

Tuesday, June 23

6:30–8:00 a.m.	Registration and Continental Breakfast	Rooms TBD
8:00–9:45 a.m.	Keynote —Mike Mattos <i>All In! Digging Deeper Into Becoming a True Professional Learning Community</i>	
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:30 a.m.	Breakout Sessions	See pages 2–3.
11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)	
1:00–2:30 p.m.	Breakout Sessions	See pages 2–3.
2:30–2:45 p.m.	Break	
2:45–3:45 p.m.	Keynote —Brig Leane <i>The Power of Shared Leadership</i>	

Wednesday, June 24

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Registration and Continental Breakfast	Rooms TBD
8:00–9:45 a.m.	Keynote —Brandon Jones <i>The Keystones of Exceptional Schools</i>	
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:30 a.m.	Breakout Sessions	See pages 2–3.
11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)	
1:00–2:30 p.m.	Breakout Sessions	See pages 2–3.
2:30–2:45 p.m.	Break	
2:45–3:45 p.m.	Team Time —Presenters aid in your collaborative team discussions.	

Thursday, June 25

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Continental Breakfast	Rooms TBD
8:00–9:30 a.m.	Breakout Sessions	See pages 2–3.
9:30–9:45 a.m.	Break	
9:45–11:45 a.m.	Keynote —Regina Stephens Owens <i>Courageous Capacity: Sustaining a Culture of Care and Competency</i>	

Agenda is subject to change.

Breakout Sessions at a Glance

A red asterisk* indicates session will be repeated.
Rooms will be listed in blue beneath titles three weeks before the event.

Presenter	Tuesday, June 23		Wednesday, June 24		Thursday, June 25
	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.
Anisa Baker-Busby	Coaching the Right Work: Using Collaboration to Drive Learning, Action, and Results* Room TBD	Yes We Can—and Must: Building Inclusive PLCs Where Special Education Is Everyone’s Work Room TBD	Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Building the Elementary Intervention-Ready PLC Room TBD	Assessment With Purpose: Using Common Formative Assessments to Fuel PLC Impact Room TBD	Coaching the Right Work: Using Collaboration to Drive Learning, Action, and Results Room TBD
Brandon Jones	Abandoning Archaic Practices: A Radical Hope for the Next Generation* Room TBD	School Culture That’s Steady in the Storm* Room TBD	Develop Without Defeating: Supporting One Another in Continuous Improvement Room TBD	School Culture That’s Steady in the Storm Room TBD	Abandoning Archaic Practices: A Radical Hope for the Next Generation Room TBD
Brig Leane	The PLC Dashboard: The Leader’s Guide to Implementing and Sustaining the PLC Process* Room TBD	Coaching Teams: Shifting From “What’s Wrong” to “What’s Next” Room TBD	Classroom and Instructional Management: Foundations for Student Learning Room TBD	Singletons: Finding Meaningful Collaboration When You Are a Team of One Room TBD	The PLC Dashboard: The Leader’s Guide to Implementing and Sustaining the PLC Process Room TBD
Cheyana Leiva	Strategic Unit Planning: Aligning to Essential Standards Room TBD	From Numbers to Knowledge: Turning Data Into Actionable Conversations Room TBD	Empowering the Leadership Team to Support the PLC Process Room TBD	Making Instruction Explicit in the PLC Process* Room TBD	Making Instruction Explicit in the PLC Process Room TBD
Mike Mattos	Developing and Supporting High-Performing Teacher Teams Room TBD	The Four Pearls of Effective Interventions Room TBD	Beyond Study Halls and Special Education: Tackling the Logistics of Secondary Systematic Interventions Room TBD	Behavior Solutions: Leveraging the PLC at Work Process to Teach Essential Behaviors Room TBD	Guiding Principles for Principals: Tips and Tools for Leading the PLC at Work Process Room TBD
Maria Nielsen	Show Me What Ya Got: Engagement Strategies to Keep the Pulse on Student Learning Room TBD	The 15-Day Challenge: Simplify and Energize Your PLC at Work Room TBD	Powerful Common Assessments: From Data to Action Room TBD	High-Impact ELA Strategies for Elementary Classrooms Room TBD	Help Your Team: From Hot Mess to On Fire Room TBD

