Agenda

Lincolnshire, IL • July 28–30, 2025

Monday, July 28

6:30–7:50 a.m.	Registration and Continental Breakfast	Field House
7:50–9:45 a.m.	**Keynote**—Mike Mattos *All In! Digging Deeper Into Becoming a True Professional Learning Community*	Performing Arts Center
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:30 a.m.	**Breakout Sessions**	See pages 2–4.
11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	Lunch (provided)	Field House
12:30–2:00 p.m.	**Breakout Sessions**	See pages 2–4.
2:00–2:15 p.m.	Break	
2:15–3:15 p.m.	**Keynote**—Michelle Marrillia *Beyond Titles: How Shared Leadership Empowers Every Educator to Lead*	Performing Arts Center
4:00–5:30 p.m.	Reception at the Lincolnshire Marriott Resort	Grand Marquee Pavilion

Tuesday, July 29

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Registration and Continental Breakfast	Field House
8:00–9:45 a.m.	**Keynote**—Brandon Jones *The North Star: Making Our Compelling Future a Reality*	Performing Arts Center
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:30 a.m.	**Breakout Sessions**	See pages 2–4.
11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	Lunch (provided)	Field House
12:30–2:00 p.m.	**Breakout Sessions**	See pages 2–4.
2:00–2:15 p.m.	Break	
2:15–3:15 p.m.	**Team Time**—*Presenters aid in your collaborative team discussions.*	Field House
7:30–11:30 p.m.	Karaoke Night at the Lincolnshire Marriott Resort	Grand Marquee Pavilion

Wednesday, July 30

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Continental Breakfast	Field House
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**—Regina Stephens Owens *Shift Happens! Care, Competency, and Continuous Learning: It's All About People*	Performing Arts Center

Agenda is subject to change.

Breakout Sessions at a Glance

Rooms are listed beneath titles in *blue italics*. All rooms are in East Building unless otherwise noted.
A red asterisk* indicates session will be repeated.

Presenter	Monday, July 28		Tuesday, July 29		Wednesday, July 30
	10:00–11:30 a.m.	12:30–2:00 p.m.	**10:00–11:30 a.m.**	12:30–2:00 p.m.	**8:00–9:30 a.m.**
Jack Baldermann	Inspiring Your Team to PLC Excellence *Performing Arts Center*	Outstanding Results in a High School PLC *Performing Arts Center*	Motivating Disengaged Students: Supporting Champions of Hope and Learning for All* *6116–6118*	Mindsets and Leadership Moves to Ensure PLC Success *6116–6118*	Motivating Disengaged Students: Supporting Champions of Hope and Learning for All *4100*
Tim Brown	Enhancing Self-Efficacy and Motivation Through Reflection and Goal Setting* *5044*	Becoming World Class: Steps, Processes, and Tools for Getting on the Same Page* *5044*	Using CFAs to Promote and Ensure Learning *5044*	Becoming World Class: Steps, Processes, and Tools for Getting on the Same Page *5044*	Enhancing Self-Efficacy and Motivation Through Reflection and Goal Setting *5044*
Erika Chapa	Beyond the Four Critical Questions: Taking the Work of Collaborative Teams to the Next Level *5120*	Disciplinary Literacy Demystified: Empowering Student Success *5120*	Scaffolding Instruction for Multilingual Learners* *5120*	Reading Interventions Based on the Science of Reading *5120*	Scaffolding Instruction for Multilingual Learners *5120*
Heather Friziellie	Bringing Out the Best: Maximizing the Talent of Those Around You* *2206 (West)*	All Means All: Essential Actions for General and Special Educators to Ensure High Levels of Learning for *All* *2206 (West)*	Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Elementary Schools *2206 (West)*	Bringing Out the Best: Maximizing the Talent of Those Around You *2206 (West)*	The 15-Day Challenge: Bringing PLC Practices to Life With Clarity and Efficiency *2206 (West)*
Keri Greener	Inspiring Action: The Power of Guiding Coalitions in PLCs *6110*	Paving the Path: Designing Curriculum With Essential Standards and DOK *6110*	Empowering Educators: Transforming Data Into Meaningful Action to Improve Student Achievement and Teacher Practice *6110*	Cultivating Excellence: Strategies for Personal Growth and Student Engagement* *6110*	Cultivating Excellence: Strategies for Personal Growth and Student Engagement *6110*

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Jacqueline Heller	Aligning Instruction and Assessment With Essential Standard Learning Targets *5128*	Communicating and Collaborating on Student Learning Goals *5128*	TEAMS Transform Literacy Outcomes for Students in a PLC at Work* *5128*	Assessment Can Look Different in Early Childhood (PreK–2) *5128*	TEAMS Transform Literacy Outcomes for Students in a PLC at Work *5128*
Brandon Jones	Abandoning Archaic Practices: Motivating and Preparing the Next Generation* *6116–6118*	You Are Not Alone! How to Thrive as a Singleton in a PLC *6116–6118*	Built to Last: Culture That Withstands the Storms *Performing Arts Center*	Demystifying Data: Making the Process Easy, Efficient, and Effective *Performing Arts Center*	Abandoning Archaic Practices: Motivating and Preparing the Next Generation *6116–6118*
Timothy D. Kanold	Your Physical and Mental Wellness: Thriving at Work *and* at Home! *2104 (West)*	On Becoming a PLC Leader: Training to Lead the PLC Life! *2104 (West)*	Your PreK–12 PLC Mathematics Focus: Instruction, Intervention, and Tasks! *2104 (West)*	JOY: Growing Strong Through Your Seasons of Life as a Teacher and Leader! *2104 (West)*	Heart & Soul: Living a Fully Engaged, High-Energy, Well-Balanced Professional Life! *2104 (West)*
Michelle Marrillia	Beyond Support: Moving From Helper to High-Impact Coach *6108*	Level Up Learning: High-Impact Instructional Moves for PLCs* *6108*	Leading Together: How Principal-Coach Partnerships Drive PLC Success *6108*	Level Up Learning: High-Impact Instructional Moves for PLCs *6108*	Sustaining Momentum: Keeping Teams Focused on Continuous Improvement *6108*
Mike Mattos	Are We a Group or a Team? *4200*	MTSS and PLCs: Leveraging Collaboration to Effectively Intervene *4200*	Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Secondary Schools *4200*	Behavior Solutions: Using the PLC at Work Process to Teach Essential Behaviors *4200*	Guiding Principles for Principals: Tips and Tools for Leading the PLC at Work Process *4200*
Robert Mountjoy	We Want to Be a PLC, But Where Do We Start?* *5124*	What Evidence Supports Your Effectiveness in Educating the Whole Child?* *5124*	How to Use AI as a Member of Your Collaborative Team *5124*	What Evidence Supports Your Effectiveness in Educating the Whole Child? *5124*	We Want to Be a PLC, But Where Do We Start? *5124*

