Agenda
Pasadena, CA • November 13–15, 2024

Wednesday, November 13

6:30–8:00 a.m.	Registration	Rooms/Locations TBD
	Continental Breakfast	
8:00–9:45 a.m.	**Keynote**—Mike Mattos *Proven, Practical, and Doable: Making the Case for PLCs at Work*	
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:30 a.m.	**Breakout Sessions**	See pages 2–4.
11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)	
1:00–2:30 p.m.	**Breakout Sessions**	See pages 2–4.
2:30–2:45 p.m.	Break	
2:45–3:45 p.m.	**Keynote**—Cassandra Erkens *Improving Student Agency in a PLC Setting*	
	Panel Discussion—*Presenters answer your most pressing questions.*	

Thursday, November 14

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Registration	Rooms/Locations TBD
	Continental Breakfast	
8:00–9:45 a.m.	**Keynote**—Anthony Muhammad *The Way Forward: PLC at Work and the Bright Future of Education*	
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:30 a.m.	**Breakout Sessions**	See pages 2–4.
11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)	
1:00–2:30 p.m.	**Breakout Sessions**	See pages 2–4.
2:30–2:45 p.m.	Break	
2:45–3:45 p.m.	**Team Time**—*Presenters aid in your collaborative team discussions.*	

Friday, November 15

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Continental Breakfast	Rooms/Locations TBD
8:00–9:30 a.m.	**Breakout Sessions**	See pages 2–4.
9:30–9:45 a.m.	Break	
9:45–11:45 a.m.	**Keynote**—Bob Sonju *Right Here, Right Now: The Power of Educators Learning Together*	

Agenda is subject to change.

Breakout Sessions at a Glance

Presenters & Titles	Wednesday, November 13		Thursday, November 14		Friday, November 15
	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.
Tim Brown					
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			
Activating the Keys of Formative Assessment to Create a Culture of Learning			X		
Grading: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly				X	X
Luis F. Cruz					
Task Forces: Collectively Using PLC Characteristics to Serve Underperforming Student Cohorts	X				
Embracing the Five Vessels: Do We Have the Right Climate *and* Culture to Become a High-Functioning PLC?		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
Timothy D. Kanold					
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	

Presenters & Titles	Wednesday, November 13		Thursday, November 14		Friday, November 15
	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.
Heart & Soul: Living a Fully Engaged, High-Energy, Well-Balanced Professional Life!					X
Cheyana Leiva					
From Data Meetings to Data Conversations	X			X	
The Invisible Fifth Question of a PLC		X			X
Guiding Coalitions: The Key to Effectively Implement a PLC			X		
Paula Maeker					
Deconstruct to Reconstruct: Establishing Collective Expertise, Clarity, and Agility Around Essential Learning Outcomes	X				
All-Inclusive! Collectively Meeting the Diverse Needs of *All* Learners		X			
Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Elementary Schools			X		
Gaining Ground: A Method and Model for Accelerating Essential Learning				X	
The Story of Where We Go Next: Teams Assessing Essential Literacy Outcomes					X
Mike Mattos					
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		
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
Anthony Muhammad					
Collaboration Is a Lifestyle, Not a Meeting!	X				

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	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.
Transforming School Culture: New Insights		X			
From PLC *Lite* to PLC *Right*!			X		
Overcoming the Achievement Gap Trap: Liberating Mindsets to Effect Change				X	
Building Commitment and Overcoming Frustration on Your PLC Journey					X
Maria Nielsen					
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		X	
Elementary ELA Strategies to Keep Your Students on Track			X		
Regina Stephens Owens					
The *Why* Effect: Intentional Systems Drive Inspirational Cultures	X				
The Learning Professional: Coaching Competence, Not Compliance		X			X
Data Discussion for Instructional Leaders: From Data to Design to Demonstration of Learning			X		
Small Schools and Singletons: Wired for Rigor and Relevance				X	
Bob Sonju					
Supercharge Your Collaboration: Strategies to Make Your Team's Collaboration Exceptional	X				
Proven Practices of PLC Leaders: Keys to Leading, Monitoring, and Supporting Teachers and Teams in a PLC		X			
Gaining Shared Clarity: Answering Question One—What Do We Want Them to Know?			X		

Presenters & Titles	Wednesday, November 13		Thursday, November 14		Friday, November 15
	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.
Help Your Team: Overcoming Common Collaborative Challenges in a PLC at Work				X	
Simplifying the Journey: Collaboration, Consistency, and Clarity for Teachers, Teams, and Leaders in a PLC					X

Agenda is subject to change.