Presenter	Tuesday, June 23		Wednesday, June 24		Thursday, June 25
	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.
Regina Stephens Owens	The <i>Why</i> Effect 2.0: Intentional Systems Produce Inspirational Cultures Room TBD	Inspiring a Culture of Courage and Care Room TBD	Your Physical, Mental, and Relational Wellness: Thriving at Work <i>and</i> at Home!* Room TBD	From Overload to Impact: A Data Discussion for Educators and Instructional Leaders Room TBD	Your Physical, Mental, and Relational Wellness: Thriving at Work <i>and</i> at Home! Room TBD
Steve Pearce	Guiding Coalitions That Drive the PLC Process* Room TBD	Flip My School: Keys to Leadership and Change Room TBD	The Collaborative Team: The Engine That Drives the PLC Process Room TBD	Grow Your Own: Improving Teacher Leadership in a PLC at Work Room TBD	Guiding Coalitions That Drive the PLC Process Room TBD
Anthony R. Reibel	Engaged and Successful Yet Still Dependent: When Good Teaching Is Not Enough* Room TBD	Stop Calling Emotions a Distraction: How Ignoring Them Undermines Learning Room TBD	From Deficit to Capability: Why Proficiency-Based Grading Matters for English Learners Room TBD	If Grading Is Working, Then Why Does Something Still Feel Off? Room TBD	Engaged and Successful Yet Still Dependent: When Good Teaching Is Not Enough Room TBD

Agenda is subject to change.

Session Descriptions—Day 1

MORNING KEYNOTE

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.

MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Anisa Baker-Busby

Coaching the Right Work: Using Collaboration to Drive Learning, Action, and Results

Many schools have collaboration time, but far fewer see the results they expect. In this session, Anisa Baker-Busby examines how coaching can transform collaborative teams into highly effective engines for improvement. Grounded in *The Handbook for Highly Effective Teams in a PLC at Work* (Solution Tree, 2025), participants explore how coaches help teams establish clarity, develop shared norms and goals, engage in collective inquiry, and respond to student learning with urgency. Dr. Baker-Busby highlights how effective coaching supports teams through different stages of learning, fosters a culture of collective responsibility, and ensures collaboration remains focused on student learning rather than activity or compliance. Educators and leaders gain concrete coaching strategies to strengthen team effectiveness and sustain continuous improvement.

Participants can expect to:

- Understand how coaching strengthens collaborative teams by maintaining a focus on learning, action, and results.
- Identify effective coaching practices that support collective inquiry, shared responsibility, and timely response to student learning.
- Determine practical coaching actions to move teams toward sustained effectiveness and continuous improvement.

Brandon Jones

Abandoning Archaic Practices: A Radical Hope for the Next Generation

An archaic practice is defined as any embedded practice that is not leading to higher levels of learning. Our students' values, preferred methods of learning, and factors that motivate them have changed through the years. Has our system for reaching, supporting, and teaching changed with them? Unfortunately, for too many schools, the answer is a resounding no. A typical response is to continue piling more responsibilities and expectations on educators. Instead of learning together and implementing research-backed strategies, we chase the next new program and initiative, hoping it will save the ship from sinking. In doing so, initiative fatigue quickly sets in, and even those with the best intentions begin to act out of rote compliance.

Thankfully, we have the authority and the ability to improve our course of action—to begin prioritizing a limited number of policies and practices that directly improve the motivation, preparation, and learning of our students. To make room for these best strategies, we must also identify and remove the archaic practices that are demotivating students and hindering learning so the healing process in our schools can begin.

Participants can expect to:

- Compare the learning needs of different generations of students.
- Examine a systematic process for identifying, removing, and replacing archaic practices that are not leading to higher levels of learning.
- Explore common archaic practices in leadership, teaching, and learning that, if abandoned, will improve the motivation and preparation of students.

Brig Leane

The PLC Dashboard: The Guide to Implementing and Sustaining the PLC Process

This session is for leaders who are eager to start (or restart) the PLC process back on campus in a way that is focused, will produce quick wins, and will be sustainable for busy educators. Based on his newest book, *The PLC Dashboard* (Solution Tree, 2025), Brig Leane explores exactly what effective teams and singletons should produce and what leaders should monitor. Brig gives leaders a doable roadmap outlining the three keys that guide schools through the PLC process as well as insights into how and why leaders should monitor team progress.