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Regina Stephens Owens	The *Why* Effect: Intentional Systems Drive Inspirational Cultures *4100*	Data Discussion for Instructional Leaders: From Data to Design to Demonstration of Learning *4100*	Not *Going* To, But *Belonging* To: Leading in a PLC *4100*	Small Schools and Singletons: Wired by Rigor, Relevance, and Results *4100*	The Learning Professional: Coaching Competence, Not Compliance *Performing Arts Center*
Matthew Treadway	Tier 2 Intervention: It's Not a Miracle, It's a System* *6112*	Difficult Conversations: Don't Like Them, Can't Avoid Them* *6112*	Inclusive Practices: Because "All Means All" Isn't Just a T-Shirt Slogan *6112*	Tier 2 Intervention: It's Not a Miracle, It's a System *6112*	Difficult Conversations: Don't Like Them, Can't Avoid Them *6112*
Eric Twadell	Social and Emotional Learning in a PLC at Work *5132*	Using AI Tools to Facilitate Better Teaching and Learning *5132*	Evidence-Based Grading: Five Stages to Transform Grading Practices* *5132*	Through New Eyes: Examining the Culture of Your School *5132*	Evidence-Based Grading: Five Stages to Transform Grading Practices *5132*

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Session Descriptions—Day 1

Mike Mattos

All In! Digging Deeper Into Becoming a True Professional Learning Community

The PLC at Work framework is the most research-based, practitioner-confirmed process to improve student and adult learning. Yet many schools and districts are failing to reap the benefits of their collaborative efforts because they fail to dig deeply and stay committed to the right work. Mike Mattos identifies the essential thinking and actions of a true professional learning community and discusses how each collectively creates an ongoing process of continuous improvement.

Participants in this session:
- Learn the three big ideas and four critical questions of the PLC at Work process.
- Understand how each critical question is not a singular act but instead requires never-ending cycles of focus to dig deeper into the right work.
- Assess their current reality and consider next best steps to improve learning for all.

Jack Baldermann

Inspiring Your Team to PLC Excellence

Jack Baldermann shares the ideas, programs, strategies, and tools that Westmont High School (a Title 1 school in Illinois) implemented to become the most improved and one of the top-performing schools in the nation. In every student achievement category, Westmont has achieved exceptional and sustained results. Westmont's student-to-teacher trust score has been the highest in Illinois for the last five years, and our collaborative teacher score has also been the highest in the state. Jack shares specific ideas and programs that led to these powerful relationships.

Participants explore specific and practical action steps that led to these student learning performance gains. Participants gain a framework to successfully implement PLC and RTI concepts that will lead to real student success.

Tim Brown

Enhancing Self-Efficacy and Motivation Through Reflection and Goal Setting

Educators in a school with a focus on learning promote a strong sense of self-efficacy in their students. Studies show this may be one of the greatest factors for student motivation and engagement. Participants in this session examine essential characteristics for building student self-efficacy and explore team-developed products and strategies for how to use them.

Erika Chapa

Beyond the Four Critical Questions: Taking the Work of Collaborative Teams to the Next Level

In this session, Erika Chapa dives deeper into the essential work of collaborative teams, building on the foundation of the four critical questions of a PLC. Participants explore advanced strategies and practices to enhance team collaboration, improve data-driven decision making, and foster a culture of continuous improvement. Through practical tools and real-world examples, participants learn how to maximize the impact of their collaborative efforts and drive transformative student outcomes.

Participants in this session:
- Engage in practices that deepen the understanding of student learning expectations.
- Explore tools that help drive the work of collaborative teams.
- Discover strategies that help extend the work of collaborative teams.

Heather Friziellie

Bringing Out the Best: Maximizing the Talent of Those Around You

Every school and district's resources seem to be stretched to maximum capacity. When working as a PLC in the constantly changing education system, leaders must keep their "compass north" while making the most of all staff and faculty and remaining true to the beliefs and actions of a professional learning community. Participants in this session learn about effective strategies for establishing and strengthening relationships in a culture of change, keeping "tight" to certain PLC processes. Participants consider how to create a culture where every stakeholder feels motivated to overcome issues for the greater purpose and actively contribute to ensure high levels of learning for all.

Participants in this session:
- Reflect on the change process and essential steps for building and enriching relationships through change.
- Learn and apply a protocol for identifying and maximizing individual strengths to create powerful teams.
- Examine current realities and plan for next steps.

Keri Greener

Inspiring Action: The Power of Guiding Coalitions in PLCs

In this session, Keri Greener delves into the purpose of the guiding coalition and the essential role this team plays in leading the professional learning community process in schools. Participants embark on a shared journey to uncover how this team drives the success of the PLC

process and explore ways they can serve as a guiding light, inspiring and supporting other teams along the way.

Participants can expect to:
- Acquire tools to lead the PLC process in their school.
- Discover the seven components that govern the work of the guiding coalition.