Session Descriptions—Day 1

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.

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*

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.

Cheyana Leiva

From Data Meetings to Data Conversations

Schools have utilized data for years and teams have discussed data in various forms throughout their teaching careers, but it hasn't moved the bar for students. This session helps participants learn how the

PLC process shifts teams from talking about numbers to discussions around student skills, instructional practices, and next steps to ensure all students learn.

Participants in this session:
- Build shared knowledge around highly effective data conversations.
- Learn specific steps to improve instructional practice and student achievement through data conversations.

Paula Maeker

Deconstruct to Reconstruct: Establishing Collective Expertise, Clarity, and Agility Around Essential Learning Outcomes

The teaching-learning feedback loop begins with articulating what every student must know and be able to do. The process of identifying what students must learn starts with identifying what standards are most essential and developing a plan of action to guarantee mastery for every student. Teams that dive deeply into the work of identifying, prioritizing, and deconstructing essential learning targets have a greater understanding of how to ensure all students are learning at high levels and respond immediately and effectively when students do not.

Participants can expect to:
- Identify the criteria for establishing essential learning targets.
- Prioritize and pace essential learning outcomes.
- Create "I can" statements, success criteria, and coaching questions to lead students through the learning progression of essential learning targets.
- Examine tools and protocols to support the right work of teams.
- Build shared knowledge in designing focused instruction and intervention.

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.

Anthony Muhammad

Collaboration Is a Lifestyle, Not a Meeting!

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

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

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.

Regina Stephens Owens

The *Why* Effect: Intentional Systems Drive Inspirational Cultures

Organizational purpose, collective beliefs, and commitments affect building systems at all levels. How can we ensure that all practices and procedures are intentional and personify organizational beliefs? It all begins with the *why*. Regina Stephens Owens shares strategies to move cultures from an attitude of compliance, coercion, and fear to one that is respectful, responsive, and reflective.

Participants can expect to:
- Promote high standards of achievement for all.
- Create a collective, rather than individual, leadership focus.
- Design and sustain a values-driven culture that is evidenced by trust, transparency, reflection, and responsiveness.

Bob Sonju

Supercharge Your Collaboration: Strategies to Make Your Team's Collaboration Exceptional

Collaboration is a foundational part of the PLC process. For teams to see increases in student learning, merely collaborating will not accomplish this; it's what you collaborate about that will increase learning and improve your ability to function as a highly effective team. In this highly engaging session, author and practitioner Bob Sonju guides participants through strategies and practices to make their collaboration go from *blah* to supercharged!

Participants in this session:
- Understand the specific actions of highly effective collaborative teams.
- Utilize various tools to determine their team's progress.

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

Embracing the Five Vessels: Do We Have the Right Climate *and* Culture to Become a High-Functioning PLC?

If a school or district is committed to becoming a professional learning community, then adult behaviors need to shift away from those found in a traditional school system. What behaviors are those found within the context of a PLC? What are five main behaviors that need to be embraced for successful transformation to a PLC? Join Luis F. Cruz as he explains what Rick DuFour called the five non-negotiables schools must embrace to become PLC right and avoid becoming PLC lite.

Dr. Cruz shows participants:
- The specific adult behaviors needed to change to become a PLC
- The five big behaviors that shift all necessary adult behaviors to become a PLC
- The difference between becoming a PLC and embracing the PLC process

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.

Cheyana Leiva

The Invisible Fifth Question of a PLC
The PLC process leads teacher teams to answer these four critical questions:
1. What do we expect students to learn?
2. How will we know if they learn it?
3. How do we respond when students experience difficulties in learning?
4. How do we respond when students do learn?

Embedded in each of those questions is the question of *instruction*. How do teachers design their instruction to support the four questions? Teams must explicitly discuss instruction as they answer the four critical questions. In this session, Cheyana Leiva helps participants learn how to ensure teams address high-quality instructional practices while collaborating on these questions.