Participants in this session:

- Explore exactly what teams and singletons should produce.
- Learn methods to effectively monitor the PLC process in a low-tech way.
- Examine ways to address resistance.

Cheyana Leiva

Strategic Unit Planning: Aligning to Essential Standards

As Dwight D. Eisenhower said, “Plans are nothing; planning is everything.” Textbooks and resources provide a starting point, but true impact comes from collaboratively creating unit plans that align with essential standards. In this session, Cheyana Leiva guides teams in designing intentional, customized unit plans that prioritize student learning.

Participants in this session:

- Develop a shared understanding of the unit planning process.
- Identify key steps to take before building a unit plan.
- Construct effective unit plans that align with essential learning standards.

Mike Mattos

Developing and Supporting High-Performing Teacher Teams

Teacher teams are the engines of a professional learning community. They are responsible for identifying, teaching, assessing, and intervening on the most essential curriculum that students must learn each year. When teacher teams do the right work really well, student learning thrives. In this session, Mike Mattos provides a step-by-step process for forming, developing, and supporting high-performing teacher teams.

Participants learn how to:

- Form teacher teams and monitor their progress.
- Develop team norms, address violations, and focus teams on the right work.
- Create a tight/loose calendar of team outcomes.

Maria Nielsen

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

Ready to turn up the energy in your classroom? In this session, Maria Nielsen helps teachers move beyond “sit and get” and into lessons where every student is thinking, responding, and showing what they know. Participants explore engaging, easy-to-implement strategies that keep the pulse on student learning from beginning to end.

Participants can expect to:

- Explore the *nifty-nine* high-impact teaching practices.
- Practice engagement strategies that check for understanding in real time.
- Learn the difference between single-response questions, open-ended questions, and engagement prompts.
- Gain ready-to-use ideas that boost participation, spark thinking, and make learning visible

Regina Stephens Owens

The *Why* Effect 2.0: Intentional Systems Produce Inspirational Cultures

Organizational purpose and shared beliefs shape systems at every level. How do we ensure that all practices and procedures are intentional and personify organizational beliefs? It all begins with the *why*. In this session, Regina Stephens Owens offers strategies to design cultures that shift from compliance and coercion to strategies that are caring and compelling.

Participants in this session:

- Identify the roles and responsibilities of the guiding coalition.
- Move from individual to collective commitments.
- Operationalize their culture by translating values into consistent actions.

Steve Pearce

Guiding Coalitions That Drive the PLC Process

Leading the PLC at Work process is not a journey any school leader can—or should—navigate alone. A strong guiding coalition is essential to drive meaningful change and ensure the successful implementation of PLC practices. While many schools have leadership teams, not all operate as true guiding coalitions that actively lead the PLC process. In this session, participants will uncover the transformative power of guiding coalitions and gain practical insights into how to build and sustain them. Learn how to move beyond traditional leadership structures and create a coalition that champions collaborative learning and drives lasting school improvement.

Participants in this session:

- Define what a guiding coalition is and why it is vital to PLC success.
- Identify who should be part of the guiding coalition to maximize influence and impact.
- Explore the essential work guiding coalitions should lead and support to foster a thriving PLC.
- Gain practical strategies to develop, strengthen, and empower your guiding coalition for sustained success.

Anthony R. Reibel

Engaged and Successful Yet Still Dependent: When Good Teaching Is Not Enough

Many classrooms look successful, orderly, engaging, and productive, yet students remain dependent on teachers. Drawing on classroom experience and research, Anthony R. Reibel names a common but rarely addressed problem: instruction that engages students without making them accountable for their own learning. Participants gain a sharper lens for seeing agency in everyday instruction and practical design moves they can apply immediately. Anthony demonstrates how to build classrooms where structure and ownership coexist rather than choosing between control or chaos. The result is learning that no longer depends on teacher management but on students who can think, act, and regulate their learning with purpose.

Participants can expect to:

- Examine why both highly controlled and loosely student-centered classrooms often produce the same outcome—low agency—and what to design for instead.
- Learn clear, observable strategies that shift learning from compliance and activity to ownership, self-regulation, and agency.
- Develop a shared language for identifying agency in practice and concrete moves for strengthening it without sacrificing rigor or structure.

AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Anisa Baker-Busby

Yes We Can—and Must: Building Inclusive PLCs Where Special Education Is Everyone’s Work

When schools truly believe all means *all*, special education becomes a catalyst for stronger Tier 1 instruction, not an endpoint. In this session, Anisa Baker-Busby draws from *Yes We Can!* (Solution Tree, 2016) and *All Means All* (Solution Tree, 2025) to help educators understand how inclusive practices are deeply connected to the PLC at Work process and the four critical questions of learning. Participants explore how collaboration by all for all, standards-focused planning, and intentional instructional scaffolding create access to grade-level learning without lowering expectations. They examine real data trends, practical tools, and reflection protocols to move teams beyond compliance toward collective responsibility for students with disabilities—and improved results for every learner.

Participants can expect to:

- Understand how special education functions as a shared responsibility within PLCs, strengthening Tier 1 instruction and improving results for all students.
- Identify inclusive, standards-aligned practices that ensure access to grade-level learning without lowering expectations.
- Determine actionable next steps to move from compliance-driven practices to collaborative, results-oriented support systems.

Brandon Jones

School Culture That’s Steady in the Storm

Reforming schools to become professional learning communities takes more than managing, meeting, and exchanging mixed messages. It requires that staff examine their culture: the foundational beliefs and behaviors on which they stand. Building (or *rebuilding*) a healthy school culture can seem like a daunting task, especially if significant resistance is encountered early in the change process. It is significantly easier to purchase a new online resource, change the way we dismiss students to the bus line, or schedule themed “dress-up” days than it is to influence the thinking or behaviors of others, which is all the more reason we must learn practical strategies for dropping an anchor in what matters most for our school, staff, and students. In this session,

the work of Anthony Muhammad, Luis Cruz, Rick DuFour, and Brandon Jones is used to create a practical plan for developing a culture that is unshakable.

Participants can expect to:

- Examine how to identify the components of healthy and toxic school cultures.
- Identify the types of beliefs and behaviors in which we should anchor our culture.
- Identify who is responsible for culture development.
- Determine strategies for influencing others to move closer to your desired culture.

Brig Leane

Coaching Teams: Shifting From “What’s Wrong” to “What’s Next”

As an administrator or instructional coach, shifting from individual to team coaching can be a challenge. To do this effectively, you must have clarity on what is expected of teams, know questions to ask that facilitate discussion, and establish ways to monitor team progress. In this session, Brig Leane addresses educational leaders looking to learn how to successfully coach collaborative teams through the PLC process.

Participants in this session:

- Explore the seven-step learning cycle.
- Examine tools to monitor and assess team progress.

Cheyana Leiva

From Numbers to Knowledge: Turning Data Into Actionable Conversations

For years, educators have used data in various forms, yet student outcomes remain unchanged. In this session, Cheyana Leiva explores how the professional learning community process shifts the focus from merely analyzing numbers to engaging in meaningful discussions about student skills, instructional strategies, and actionable steps that drive learning for all students.

Participants in this session:

- Develop a shared understanding of effective data-driven conversations.
- Learn practical strategies to enhance instruction and student achievement through data discussions.

Mike Mattos

The Four Pearls of Effective Interventions

The fundamental purpose of a professional learning community is to ensure high levels of learning for every student. Achieving this goal requires that schools effectively answer the third critical question of a PLC: How will we respond when students don’t learn? In this session, Mike Mattos provides four guiding principles—four pearls—that can make your site interventions more

effective. Participants explore how being a PLC creates the schoolwide processes needed to successfully implement these powerful ideas.

Participants in this session:

- Understand the four pearls to effective interventions.
- Explore examples and tools to implement each pearl.
- Connect the four pearls to the four critical questions of a PLC at Work.

Maria Nielsen

The 15-Day Challenge: Simplify and Energize Your PLC at Work

In this session, Maria Nielsen helps participants establish, reboot, or reignite their collaborative teacher teams. In just 15 days, participants can simplify the work, clarify priorities, and create momentum that leads to real results for students. Schools across the nation and around the world are using this powerful seven-step process to turn collaboration into meaningful action and good intentions into guaranteed results.

Participants in this session:

- Explore real-life scenarios, implement ready-to-use strategies, and clarify the true work of collaborative teams.
- Learn a simple, actionable seven-step process for creating a guaranteed and viable curriculum.
- Gain a clear roadmap, renewed energy, alignment, and next steps to begin the 15-Day Challenge immediately.