Jacqueline Heller

Aligning Instruction and Assessment With Essential Standard Learning Targets

How do we meet students where they are and actually move them toward proficiency on the essential standards? Teams must not only identify what is most essential for all students to learn, but also create a learning progression for their essential standards and collectively develop a plan of action through the teaching-assessing-learning cycle that maximizes opportunities for students to become proficient with learning tasks aligned to specific learning targets.

Participants learn how to:
- Deconstruct essential standards into learning targets arranged in a learning progression.
- Prioritize and pace the learning across the year with proficiency maps.
- Align purchased curriculum materials to team-developed learning targets.
- Create or curate assessments with tasks and questions that yield actionable data for specific learning targets.

Brandon Jones

Abandoning Archaic Practices: Motivating and Preparing the Next Generation

We are preparing students for jobs that do not exist to solve challenges that have not yet been identified. What happens when our current practices fail to motivate, engage, and prepare the current generation of students who depend on the immediacy of the world around them? The challenge lies in the fact that their system of thinking from neural to practical is instant and problem based—the opposite of preceding generations. In this session, Brandon Jones compares 21st century learning and traditional practices that have significant impacts on student motivation and learning.

Participants can expect to:
- Compare significant differences between this generation of students and past generations, including those of educators.
- Identify archaic practices that demotivate students.
- Identify 21st century learning practices that motivate and prepare students for their future.

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 intentional 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.

Michelle Marrillia

Beyond Support: Moving From Helper to High-Impact Coach

In this session, Michelle Marrillia helps instructional coaches shift from being perceived as "helpers" to becoming true capacity builders who empower teachers and collaborative teams to take ownership of their growth and student learning. Coaches explore the difference between support and instructional coaching, learn strategies for embedding coaching cycles into PLCs, and practice facilitating difficult yet productive coaching conversations.

By the end of this session, participants can expect to:
- Identify behaviors limiting team growth and explore strategies to shift from supporting to building teacher and team capacity.
- Develop skills to navigate challenging coaching conversations that address resistance, foster trust, and promote productive dialogue.
- Apply a framework for coaching cycles to empower teams, strengthen accountability, and drive continuous improvement.

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.

Robert Mountjoy

We Want to Be a PLC, But Where Do We Start?
It is time to get clear on what we want students to know and be able to do. It takes collaboration and planning, and it starts with getting the right people involved to start a movement. In this session, Robert Mountjoy discusses systems that are in place to set schools or districts up for success in growing their professional learning community. Robert guides participants through beginning this work and helps them avoid the shortcuts that may hold them back.

Participants explore:
- First steps in setting up their PLC for success
- How to get the right people involved
- The power of a shared and common language

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.

Matthew Treadway

Tier 2 Intervention: It's Not a Miracle, It's a System

In this session, Matthew Treadway explores critical question three, focusing on how to make Tier 2 a systematic schoolwide strategy that drives student success. Rather than viewing interventions as isolated classroom efforts, participants learn how to build and strengthen processes that support all students. Participants evaluate current practices, identify opportunities for improvement, and develop actionable steps to create a cohesive and effective intervention system throughout their school.

Participants in this session:
- Examine the recipe for an effective Tier 2 schedule.
- Evaluate how the four critical questions play an integral role in developing a system of intervention.

Eric Twadell

Social and Emotional Learning in a PLC at Work

In most schools, social and emotional learning (SEL) is little more than canned programs that highlight cliché-driven posters and flyers. Schools that take SEL seriously learn quickly that we can teach and assess SEL just like any other subject and content area. In this session, Eric Twadell explores the CASEL social-emotional learning competencies and develops strategies and best practices for teaching and learning.

Participants in this session:
- Explore the CASEL social-emotional learning competencies—self-management, self-awareness, social awareness, responsible decision-making, and relationship skills.
- Learn strategies for the explicit assessment of these competencies.
- Understand how these competencies can impact student learning.
- Learn how to assess the impact of social and emotional learning instruction.

AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Jack Baldermann

Outstanding Results in a High School PLC

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

Riverside Brookfield High School achieved similar results using PLC concepts and employing strategic leadership.

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

Tim Brown

Becoming World Class: Steps, Processes, and Tools for Getting on the Same Page
Daniel Goleman, author of *Emotional Intelligence* (2005), argues that explicitly stated values are one of the most powerful steps we can take to help a team become exemplary. Developing a common vision of instruction, assessment, and interventions at the classroom, team, and schoolwide levels are critical steps in the PLC process. Tim Brown shares strategies and provides examples that educators have found helpful for developing their collective commitments and common vision for a learning-centered classroom.

Erika Chapa

Disciplinary Literacy Demystified: Empowering Student Success
In this session, Erika Chapa explores the principles of disciplinary literacy and demonstrates how to integrate subject-specific reading, writing, and critical thinking strategies into learning. Participants develop a deeper understanding of ways to approach texts and tasks and gain practical tools to help students achieve at higher levels across content areas.

Participants in this session:
- Distinguish between content-area literacy and disciplinary literacy approaches.
- Gain a deeper understanding of the importance of implementing disciplinary literacy across content areas and its implications for student success.
- Discover ways to implement disciplinary literacy strategies across content areas.

Heather Friziellie

All Means All: Essential Actions for General and Special Educators to Ensure High Levels of Learning for *All*
Participants explore the concepts from *Yes We Can: General and Special Educators Collaborating in a Professional Learning Community* (Solution Tree, 2016) and its new companion book *All Means All: Essential Actions for Leveraging Yes We Can!* (Solution Tree, 2025). These concepts focus on fostering collaboration between general and special educators to achieve high levels of learning for *all* students by addressing personal and systemic beliefs, aligning systems, and adopting inclusive practices.

Participants in this session:
- Understand the six core principles from *Yes We Can* and their relevance to inclusive practices.
- Examine personal and systemic beliefs about students, learning, and educators' roles.
- Reflect on current practices to identify gaps and align actions with the belief that all students can learn at high levels through specific strategies.
- Develop actionable next steps to strengthen collective commitment and shared ownership in the PLC process.