Participants can expect to:
- Build shared knowledge around how instruction is a key component of PLCs.
- Connect instructional practices to prevention, intervention, and acceleration.

Paula Maeker

All-Inclusive! Collectively Meeting the Diverse Needs of *All* Learners

The word *all*, by definition, does not exclude, so how do we meet the varied and unique needs of learners who are eligible for additional services? If we embrace the idea that every student is *our* student, then we need systems and structures that deepen collaboration for all students' success. Teachers learn how to provide access and support to all learners through the Professional Learning Communities at Work process framework. Designed for both general and special educators and based on the book *Yes We Can!* (Solution Tree, 2016), this session provides participants with strategies and protocols to examine mindsets and collaborative processes to ensure higher learning levels for *all* students. No low expectations allowed!

This session asks participants to:
- Examine past and current realities regarding special education.
- Reflect on practices that do and do not support a culture of learning for all.
- Learn strategies for effective and purposeful collaboration between general and special educators.

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.

Anthony Muhammad

Transforming School Culture: New Insights

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

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

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.

Regina Stephens Owens

The Learning Professional: Coaching Competence, Not Compliance

In a time of great change and instability, educators and administrators more than ever need to become empowered learners. Let's move from telling to teaching and from unsupported expectations to unmatched experiences that ensure educators are prepared for continuous learning.

Participants can expect to:
- Design and develop culture for learning.
- Learn to coach competency, not just compliance.
- Build collective capacity through shared responsibility of learning.
- Invest in personal mastery that results in increased capacity, collective responsibility, and increased achievement.

Bob Sonju

Proven Practices of PLC Leaders: Keys to Leading, Monitoring, and Supporting Teachers and Teams in a PLC

Whether you are a team, school, or district leader, knowing what to pay attention to can often be a challenge. Bob Sonju leads participants through a series of strategies and practices that guiding coalitions and highly effective leaders in a professional learning community use to clarify the work to be done, support teachers and teams as they learn, monitor the work of teams, and celebrate small wins throughout the process.

Participants in this session:

- Learn the actions of teams, guiding coalitions, and leaders in a professional learning community.
- Identify the four keys to leadership in a professional learning community.
- Utilize proven strategies for monitoring the work of collaborative teams and increasing their effectiveness.

AFTERNOON KEYNOTE

Cassandra Erkens

Improving Student Agency in a PLC Setting

Sometimes the "second chances" offered in a PLC setting (no late penalties, access to retakes, etc.) seem to dissuade rather than inspire self-regulation in students. However, there are ways to design for an increase in student agency through healthy, balanced, and interdependent assessment and RTI systems. In this keynote, Cassandra Erkens explores the systems and protocols that professional learning communities can embed early to influence students to invest in their learning.

Participants can expect to:

- Explore ways to infuse student agency in the RTI system.
- Identify the features of a balanced and informative assessment system that enable (and require) student agency.
- Identify strategies and tools teachers can use to support self-regulation in learners.

Session Descriptions—Day 2

Anthony Muhammad

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

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

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

Tim Brown

Activating the Keys of Formative Assessment to Create a Culture of Learning

Formative assessment can have an amazing impact on learning and is especially beneficial for students who struggle. If you have students who struggle in your school, being great at formative assessment is crucial. Participants in this session examine their current assessment practices in comparison to the five keys and nine principles of assessment for learning. Practical examples and strategies are shared throughout the session.

Participants can expect to:
- Explore the relationship between formative assessment and student achievement.
- Evaluate important considerations in the assessment process.
- Examine tools, scenarios, and processes from the field that demonstrate that the five keys and nine principles are doable in every classroom, at every level.

Luis F. Cruz

English Learners and PLCs

Luis F. Cruz shares how schools use PLC strategies to help English learner populations flourish. By effectively using PLC components, administrative and teacher leaders close achievement gaps for students learning English as an additional language. Dr. Cruz shows how EL task-force leaders reculture and restructure, while introducing best practices to increase learning outcomes for all students.

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

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.