Regina Stephens Owens

Educators Are Learners, Too! Stop Telling, Start Teaching

Educators must embrace the mindset that they are learners, too. Participants in this session discover practical strategies to coach professionals toward true competence and promote efficacy and engagement in every learner. Regina Stephens Owens fosters collaboration and confidence as we learn and grow together by monitoring and measuring processes and performance.

Participants in this session:

- Identify systems in need of redesign and intentionally monitor and measure learning processes.
- Learn strategies to sustain professional growth and plan for continuous learning.

Steve Pearce

Flip My School: Keys to Leadership and Change

The research is clear: effective leadership drives meaningful and lasting change. In this session, Steve Pearce shares compelling research on leadership and change alongside real-world

strategies he and his staff implemented as principal of model PLC schools. Participants discover how even struggling schools can transform into thriving, high-performing PLCs where all students succeed. Join Steve to unlock the keys to flipping your school and leading with confidence toward lasting improvement!

Through engaging examples and actionable insights, participants:

- Understand the critical role leadership plays in driving schoolwide change and cultivating a culture of continuous improvement and student-centered success.
- Explore best practices, research-based strategies, and change models to guide leadership decisions and navigate the PLC process.
- Gain practical tools and proven methods that foster sustainable transformation.

Anthony R. Reibel

Stop Calling Emotions a Distraction: How Ignoring Them Undermines Learning

For decades, schools have treated emotion as something to manage, minimize, or remove from academics, believing it interferes with learning and focus. However, research indicates that emotion drives attention, understanding, memory, and self-efficacy. In this session, Anthony R. Reibel challenges the myth of neutral learning and explains why ignoring emotion undermines rigor, equity, and accuracy. Drawing from relevant research and experience, Anthony reframes emotion as something to embrace in classroom learning.

Participants can expect to:

- Explore how students are emotionally evaluating every cognitive move they make.
- How instruction and assessment that ignore emotion distort learning, performance, and equity.
- Gain practical strategies to design learning and assessment that leverage emotion to increase understanding, agency, and achievement without lowering expectations or rigor.

AFTERNOON KEYNOTE

Brig Leane

The Power of Shared Leadership

A key strategy to starting and sustaining the PLC process is establishing an effective guiding coalition of administrators and teacher leaders. In this interactive keynote, Brig Leane provides practical guidance to learn what a guiding coalition is, how everyone at school can contribute, and who should (and shouldn't) be on the guiding coalition, so that each participant can positively impact school culture through shared leadership.

Participants in this session:

- Examine the purpose and tasks of the guiding coalition.
- Learn how to respond to negativity.
- Develop actionable next steps.

Session Descriptions—Day 2

KEYNOTE

Brandon Jones

The keystones of Exceptional Schools

A *keystone* is defined as a central principle of a larger system that holds everything else together. In a time when our students need us the most, educators face more challenges than ever before. Rapidly changing expectations, expanding needs, and stress are leading many teachers and administrators to feel the mountains in front of them are just too tall to climb. Yet, in spite of the difficulties, you are here. Something in you knows better times are possible—for you and for the kids you serve. What critical tenets will pull it all together, solidify, and sustain the seemingly brittle system? Thankfully, there is resounding hope for you, your colleagues, and your community of learners!

In this session, Brandon Jones outlines critical components that high-functioning professional learning communities put in place to become the schools they were meant to be. Together, we stand—resolute!

MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Anisa Baker-Busby

Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Building the Elementary Intervention-Ready PLC

Too many schools try to close gaps by adding programs without first building the prerequisites that make intervention and enrichment actually work. Participants in this session learn how to lay the groundwork for effective intervention by organizing team routines around the right work: essential learning, clear success criteria, and frequent common formative assessments (CFAs) that produce data teams can act on quickly. Participants gain a clear picture of what an intervention-ready team does *before* students struggle, and how to create a culture where learning is the constant and time and support become the variables so they can truly raise the bar and close the gap.

Participants in this session:

- Identify essentials and break them into measurable learning targets.
- Define what proficiency looks like so the bar is the same for every student.
- Plan weekly CFAs and use a quick data protocol to respond with targeted support.
- Align pacing and intentionally plan days for intervention and extension without pulling students from new instruction.
- Ensure every learner, including students with disabilities, has consistent access to grade-level rigor by using a team-based “rigor audit” mindset.