Keri Greener

Paving the Path: Designing Curriculum With Essential Standards and DOK

Participants in this session learn how to develop a guaranteed and viable curriculum (GVC) that ensures all students are mastering the same essential standards. Keri Greener demonstrates how to utilize depth of knowledge and how to pace a unit plan.

Participants can expect to:
- Experience how a GVC ensures that teams flourish.
- Connect the *why* behind a GVC and the PLC process.
- Acquire a toolkit to create a GVC.

Jacqueline Heller

Communicating and Collaborating on Student Learning Goals

How can classroom teachers, special educators, interventionists, and all adults who support a student's learning better monitor and celebrate student progress toward proficiency? In a professional learning community where we take collective responsibility for the learning of all students, there must be protocols and tools for goal setting and progress monitoring so that our efforts lead to higher levels of learning.

Participants in this session:
- Use a data protocol to guide collaborative discussions to determine which students need support with which learning targets.
- Develop tools such as goal cards for communication, feedback, and goal setting with students to focus on and celebrate learning the essential standards.
- Explore collaborative progress-monitoring tools so those who provide initial instruction as well as intervention and special services can share data, prompts, and resources to better help students transfer learning across settings.

Brandon Jones

You Are Not Alone! How to Thrive as a Singleton in a PLC

The evidence in support of becoming a professional learning community is clear, and the success stories are compelling. As the only 3rd grade math teacher, middle school band director, or high school graphic design teacher, you may ask: "How am I supposed to be collaborative by myself?" Behind every successful school and model PLC story is a group of committed educators who decided to not let the singleton speed bump slow them down. Participants in this session learn practical ways to organize, collaborate, and align themselves to not only support the PLC process, but to thrive as a contributing team member!

Participants in this session:
- Review the work of Brig Leane, Jon Yost, and Aaron Hansen to develop a practical plan of action for singletons.
- Learn about powerful concepts and meaningful team structures that unite singletons as effective teams of one.
- Examine the four critical questions for learning through the lens of a singleton.

Timothy D. Kanold

On Becoming a PLC Leader: Training to Lead the PLC Life!

School-site administrators and leaders, guiding coalition members, instructional coaches, school district or central office administrators cannot lead by merely *trying* harder. Yet, they can become more leadership "fit" as their discernment and wisdom improve over time. They can *train* to run and lead the PLC race!

In this session, Timothy D. Kanold reveals how to become a dynamic and inspiring decision maker others will want to follow. Dr. Kanold answers PLC leadership questions such as: Where do I focus my energy and effort as a PLC leader? How do I make the time to get it all done? How do I lead our PLC vision into realized action? How do I make good decisions, discernments, and judgments? How can I improve my PLC leadership skills?

Only you can write the story of your PLC leadership life and the legacy you will leave behind. Come find out how to become a great PLC Leader!

PLC leader participants can expect to:
- Identify the *dual* PLC leadership mission of all school site and central office leaders.
- Learn how to use the PLC leadership discipline of *vision and values*.
- Learn how to become great at the PLC leadership discipline of *accountability and celebration* using the shared vision and values.
- Learn how to engage in the PLC leadership discipline of *service and sharing* to prevent burnout for those they lead.

Michelle Marrillia

Level Up Learning: High-Impact Instructional Moves for PLCs

Participants in this session explore proven instructional strategies that maximize student achievement and reinvigorate PLC practices. Whether your team is plateauing or looking to fine tune your efforts, Michelle Marrillia provides actionable strategies and tools to refocus on learning outcomes, increase instructional effectiveness, and accelerate student progress. Together, Michelle and participants analyze, apply, and plan for impactful instructional moves that bring measurable results back to your teams.

By the end of this session, participants can expect to:
- Analyze their current PLC practices to identify barriers hindering student progress.
- Explore and apply high-impact instructional strategies that drive measurable improvements in student learning.
- Develop an actionable plan to align instructional moves with the four critical questions of a PLC and monitor their effectiveness.

Mike Mattos

MTSS and PLCs: Leveraging Collaboration to Effectively Intervene

The fundamental purpose of a professional learning community is to ensure high levels of learning for every student. Achieving this goal will undoubtedly require schools to effectively answer the critical question: How will we respond when students don't learn? Mike Mattos discusses specific steps that schools can take to create a highly effective, multitiered system of supports to target learning gaps, and demonstrates how the PLC at Work process fosters the schoolwide framework required to successfully intervene.

Participants in this session:
- Understand the guiding principles behind a multitiered system of interventions.
- Learn the essential actions of a school's guiding coalition, teacher teams, and intervention team.
- Prioritize resources to best meet student needs and make MTSS doable.

Robert Mountjoy

What Evidence Supports Your Effectiveness in Educating the Whole Child?

To get the most out of our students, we should work to develop their skills to first be independent and then become interdependent. To prepare today's students for the jobs of tomorrow, we must provide opportunities for them to develop soft skills that will translate to current and future success. In this session, Robert Mountjoy explores evidence-based practices that will allow participants and their students to grow and prepare them for their future.

Participants in this session:
- Gain a foundational understanding of high-leveraging habits.
- Understand the importance of creating and celebrating goals.
- Align behavior with mission, vision, and collective commitments.

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.

Matthew Treadway

Difficult Conversations: Don't Like Them, Can't Avoid Them

In this session, Matthew Treadway leads participants through various scenarios that often present themselves in schools. Through those scenarios and the new learning presented in this session, participants navigate how to engage others in courageous and respectful conversations that lead to improved student learning.

Participants can expect to:
- Understand and apply the "why, who, how, do" protocol to approach difficult conversations effectively.
- Collaborate with peers to craft effective responses to challenging coaching conversations.
- Reflect on personal experiences with coaching conversations to identify strengths and areas for growth.

Eric Twadell

Using AI Tools to Facilitate Better Teaching and Learning

Participants are encouraged to bring a fully charged computer or tablet to take full advantage of their time in this session.