Cheyana Leiva

Guiding Coalitions: The Key to Effectively Implement a PLC
John P. Kotter states that failure is usually associated with underestimating the difficulties in producing change. Leaders cannot create systemic change on their own; they must have a team to support this change. A guiding coalition, composed of teacher leaders and administrators, is the key to building and sustaining the work of PLCs in schools. In this session, Cheyana Leiva gives participants the keys to creating and guiding the work of guiding coalitions.

Participants in this session:
- Build shared knowledge around the work of guiding coalitions.
- Learn characteristics of a strong guiding coalition member.
- Learn focused action steps to increase the effectiveness of PLC work through guiding coalitions.
- Determine what they celebrate.

Paula Maeker

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.

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.

Anthony Muhammad

From PLC *Lite* to PLC *Right*!

The PLC at Work process has been accessible to educators for over 25 years. Schools and school districts have been enamored with the concepts, and many have attempted to implement the process at scale. Unfortunately, not nearly enough schools have fully implemented the process. Most settle for a modified, scaled-down version called *PLC Lite*. In this session, Anthony Muhammad explores the key leverage points that will guide any school into PLC excellence!

Participants in this session:

- Learn how to organize an effective guiding coalition to guide a school into the six "tight" elements of a PLC.
- Benefit from 25 years of PLC wisdom in the best practices used to secure full staff commitment to the process.
- Examine surveys and rubrics to measure and assess a staff's current reality in the PLC process.

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.

Regina Stephens Owens

Data Discussion for Instructional Leaders: From Data to Design to Demonstration of Learning
In a time of tremendous focus on data, it is imperative to grow a rich collaborative culture through dialogue and data protocols—moving from a deficit mindset to a growth mindset. Participants in this session discover ways to create this culture, use data as information, and increase team capacity and student learning.

Participants can expect to:

- Focus on results through the lens of data.
- Move from data to demonstration of learning.
- Ensure their beliefs and behaviors align as they utilize data.

Bob Sonju

Gaining Shared Clarity: Answering Question One—What Do We Want Them to Know?
Answering question one in the PLC process is *essential* for team and student success. As teams gain shared clarity regarding what *all* students need to know and be able to do for each course or grade level, their assessment and intervention practices become much more targeted. In this energetic and engaging session, Bob Sonju guides participants through the process of identifying essential standards

and skills and gaining shared clarity for each using templates and strategies they can immediately implement in their team or school.

Participants in this session:
- Utilize proven strategies to identify and gain shared clarity on what all students need to know.
- Explore the benefits of clearly defining proficiency for their team and students.
- Utilize simple, targeted protocols and templates to assist teams in their collective work.

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

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.

Cheyana Leiva

From Data Meetings to Data Conversations

Schools have utilized data for years and teams have discussed data in various forms throughout their teaching careers, but it hasn't moved the bar for students. This session helps participants learn how the PLC process shifts teams from talking about numbers to discussions around student skills, instructional practices, and next steps to ensure all students learn.

Participants in this session:
- Build shared knowledge around highly effective data conversations.
- Learn specific steps to improve instructional practice and student achievement through data conversations.

Paula Maeker

Gaining Ground: A Method and Model for Accelerating Essential Learning

How is it possible to ensure all students learn at high levels when our scholars continue to advance from grade level to grade level with significant gaps in learning? It's not only possible, it's probable if we rethink our approach to teaching and learning and design a systematic response that relentlessly focuses on accelerating what matters most. Teacher teams must become architects of intentional outcomes that focus on identifying essential outcomes that embed prerequisite learning into grade-level proficiency and beyond. Paula Maeker supports teams in developing a method and model of prevention, intervention, and acceleration that lead to impactful gains in student achievement.

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.

Anthony Muhammad

Overcoming the Achievement Gap Trap: Liberating Mindsets to Effect Change

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

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

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.

Regina Stephens Owens

Small Schools and Singletons: Wired for Rigor and Relevance

Singleton teachers are accustomed to seeking solutions and understanding opportunities as they arise. Operating efficiently and effectively within a PLC can be challenging. Team members must collaborate on common denominators, work with peers to improve professional practices and student learning, leverage technology, and authentically engage in the PLC at Work process.