Brandon Jones

Develop Without Defeating: Supporting One Another in Continuous Improvement

We as educators recognize the need for well-timed connection and constructive feedback from colleagues. We've all also, most likely, been part of a coaching interaction that left us more frustrated than encouraged to press on. As we embark on the journey to become a professional learning community, we engage in a neverending cycle of continuous improvement. During this cycle, we will each have opportunities to coach others in an effort to perfect our craft and get better results for the students we serve. We must do so in a way that edifies one another and improves our individual and collective efficacy. Most of us entered this profession to teach children, but it never even occurred to us that we would, at times, teach our colleagues as well. As John Gardner said, "Every great leader is teaching, and every great teacher is leading."

Participants can expect to:

- Consider the critical needs of the adult learner.
- Determine best practices for coaching colleagues.
- Analyze common pitfalls of coaching and support.
- Examine a practical cycle of improvement and support for one another.

Brig Leane

Classroom and Instructional Management: Foundations for Student Learning

Before expecting students to learn at high levels, teachers must have effective classroom management. This fundamental session is designed for participants to learn practical techniques to organize and arrange classroom experiences while building relationships to foster student learning. Participants learn how procedures and rules differ and how both are critical to a learning-focused classroom. Brig Leane explains how readily available technologies can help organize and manage instruction.

Participants in this session:

- Explore classroom management approaches, skills, and strategies.
- Examine how Google Slides and PowerPoint promote effective instructional management.

Cheyana Leiva

Empowering the Leadership Team to Support the PLC Process

Change cannot happen in isolation. As John P. Kotter suggests, leadership alone is not enough; systemic change requires a strong team. In this session, Cheyana Leiva focuses on establishing and empowering a guiding coalition of teacher leaders and administrators to drive and sustain the professional learning community process effectively.

Participants in this session:

- Identify the traits of effective guiding coalition members.

- Implement action steps to strengthen PLC work through collaborative leadership.
- Determine key milestones and celebrations to sustain momentum.

Mike Mattos

Beyond Study Halls and Special Education: Tackling the Logistics of Secondary Systematic Interventions

Providing systematic supports—where students can receive the collective expertise of the entire staff—requires dedicated intervention time within a school’s master schedule. At the secondary level, scheduling time at Tier 2 is relatively easy—it is the process virtually every middle/high school does to create an “assembly” schedule. The real obstacles begin when the staff considers the logistics of having potentially hundreds of students transitioning to specific interventions.

Critical questions arise, such as:

- How do we determine what interventions to offer?
- How do we assign staff?
- How do we transition students to the correct help sessions?
- What if students need help in more than one course?
- How do we hold students accountable to attend?
- What do we do for students who don’t need extra help?

In this session, Mike Mattos explores specific processes that work—and don’t work—when creating and targeting secondary interventions.

Maria Nielsen

Powerful Common Assessments: From Data to Action

Common formative assessments are a powerful way to improve both student learning and teaching practice. When teacher teams create assessments together, review results collectively, and adjust instruction based on evidence, student achievement increases. This process strengthens alignment, builds clarity around mastery of essential standards, and turns data into meaningful action.

Participants in this session:

- Reflect on and strengthen current formative assessment practices.
- Gain practical tools to improve student and adult learning.
- Learn simple strategies for analyzing data and responding to individual student needs.

Regina Stephens Owens

Your Physical, Mental, and Relational 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. Developing the relationship and wellness skills necessary to be part of an effective PLC at Work team takes its toll physically, mentally, and emotionally. The PLC life is one

of “emotional and relational labor.” It is easy to experience fatigue from the daily noise and intense, often quick-changing expectations of the educator’s work life.

Participants in this session use the Wellness Solutions for Educators™ framework (co-authored by Dr. Timothy D. Kanold and Dr. Tina H. Boogren) to take a deep dive into the physical, mental, and relational wellness challenges that exist in the daily PLC life of an educator. Participants explore specific strategies for renewing the daily energy required to positively impact their students and colleagues. Participants are (re)invigorated, (re)inspired, and (re)connected to the benefits of a sustainable, joyful, and thriving home and PLC work life.