In this session, AI beginners learn how various AI chatbots can help facilitate better teaching and learning. For most teachers, unpacking standards, planning lessons, creating assessments, and developing interventions rarely start from scratch. Instead, we often begin with existing

materials—something teachers have used in the past, something already in the district curriculum materials, something purchased from an online source like Teachers Pay Teachers, or something from online lesson libraries maintained by content-specific websites like PBS or NCTM. While those materials have potential and certainly save time by providing a first draft of instructional strategies to consider, AI chatbots can help teachers analyze and improve these materials.

Michelle Marrillia

Beyond Titles: How Shared Leadership Empowers Every Educator to Lead

A title does not define leadership; it's determined by action, influence, and a shared commitment to student success. In this keynote, Michelle Marrillia explores how shared leadership and guiding coalitions empower educators at all levels to take ownership of their roles, collaborate effectively, and drive improvement across their schools. Whether you're a teacher leading a collaborative team, a team leader facilitating difficult conversations, or an administrator building systems for shared accountability, every role contributes to creating a culture of leadership and learning. Participants walk away inspired to lead from where they are and equipped with practical ideas to build collaborative ownership, strengthen teams, and take actionable steps toward shared success.

Session Descriptions—Day 2

Brandon Jones

The North Star: Making Our Compelling Future a Reality

Poverty. Illness. Learning differences. Behavior problems. Lack of motivation. Social and emotional needs. Language barriers. Insufficient funding. Prerequisite skill gaps. Limited time and resources. Increased state and national expectations. Does this list sound familiar? If the answer is yes, then you likely recognize challenges that stand in the way of your school becoming all it could be. You could probably even add to that list!

The fact is, all schools struggle with issues that impede learning. Yet, some schools defy the odds year after year. These schools consistently make progress toward the type of school they want to become despite daunting obstacles. The secret to their success lies not in the newest shiny program or a charismatic leader. Instead, the answer is much more realistic, attainable, and sustainable than you might think.

In this session, Brandon Jones outlines how to create your own North Star, a steadfast navigation point your team uses to make decisions and commitments that improve culture, learning, and growth for students and educators alike.

Jack Baldermann

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

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

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

Tim Brown

Using CFAs to Promote and Ensure Learning

Common formative assessments have been described as the lynchpin of the PLC process. When done well, they can transform the learning experience of students and teachers alike. In this session, Tim Brown leads participants in exploring important keys to enhance the development and effective use of CFAs by collaborative teams. Various tools, resources, and protocols are provided to help teams derive all the benefits found in the CFA process.

Erika Chapa

Scaffolding Instruction for Multilingual Learners

In this session, Erika Chapa equips educators with effective strategies for supporting the academic growth and language development of English learners (ELs). Through a blend of research-based insights and practical examples, participants learn how to differentiate instruction, provide linguistic support, and create inclusive learning environments that cater to the diverse needs of ELs.

Participants in this session:
- Understand the concept of scaffolding instruction to support ELs.
- Engage in practical ways to empower students through gradual, structured support while fostering independence and critical thinking.
- Gain knowledge of effective strategies for differentiating instruction to meet the diverse needs of ELs.

Heather Friziellie

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.

Keri Greener

Empowering Educators: Transforming Data Into Meaningful Action to Improve Student Achievement and Teacher Practice

In this session, Keri Greener explores how to transform data into actionable insights that drive student achievement and enhance teacher practice. Participants examine the role of assessments in creating pathways to learning, ensuring equity, and providing targeted Tier 2 support for all students.

Participants in this session:
- Determine the roles of common and summative assessments in the continuous improvement of teacher practice and student growth.
- Utilize a data protocol to identify students who need additional time and support or extensions.
- Learn how to improve their professional practice through team collaboration.

Jacqueline Heller

TEAMS Transform Literacy Outcomes for Students in a PLC at Work

Reading proficiently lays the foundation for achievement in all aspects of learning. Educators ensure high levels of literacy by identifying what is most essential from the seemingly unending scope of literacy learning, standards, and research. When teams build shared learning in how to identify, prioritize, and clarify essential learning targets, then align their assessment practices to those literacy learning targets, they can better ensure high levels of literacy learning for every child, every day.

Participants in this session gain tools to help teams:
- Understand the TEAMS framework for guiding collaborative time to focus on student learning in literacy.
- Prioritize time within their literacy block for the components that increase essential literacy outcomes by grade-level band.
- Access and utilize templates and protocols to improve literacy for all.

Brandon Jones

Built to Last: Culture That Withstands the Storms

Reforming schools to become professional learning communities takes more than changing policies, practices, and products. It requires that a school examine the foundational beliefs and behaviors on which it is built: the culture. Building (or *re*building) a healthy school culture can seem like a daunting task, especially if significant resistance is encountered early in the change process. As a result, some leaders choose to turn a blind eye to the beliefs and behaviors that impact the school's success. After all, it's easier to change the master schedule, purchase a new

online program, or hand out jeans passes than it is to influence the thinking of others! Participants in this session analyze the work of Anthony Muhammad, Luis F. Cruz, Rick DuFour, and Brandon Jones to design a practical plan for creating a culture that's built to last.

Participants can expect to:
- Examine the critical components of a healthy school culture.
- Learn how to establish a culture that is simultaneously loose and tight.
- Determine key factors for supporting and influencing people in their organization.

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.

Michelle Marrillia

Leading Together: How Principal-Coach Partnerships Drive PLC Success
Collaborating between principals and instructional coaches is essential for transforming PLCs into high-performing, student-centered teams. In this session, Michelle Marrillia emphasizes practical strategies for establishing a shared vision, aligning instructional priorities, and fostering a culture of trust and accountability that propels PLC success. Participants engage with scenarios, tools, and techniques to clarify roles, prioritize instruction, and maintain momentum in collaborative efforts.

By the end of this session, participants can expect to:
- Clarify principal-coach roles.
- Set and monitor instructional priorities.
- Sustain momentum through collaboration.

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.

Robert Mountjoy

How to Use AI as a Member of Your Collaborative Team

If we learned anything from the pandemic, it is that teachers are essential. While artificial intelligence will never replace a teacher, a teacher who is proficient using AI tools could replace a teacher who is not. In this session, Robert Mountjoy provides practical ways for participants to use AI in their collaborative meetings. Participants learn how to use AI tools as a resource to make collaboration more meaningful and efficient.

Participants explore:

- Real-time opportunities to work with AI tools
- Use of AI to provide resources that align with the four critical questions of a PLC

Regina Stephens Owens

Not *Going* To, But *Belonging* To: Leading in a PLC

In a time of great change and instability, educators and administrators more than ever must become empowered learners. How do we lead learning in our community in a way that results in thriving, wholeness, and belonging? Join Regina Stephens Owens and learn how to lead in a professional learning community. Participants in this session invest in capacity building, collective responsibility, and increased achievement.

Leaders in this session:

- Accept the challenge of being a lead learner.

- Design and develop a culture of learning.
- Build collective capacity through shared responsibility for learning.

Matthew Treadway

Inclusive Practices: Because "All Means All" Isn't Just a T-Shirt Slogan
Inclusive practices are more than just a catchy phrase; they're a commitment to ensuring every student has the support they need to succeed. In this session, Matthew Treadway helps participants turn the idea of "all means all" into concrete actions in their school. Through reflection on current practices, collaborative discussions, and strategic planning, participants develop actionable steps to make inclusive practices a core part of their school culture.

Participants in this session:
- Examine the history and current realities of special education.
- Investigate the critical components that make up a guaranteed and viable curriculum.
- Explore the concept of tailoring instruction to meet the diverse needs of all learners.

Eric Twadell

Evidence-Based Grading: Five Stages to Transform Grading Practices
Moving beyond PLC Lite requires that schools examine traditional grading practices. While tackling this challenge has often been cited as the "third rail of school reform," it is an essential destination on the journey to becoming a PLC that embraces assessment and grading practices and supports student learning. In this session, Eric Twadell provides participants with a roadmap for differentiating professional development for teachers and teams interested in implementing standards-based grading.

Participants in this session:
- Gain appreciation for using a learning map to differentiate professional development.
- Explore challenges associated with traditional grading practices and reporting results.
- Learn how to structure professional development and a learning map for teachers and teams specifically focused on standards-based grading and reporting.
- Explore the five stages of evidence-based grading and reporting.

AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Jack Baldermann

Mindsets and Leadership Moves to Ensure PLC Success
Westmont High School became the most improved and one of the top-performing high schools in the nation by successfully implementing PLC concepts and practices. In 2020, Jack Baldermann and his team at Westmont won the DuFour Award as the best PLC in the country and in 2021 won the National Blue Ribbon Award as the most diverse regular high school to win the honor in

Illinois in the last 25 years. These accomplishments were achieved because the team is passionately dedicated to creating a culture that is focused on compassion for all people, collaboratively building and developing an intense commitment to a championship vision, and making certain that joy and having fun are present on the path to exceptional results. Jack applied the mindsets and leadership moves to help his PreK–12 district to realize outstanding student achievement gains in all areas, including attendance rates, student discipline, and academic growth.

Participants learn:
- The powerful mindsets that create the most effective and high-performing culture, including ways to lead that will inspire their team
- How to build a compassionate culture and commitment to their championship vision or "educational promised land"
- How to build student and staff confidence, trust, and a growth mindset among their team
- Practical and impactful ideas to improve their PLC and RTI/MTSS implementation

Tim Brown

Becoming World Class: Steps, Processes, and Tools for Getting on the Same Page

Daniel Goleman, author of *Emotional Intelligence* (2005), argues that explicitly stated values are one of the most powerful steps we can take to help a team become exemplary. Developing a common vision of instruction, assessment, and interventions at the classroom, team, and schoolwide levels are critical steps in the PLC process. Tim Brown shares strategies and provides examples that educators have found helpful for developing their collective commitments and common vision for a learning-centered classroom.

Erika Chapa

Reading Interventions Based on the Science of Reading

Explore ways to determine appropriate reading interventions rooted in the science of reading. Participants dive into evidence-based strategies that decode the complexities of reading development and elevate their teaching with tools that help bridge the gap between research and practice for enhanced literacy outcomes in both classroom and intervention settings.

Participants in this session:
- Uncover the neurological underpinnings of reading.
- Gain practical insights to implement targeted interventions that address root causes of reading difficulties.
- Explore interventions focused on phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Heather Friziellie

Bringing Out the Best: Maximizing the Talent of Those Around You

Every school and district's resources seem to be stretched to maximum capacity. When working as a PLC in the constantly changing education system, leaders must keep their "compass north" while making the most of all staff and faculty and remaining true to the beliefs and actions of a professional learning community. Participants in this session learn about effective strategies for establishing and strengthening relationships in a culture of change, keeping "tight" to certain PLC processes. Participants consider how to create a culture where every stakeholder feels motivated to overcome issues for the greater purpose and actively contribute to ensure high levels of learning for all.

Participants in this session:

- Reflect on the change process and essential steps for building and enriching relationships through change.
- Learn and apply a protocol for identifying and maximizing individual strengths to create powerful teams.
- Examine current realities and plan for next steps.

Keri Greener

Cultivating Excellence: Strategies for Personal Growth and Student Engagement

In this session, Keri Greener reviews strategies participants can incorporate into their daily routine to optimize their best selves. Together, Keri and participants unravel strategies to engage students and learn the components of a safe school environment where students feel a sense of belonging.

Participants in this session:

- Determine habits that positively impact health, happiness, and productivity.
- Create the "stop doing" list.

Jacqueline Heller

Assessment Can Look Different in Early Childhood (PreK–2)

The collaborative and data-driven process of PLCs applies not just to those in the high-stakes testing grades. Educators who teach PreK–2 have specific considerations when collecting data that allow them to be responsive and monitor their youngest students' learning in a way that may look different than in upper grades.

Participants in this session:

- Learn how to accelerate student progress toward proficiency by creating targeted learning progressions that meet each student where they are and move them forward.

- Explore assessment techniques, tasks, and tools for team-developed assessments for academic content and social-emotional learning in early childhood.
- Use age-appropriate student goal setting and progress-monitoring tools that allow them to use data to achieve better results for young learners.

Brandon Jones

Demystifying Data: Making the Process Easy, Efficient, and Effective

Albert Einstein stated that "the definition of genius is taking the complex and making it simple." One of the final stages of team development is the use of information gathered from assessments. Unfortunately, this is also a tempting stopping place in the improvement process. We find that some schools and teacher teams suffer from what Waterman and Peters call DRIP: data rich, information poor (2006). These teams have ample data but lack the process to turn this meaningful information into a competitive advantage. In this session, Brandon Jones explores the most meaningful ways to analyze data in a professional learning community. Participants use simple, practical data protocols to become efficient with their work and lead them to action.

Participants in this session:
- Discover how to increase reliability in the data that teams collect.
- Examine the three main uses for data in a collaborative team.
- Practice engaging in this process using a real-world scenario.

Timothy D. Kanold

JOY: Growing Strong Through Your Seasons of Life as a Teacher and Leader!

Educators choose a lifetime of work designed in yearly cycles, one school year after another. And each school year has a season of new beginnings (fall), a middle season of heavy lifting (winter), an ending season of finishing well (spring), followed by an opportunity for a physical, mental, and emotional wellness reset: a season of rest (summer). Once that yearly cycle is complete, their journey repeats. Their teaching and leading story adds another chapter.

Will that chapter represent a school year of joy, or not? Is it possible to live a life of sustained and persistent joy through each of the school seasons? What *is* joy, exactly, and how is joy different from happiness? Is it possible to cultivate daily joy into workplace and home life experiences? Is it possible to find joy in the small and ordinary aspects of life despite the messiness, the beauty, the exhaustion and sometimes grief that comes with life as educators?

Based on his recently released book *JOY!* (Solution Tree Press, 2025), Timothy D. Kanold reveals brain-research affirmed strategies for pursuing joy, decreasing daily stress, persevering through each season of the school year, and developing the relationship skills necessary to be part of an effective PLC at Work team. Come be inspired!

Participants can expect to:
- Understand the difference between happiness and joy.
- Learn specific *mindfulness* routines that build joy habits that stick.
- Understand how to persevere and persist using friendships at work and at home.
- Discover strategies such as JOMO for improving disposition toward daily joy at work and at home.
- Consider how daily work life feeds into Ubuntu—the greater purpose of all educators.

Michelle Marrillia

Level Up Learning: High-Impact Instructional Moves for PLCs
Participants in this session explore proven instructional strategies that maximize student achievement and reinvigorate PLC practices. Whether your team is plateauing or looking to fine tune your efforts, Michelle Marrillia provides actionable strategies and tools to refocus on learning outcomes, increase instructional effectiveness, and accelerate student progress. Together, Michelle and participants analyze, apply, and plan for impactful instructional moves that bring measurable results back to your teams.

By the end of this session, participants can expect to:
- Analyze their current PLC practices to identify barriers hindering student progress.
- Explore and apply high-impact instructional strategies that drive measurable improvements in student learning.
- Develop an actionable plan to align instructional moves with the four critical questions of a PLC and monitor their effectiveness.

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.

Robert Mountjoy

What Evidence Supports Your Effectiveness in Educating the Whole Child?

To get the most out of our students, we should work to develop their skills to first be independent and then become interdependent. To prepare today's students for the jobs of tomorrow, we must provide opportunities for them to develop soft skills that will translate to current and future success. In this session, Robert Mountjoy explores evidence-based practices that will allow participants and their students to grow and prepare them for their future.

Participants in this session:
- Gain a foundational understanding of high-leveraging habits.
- Understand the importance of creating and celebrating goals.
- Align behavior with mission, vision, and collective commitments.

Regina Stephens Owens

Small Schools and Singletons: Wired by Rigor, Relevance, and Results

Small schools—charter, innovative, or online—often ask: How do we engage in the PLC at Work process? How do we involve CTE, fine arts, PE? How do we handle singletons? Where do we begin? Join Regina Stephens Owens to learn how to effectively implement the PLC process so that you are wired for rigor and relevance..

Outcomes from this session include:
- Learning how to function as a PLC at Work
- Developing your teams to include meaningful work for all
- Monitoring and measuring your success

Matthew Treadway

Tier 2 Intervention: It's Not a Miracle, It's a System

In this session, Matthew Treadway explores critical question three, focusing on how to make Tier 2 a systematic schoolwide strategy that drives student success. Rather than viewing interventions as isolated classroom efforts, participants learn how to build and strengthen processes that support all students. Participants evaluate current practices, identify opportunities for improvement, and develop actionable steps to create a cohesive and effective intervention system throughout their school.

Participants in this session:
- Examine the recipe for an effective Tier 2 schedule.
- Evaluate how the four critical questions play an integral role in developing a system of intervention.

Eric Twadell

Through New Eyes: Examining the Culture of Your School

The PLC at Work process is all about culture—not structure. A school culture is founded upon the assumptions, beliefs, values, expectations, and habits that drive its day-to-day work and share how its people think, feel, and act. This session provides participants with the opportunity to examine the culture of two very different schools and explores common practices and conventional wisdom with a critical eye.

Participants in this session:
- Examine the culture of two different schools and the experiences of a student.
- Assess the practices and procedures of a traditional school versus a school that works as a professional learning community.
- Develop an understanding of the important difference between culture and structure in initiative, and sustain the PLC at Work process.

Session Descriptions—Day 3

Jack Baldermann

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

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

Participants in this session:

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

Tim Brown

Enhancing Self-Efficacy and Motivation Through Reflection and Goal Setting

Educators in a school with a focus on learning promote a strong sense of self-efficacy in their students. Studies show this may be one of the greatest factors for student motivation and engagement. Participants in this session examine essential characteristics for building student self-efficacy and explore team-developed products and strategies for how to use them.

Erika Chapa

Scaffolding Instruction for Multilingual Learners

In this session, Erika Chapa equips educators with effective strategies for supporting the academic growth and language development of English learners (ELs). Through a blend of research-based insights and practical examples, participants learn how to differentiate instruction, provide linguistic support, and create inclusive learning environments that cater to the diverse needs of ELs.

Participants in this session:

- Understand the concept of scaffolding instruction to support ELs.
- Engage in practical ways to empower students through gradual, structured support while fostering independence and critical thinking.

- Gain knowledge of effective strategies for differentiating instruction to meet the diverse needs of ELs.

Heather Friziellie

The 15-Day Challenge: Bringing PLC Practices to Life With Clarity and Efficiency

Teams can get stuck in knowing *how* to bring PLC practices to life in a way that has greater impact with increased efficiency. In this session, Heather Friziellie explores the 15-Day Challenge framework to help participants create wins in less time!

Participants in this session:
- Discuss the *what* and *why* of Maria Nielsen's 15-Day Challenge.
- Explore the 15-Day Challenge process by collaborating on a plan.
- Develop a plan for using the 15-Day Challenge structure in their classrooms.

Keri Greener

Cultivating Excellence: Strategies for Personal Growth and Student Engagement

In this session, Keri Greener reviews strategies participants can incorporate into their daily routine to optimize their best selves. Together, Keri and participants unravel strategies to engage students and learn the components of a safe school environment where students feel a sense of belonging.

Participants in this session:
- Determine habits that positively impact health, happiness, and productivity.
- Create the "stop doing" list.

Jacqueline Heller

TEAMS Transform Literacy Outcomes for Students in a PLC at Work

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Participants in this session gain tools to help teams:
- Understand the TEAMS framework for guiding collaborative time to focus on student learning in literacy.
- Prioritize time within their literacy block for the components that increase essential literacy outcomes by grade-level band.
- Access and utilize templates and protocols to improve literacy for all.

Brandon Jones

Abandoning Archaic Practices: Motivating and Preparing the Next Generation

We are preparing students for jobs that do not exist to solve challenges that have not yet been identified. What happens when our current practices fail to motivate, engage, and prepare the current generation of students who depend on the immediacy of the world around them? The challenge lies in the fact that their system of thinking from neural to practical is instant and problem based—the opposite of preceding generations. In this session, Brandon Jones compares 21st century learning and traditional practices that have significant impacts on student motivation and learning.

Participants can expect to:
- Compare significant differences between this generation of students and past generations, including those of educators.
- Identify archaic practices that demotivate students.
- Identify 21st century learning practices that motivate and prepare students for their future.

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 educator's 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 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.

Michelle Marrillia

Sustaining Momentum: Keeping Teams Focused on Continuous Improvement

In this session, Michelle Marrillia provides instructional leaders with practical strategies and tools to help collaborative teams maintain focus, energy, and commitment to continuous improvement. Participants explore methods to monitor progress, address setbacks, and celebrate successes to enhance team effectiveness and improve student learning outcomes.

By the end of this session, participants can expect to:
- Explore strategies to address common challenges, such as team resistance, stagnation, and misalignment of goals.
- Practice using tools to monitor progress, reflect on team actions, and plan next steps for improvement.
- Design meaningful celebrations to recognize successes, build team confidence, and sustain motivation for continuous improvement.

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.

Robert Mountjoy

We Want to Be a PLC, But Where Do We Start?

It is time to get clear on what we want students to know and be able to do. It takes collaboration and planning, and it starts with getting the right people involved to start a movement. In this session, Robert Mountjoy discusses systems that are in place to set schools or districts up for success in growing their professional learning community. Robert guides participants through beginning this work and helps them avoid the shortcuts that may hold them back.

Participants explore:
- First steps in setting up their PLC for success
- How to get the right people involved
- The power of a shared and common language

Regina Stephens Owens

The Learning Professional: Coaching Competence, Not Compliance

In a time of great change and instability, educators and administrators more than ever must 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.

Matthew Treadway

Difficult Conversations: Don't Like Them, Can't Avoid Them

In this session, Matthew Treadway leads participants through various scenarios that often present themselves in schools. Through those scenarios and the new learning presented in this session, participants navigate how to engage others in courageous and respectful conversations that lead to improved student learning.

Participants can expect to:
- Understand and apply the "why, who, how, do" protocol to approach difficult conversations effectively.
- Collaborate with peers to craft effective responses to challenging coaching conversations.
- Reflect on personal experiences with coaching conversations to identify strengths and areas for growth.

Eric Twadell

Evidence-Based Grading: Five Stages to Transform Grading Practices

Moving beyond PLC Lite requires that schools examine traditional grading practices. While tackling this challenge has often been cited as the "third rail of school reform," it is an essential destination on the journey to becoming a PLC that embraces assessment and grading practices and supports student learning. In this session, Eric Twadell provides participants with a roadmap for differentiating professional development for teachers and teams interested in implementing standards-based grading.

Participants in this session:
- Gain appreciation for using a learning map to differentiate professional development.

- Explore challenges associated with traditional grading practices and reporting results.
- Learn how to structure professional development and a learning map for teachers and teams specifically focused on standards-based grading and reporting.
- Explore the five stages of evidence-based grading and reporting.

Regina Stephens Owens

Shift Happens! Care, Competency, and Continuous Learning: It's All About People
Learning in community requires a focus on building the capacity of all learners, including the professionals. Regina Stephens Owens equips participants with the tools needed to design learning environments that support believing, becoming, and belonging in their professional learning community. Regina shares the essentials for developing the skills and systems that sustain continuous learning.

Learning outcomes from this session include:
- Designing and developing a culture of care
- Coaching competency, not just compliance
- Building capacity for continuous learning