Regina Stephens Owens shows how to use best practices in collaboration, and participants learn how to design action plans supporting the work of schools and singleton teachers in a PLC.

Participants can expect to:
- Gain clarity on connecting in a PLC.
- Seek solutions for successful partnering.
- Learn to function effectively in a PLC.

Bob Sonju

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.

Session Descriptions—Day 3

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

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.

Cheyana Leiva

The Invisible Fifth Question of a PLC

The PLC process leads teacher teams to answer these four critical questions:
1. What do we expect students to learn?
2. How will we know if they learn it?
3. How do we respond when students experience difficulties in learning?
4. How do we respond when students do learn?

Embedded in each of those questions is the question of *instruction*. How do teachers design their instruction to support the four questions? Teams must explicitly discuss instruction as they answer the four critical questions. In this session, Cheyana Leiva helps participants learn how to ensure teams address high-quality instructional practices while collaborating on these questions.

Participants can expect to:
- Build shared knowledge around how instruction is a key component of PLCs.
- Connect instructional practices to prevention, intervention, and acceleration.

Paula Maeker

The Story of Where We Go Next: Teams Assessing Essential Literacy Outcomes

There is no learning without feedback. Effective collaborative literacy teams embrace assessment as the catalyst for teaching and learning. In order to create a culture of learning for all, literacy teams must shift from the traditional assessment mindset that values data as evaluation to one that embraces data as information. When teams embrace assessment as information in a thoughtful and responsive way, they achieve more than students learning at high levels—they become masters of their craft.

In this session, teams learn how to create focused and purposeful assessment literacy practices that:

- Provide quality feedback opportunities for students to reach proficiency in essential literacy outcomes.
- Support teams in gaining insights and next steps in instructional practices.
- Create intentional and actionable responses by student, standard, strength, and need.

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.

Anthony Muhammad

Building Commitment and Overcoming Frustration on Your PLC Journey

Anthony Muhammad addresses two vital stages in creating a PLC culture: 1) establishing philosophical agreement and building shared purpose, and 2) addressing staff frustration and reluctance to change. He leads an exploration of theories linking school culture and student learning, and participants leave with practical strategies to transform the culture at their schools.

Learning targets include:

- Addressing counterproductive belief systems and forming a cohesive team of student advocates
- Analyzing and managing staff frustration
- Understanding the balance between support and accountability

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.

Regina Stephens Owens

The Learning Professional: Coaching Competence, Not Compliance

In a time of great change and instability, educators and administrators more than ever need to become empowered learners. Let's move from telling to teaching and from unsupported expectations to unmatched experiences that ensure educators are prepared for continuous learning.

Participants can expect to:

- Design and develop culture for learning.
- Learn to coach competency, not just compliance.
- Build collective capacity through shared responsibility of learning.
- Invest in personal mastery that results in increased capacity, collective responsibility, and increased achievement.

Bob Sonju

Simplifying the Journey: Collaboration, Consistency, and Clarity for Teachers, Teams, and Leaders in a PLC

It's easy to get confused and overwhelmed with all the "noise" in today's educational world. The creativity and innovation needed in today's schools is not found in adding more to the plates of educators. Instead, the key to clearing up confusion is in simplifying and focusing on research-based, proven strategies that make a dramatic difference in student learning. Career educator and author Bob Sonju will guide participants through the four critical questions of a PLC and will share practical strategies to make their collective practices more targeted and effective as they learn together.

Participants in this session:

- Engage in a process that will simplify the work of their team and school.
- Practice effective strategies for making assessment data more useful.
- Explore targeted assessment and grading practices.

Bob Sonju

Right Here, Right Now: The Power of Educators Learning Together

Dr. Robert Eaker, an architect of the PLC process, clearly defined our role in this essential work when he stated, "The first step educators in a PLC take … is to learn together" (Solution Tree, 2020). Anchored in the four critical questions and three big ideas that drive PLCs, this session challenges educators to embrace the learning and momentum that has taken place during this institute and turn it into sustainable change in their collaborative practices. During this keynote, Bob Sonju introduces educators to ideas and strategies to increase the effectiveness of their collective learning while also reminding them of their foundational role as ambassadors of hope for their fellow educators and the students they serve.