Participants can expect to:

- Discover brain research associated with their physical, mental, emotional, and social wellness.
- Consider concrete strategies for renewing their energy and incorporating wellness routines into daily life.
- Explore concrete strategies for reducing and avoiding the daily exhaustion of the educator’s life.
- Learn mindfulness routines that build collaborative relationships and joy routines that stick.
- Learn how to choose a daily well-balanced professional and personal life.

Steve Pearce

The Collaborative Team: The Engine That Drives the PLC Process

The true power behind the PLC at Work framework lies in the hands of collaborative teams working together to achieve shared goals. Participants in this session explore why these teams are the driving force of transformative change and how to harness their potential for maximum impact. Steve Pearce guides participants through practical strategies that empower teams to focus on the right work, implement meaningful protocols, and produce results that drive student success. Participants discover how to navigate conflict constructively and develop a model collaborative team that can inspire and lead others.

Participants in this session:

- Explore practical protocols and products that foster productive collaboration and tangible outcomes.
- Gain tools to manage and resolve conflict within teams, strengthening relationships and effectiveness.
- Discover the characteristics of model collaborative teams and how to cultivate them in their school.

Anthony R. Reibel

From Deficit to Capability: Why Proficiency-Based Grading Matters for English Learners

Traditional grading often frames English learners (ELs) by what they lack, leading to inaccurate grades, premature Tier 2 placement, and distorted senses of self. In this session, Anthony R. Reibel examines how a proficiency-based grading model shifts evaluation from deficit to asset and clarifies what ELs can do, thereby strengthening Tier 1 instruction and improving assessment quality, instructional support, and feedback. Anthony explores how proficiency-based grading aligned to proficiency scales produces clearer evidence of learning, builds student agency, and increases instructional trust. Rather than lowering expectations, this approach raises them, resulting in more accurate, defensible grades and more responsive support for ELs. Participants explore practical shifts that replace guesswork and deficit thinking with evidence, precision, and trust, resulting in better instruction, better interventions, and grades that finally reflect what ELs know and can do.

Participants explore how to:

- Design better, more varied assessments that reveal language proficiency without masking content understanding.
- Avoid learned helplessness by increasing trust in ELs' capacity and agency.
- Make grading more accurate, transparent, and instructionally useful for ELs.

AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Anisa Baker-Busby

Assessment With Purpose: Using Common Formative Assessments to Fuel PLC Impact

Effective professional learning communities don't just give assessments, they use them. In this session, Anisa Baker-Busby focuses on how collaborative teams design and use common formative assessments (CFAs) as powerful sources of information rather than compliance checkpoints. Using the *Design in Five* framework, participants learn how to clarify expectations for learning, craft intentional assessment plans, and analyze evidence by student and standard to guide collective action. This session is ideal for teachers, coaches, and leaders committed to strengthening collaboration, precision, and results.

Participants can expect to:

- Clarify the role of CFAs in answering the four critical questions of a PLC and driving collective action.
- Use the *Design in Five* framework to design and refine CFAs aligned to essential standards and learning progressions.
- Identify team and leadership practices that strengthen consistent, high-impact CFA use within PLCs.

Brandon Jones

School Culture That's Steady in the Storm

Reforming schools to become professional learning communities takes more than managing, meeting, and exchanging mixed messages. It requires that staff examine their culture: the foundational beliefs and behaviors on which they stand. Building (or *rebuilding*) a healthy school culture can seem like a daunting task, especially if significant resistance is encountered early in the change process. It is significantly easier to purchase a new online resource, change the way we dismiss students to the bus line, or schedule themed “dress-up” days than it is to influence the thinking or behaviors of others, which is all the more reason we must learn practical strategies for dropping an anchor in what matters most for our school, staff, and students. In this session, the work of Anthony Muhammad, Luis Cruz, Rick DuFour, and Brandon Jones is used to create a practical plan for developing a culture that is unshakable.

Participants can expect to:

- Examine how to identify the components of healthy and toxic school cultures.
- Identify the types of beliefs and behaviors in which we should anchor our culture.
- Identify who is responsible for culture development.
- Determine strategies for influencing others to move closer to your desired culture.

Brig Leane

Singletons: Finding Meaningful Collaboration When You Are a Team of One

How does the only music, art, CTE, AP, departmentalized elementary teacher, or any other singleton teacher effectively participate in the PLC process like the teachers who teach the same course or subject? Based on Brig Leane's book, *Singletons in a PLC at Work* (Solution Tree, 2022), both singletons and administrators will be provided clear direction to engage in powerful and meaningful collaboration. Participants will receive tools and templates they can immediately utilize to ensure singletons don't waste their time coblaborating.

Participants in this session:

- Examine several keys to meaningful collaboration.
- Examine the three on-ramps for singletons to develop meaningful collaboration.

Cheyana Leiva

Making Instruction Explicit in the PLC Process

In a PLC at Work, instruction is not a separate conversation; it is embedded in every aspect of the collaborative process. As teams engage in the four critical questions of a PLC—clarifying essential learning, monitoring student progress, and responding through intervention or extension—they must make intentional instructional decisions that directly impact student outcomes. In this session, Cheyana Leiva focuses on helping leaders and collaborative teams make instructional practice visible, intentional, and actionable within PLC conversations. Participants learn how to

ensure teams consistently connect instructional practices to prevention, intervention, and acceleration so collaboration results in improved teaching and learning.

Participants in this session:

- Build shared understanding of how instruction is embedded within the PLC process.
- Strengthen the connection between instruction, collaboration, and student results.
- Align instructional practices to ensure student success.

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, some students will need support mastering the behaviors to succeed in school and beyond. Every school knows this universal truth, but many schools lack the systematic processes needed to achieve this outcome. In this session, Mike Mattos demonstrates how a school can leverage the four critical questions of the PLC at Work process to identify, teach, assess, and intervene when students lack essential academic and social behaviors.

Participants in this session:

- Create the right mindset for teaching behavior.
- Learn how the entire school—the entire PLC—must work together to teach essential behaviors.
- Consider systematic, tiered supports to target behavior interventions.

Maria Nielsen

High-Impact ELA Strategies for Elementary Classrooms

In this session, Maria Nielsen guides elementary educators through time-tested ELA strategies that make standards clear and instruction intentional. Teachers explore how reading and writing work hand in hand to deepen comprehension and ensure on-grade-level reading.

Participants in this session:

- Practice five proven reading strategies that boost reading fluency and comprehension.
- Understand how reading and writing connect to accelerate learning.
- Leave with practical tools and graphic organizers to support student writing.

Regina Stephens Owens

From Overload to Impact: A Data Discussion for Educators and Instructional Leaders

In a time of intense focus on data, it's essential to build a rich culture of learning through dialogue and data, shifting from deficit thinking to a data mindset. Participants in this session discover practical ways to foster this culture, leverage varied data types, and boost team capacity

for high levels of learning for all. Regina Stephens Owens equips instructional leaders to turn data into a catalyst for continuous growth and impact.

Participants learn:

- How we think with data to uncover insights and possibilities
- How we organize and access data for seamless use
- How we act on data in real time through decisions, shifts, and interventions

Steve Pearce

Grow Your Own: Improving Teacher Leadership in a PLC at Work

Participants in this session explore how a school district leveraged intentional professional learning to expand teacher leadership and align instructional practices with its strategic plan. Steve Pearce examines a cohort-based internal university model designed to build educator capacity and improve student outcomes. Participants reflect on their own systems for adult learning and leave with actionable strategies and structures that can be applied immediately in their own contexts.

Participants in this session:

- Develop a shared vision for teacher leadership and understand its impact on teachers, teams, and schoolwide improvement.
- Examine a district's cohort-based internal learning model and identify practices that can be adapted to strengthen adult learning systems.
- Initiate next steps and assume collective responsibility for improving teaching and learning aligned to their district's strategic goals.

Anthony R. Reibel

If Grading Is Working, Then Why Does Something Still Feel Off?

Many educators have done everything they were told to do, such as eliminating zeros, aligning standards, using rubrics, and reassessing students; yet, grading still feels unfair, inconsistent, and exhausting. Traditional grading doesn't work, but for many, standards-based grading hasn't delivered the clarity or trust it promised either. In this session, Anthony R. Reibel addresses this frustration openly and offers an alternative perspective. Drawing from relevant research and experience, participants examine why most grading systems fail at accurately evaluating learning. They discover how averages, points, and even rigid proficiency rules introduce noise, distort growth, and push teachers to hide behind formulas instead of professional judgment, mode, and trend. