PLC and RTI processes to become a professional learning community. Dr. Cruz showcases how educators use effective collaborative processes (taping the room) to ensure a collective response when students do not learn (painting the room). Hence, participants learn how the PLC and RTI processes complement each other in increasing academic achievement for all students.

Participants in this session learn:

- How effective teacher teams collaborate and respond when students do not learn
- How to incorporate the five non-negotiable vessels of the PLC Process
- How to gauge collaborative practices via seven stages
- How teacher teams implement structures and processes that will allow for a collective response when students do not learn

## Aaron Hansen

### **How to Develop PLCs for Singletons and Small Schools**

PLC concepts resonate with most educators, but making collaborative learning work in small schools or for singleton teachers can be challenging. Participants explore five models for creating meaningful professional learning teams: 1) changing schedules to allow teachers to teach the same subjects, 2) vertical teaming, 3) cross-curricular teaming, 4) supporting roles, and 5) using electronic tools to pair teachers with peers in the same subject area.

Outcomes for this session include:

- Discussing common structural barriers that prevent singletons from joining collaborative teams and learning how others have overcome those challenges
- Gaining the understanding necessary to develop an action plan to incorporate singletons into the PLC process

## Timothy D. Kanold

### **Mindfulness, Trust, and Relationship-Building Routines: Strategies for Living the PLC Life!**

The PLC at Work story is a positive relationship story of learning how to effectively respond to daily emotions and events. How do you intentionally become the type of person others will want to be with in community? How do you respond emotionally and socially to experiences of adversity and triumph? Creating and sharing new knowledge with others is at the heart of the PLC life. Educators must emotionally and socially adapt, shift, alter, adjust, and subsequently thrive.

In this active and inspiring session, Timothy D. Kanold reminds participants how their daily positive emotional and social presence directly impacts their relationship and trust-building actions with others. Dr. Kanold highlights mindfulness, trust-building routines, and relationship-building routines from the Wellness Solutions for Educators™ framework and provides strategies for improving trust, relational intelligence, and emotional regulation while decreasing stress and anxiety.

Participants can expect to:

- Embrace the emotional wellness routine of *mindfulness* to build atomic habits that stick.
- Understand how to use the social wellness routines of *trust* and *relationships* to develop friendships and effectively collaborate with others.
- Discover ways to improve emotional and relational intelligence.
- Consider how their daily work life feeds into their greater purpose as educators.

## Janel Keating

### **Aligning PLCs Districtwide: From the Boardroom to the Classroom**

A districtwide professional learning community is more than a sum of individual parts. A high-performing school district that functions as a PLC reflects thoughtful alignment and integration of work at the central office level, in individual schools, and in teacher teams. While highlighting the efforts of highly successful school districts, Janel Keating describes how districts organize and align at each level to implement PLC concepts and practices systemwide. This session provides many practical examples and useful templates to assist any school or district in doing the work of a PLC.

## Sharon V. Kramer

### **Acceleration: The Path to Closing the Achievement Gap**

Acceleration is the path less traveled in most schools and classrooms, especially those in which students are reading and writing far below grade level. The usual approach is to help students catch up

by remediating learning or going backward to go forward. Through the examination of specific and practical strategies that administrators, teachers, teams, and schools can implement, Sharon V. Kramer takes the participants on an alternate journey through the acceleration pathway that closes the achievement gap quickly enough to access grade- and course-level learning for all students.

Participants examine ways to:

- Develop an acceleration mindset.
- Build the foundation for acceleration.
- Dig into the real work of acceleration.

## Mike Mattos

### **Behavior Solutions: Leveraging the PLC at Work Process to Teach Essential Behaviors**

The fundamental purpose of a professional learning community is to ensure high levels of learning for all students. To achieve this mission, we know that some students will need support mastering the behaviors needed to succeed in school and beyond. Every school knows this universal truth, but many schools lack the systematic processes to achieve this outcome. In this breakout, Mike Mattos demonstrates how a school can leverage the PLC at Work process to identify, teach, assess, and intervene when students lack essential academic and social behaviors.

Participants can expect to:

- Learn how the entire school—the entire PLC—must work together to teach essential behaviors.
- Apply the four critical questions of the PLC at Work process to identify, teach, assess, and intervene around essential behaviors.
- Consider systematic, tiered supports to target behavior interventions.

## Maria Nielsen

### **Elementary ELA Strategies to Keep Your Students on Track**

Maria Nielsen takes educators on an interactive journey to gain new and exciting ELA and writing strategies as a team. In this fast-paced session, elementary teachers gain clarity about ELA standards and explore how reading and writing go hand in hand for increased student learning. Participants also learn how to focus on year-long essential standards while using a district-prescribed curriculum.

Participants in this session:

- Gather tools and graphic organizers to connect reading and writing.
- Understand learning progressions on literacy-focused instruction and assessment.
- Overlay essential standards with district-prescribed curricula.
- Examine research-based teaching strategies to improve classroom instruction.

## Jeanne Spiller

### **Intentional, Courageous Leadership Starts With You!**

Implementing and sustaining the PLC process requires intentional, focused, and courageous school, district, and teacher leaders who persist in ensuring students learn at high levels, rely on evidence to make decisions, and foster a trusting, collaborative environment. Participants in this session reflect on their leadership habits and traits and learn strategies that help strengthen their leadership practices. This session is specifically designed for school leaders, but many of the concepts addressed either relate to or can be applied to educational leadership in general. This session is appropriate for school, district, and teacher leaders to attend as individuals or as school or district leadership teams.

Participants can expect to:

- Learn how to become more intentional and courageous in order to ensure high outcomes for students.
- Examine the power of vulnerability in fostering trust and courageous habits.
- Reflect and practice with tools, strategies, and resources for implementing focused daily leadership actions.

## Session Descriptions—Day 3

### BREAKOUT SESSIONS

#### 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

## Aaron Hansen

### **Heroes Within: A PLC Framework for Empowering Students to Own Their Learning Journey Through Hope, Self-Efficacy, and Motivation**

All too often, students sit passively in compliance doing assignments, but they aren't really *learning* what is intended. Others refuse to even try. Participants learn how to shift students' mindsets from one of compliance, apathy, and even victimization, to a story of hope where they are the hero! It's a new story where students have the courage to try, face failure, and try again. It's also a new story for teachers and leaders. It's a story of renewed fulfillment, purpose, and excitement for their work as they use the seven-step framework for helping students develop self-efficacy and motivation.

Participants can expect to:

- Learn how to use the seven-step framework for helping students take ownership, set goals, develop the courage to try, self-assess and track their progress, course correct, engage in metacognition, and create a vision for the future, all to cultivate a strong sense of self-efficacy.
- Understand why the PLC process is the foundation that makes new stories possible about themselves and school.
- Become reinspired and recommitted to making a difference!

## Timothy D. Kanold

### **Heart & Soul: Living a Fully Engaged, High-Energy, Well-Balanced Professional Life!**

Education is a profession of "emotional labor," and it is easy to experience fatigue from the daily noise and intense, often quick-changing expectations of the educators' work life. Giving "heart and soul" to the professional life is fulfilling. Yet, it can also take its toll at work and at home.

Timothy D. Kanold notes, "Off and on, I have lost contact with the joy of my work life. So, it is for you. Sooner or later, the world of your professional life stretches you beyond your limits. But there are ways to sustain and regain your happiness at work." The secret lies in understanding how to live a well-balanced daily life.

Participants examine how to maintain high positive daily energy and joy as they ruthlessly eliminate the hurry from their life based on the energy quadrants from Dr. Kanold's award-winning book, *HEART! Fully Forming Your Professional Life as a Teacher and Leader* (Solution Tree, 2017). Participants leave feeling the power and impact of their professional journey.

Participants can expect to:

- Understand and embrace happiness as a high positive energy state.
- Ruthlessly eliminate hurry from their life.
- Avoid emotional exhaustion through the demonstration of self-compassion.
- Avoid the natural drift to a high negative energy state of being.
- Choose a daily, well-balanced professional and personal life.

## Janel Keating

### **Daunting Yet Doable: The Role of a Principal Leading Collaborative Teams**

There's no universal affection for the role of principal! It requires courage to move beyond managing to leading and developing leadership capacity in others. This session focuses on critical leadership behaviors of the principal and assistant principal and their relationship with team leaders in building a collaborative culture and schoolwide focus on learning for students and the adults who serve them.

"Those who take this path less chosen will embrace and articulate the moral imperative of ensuring high levels of learning for all students and will acknowledge that creating the conditions for addressing that imperative lies within their sphere of influence."

—Richard DuFour

## Sharon V. Kramer

### **Learning for All Requires Differentiation**

To ensure all students learn at high levels, teachers need to respond to the needs of *each* student. Differentiation is a way to reach all students, but it is difficult for any teacher to do alone. Sharon V. Kramer demonstrates a collaborative team process for meeting the needs of all learners in a proactive rather than reactive manner.

In this session, Dr. Kramer guides participants to:

- Learn the difference between *proactive* and *reactive* differentiation.
- Understand how a team develops a learning plan that includes differentiation before, during, and after instruction.
- Identify tools and strategies for differentiation.

## Mike Mattos

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

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

Participants learn how to:

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

## Maria Nielsen

### **The 15-Day Challenge: Win Quick, Win Often!**

This interactive session establishes, reboots, or re-energizes the work of collaborative teams. Schools nationwide are using this simple learning-assessing process to connect the dots of a PLC. Maria Nielsen helps teams see the big picture of a PLC and put it all together in a recurring cycle of collective inquiry. The 15-day challenge is a practical way to bring the PLC process to life.

Participants in this session:

- Clarify the work of collaborative teams.
- Establish steps for a guaranteed and viable curriculum.
- Explore the learning-assessing cycle in a unit of study.

## Jeanne Spiller

### **Protocols for Results: Using Data Discussions to Lead to Higher Levels of Learning for All**

Is your system overwhelmed with data? Using protocols to transform data into information is an efficient and effective way to achieve improved results. Participants examine tools that empower teams to use data to drive instruction, impact student learning, and identify specific processes to meet district needs.

Participants in this session:

- Review research related to and examples of data-driven decision making.
- Apply multiple protocols for data analysis.
- Reflect on their school or district's current reality, while identifying tools that can be used or modified to meet specified needs.

## **KEYNOTE**

## Janel Keating

### **Doing the Right Work at the Right Time for the Right Reasons**

Eliminate the knowing-doing gap and the expectation-acceptance gap by implementing the high-impact actions of continuously improving teams and schools. Janel Keating shares specific leadership practices and practical tools that positively impact student learning, adult learning, and the work of teams. She provides essential next steps for participants to take back to their districts, schools, and teams to effectively do the right work at the right time for the right reasons.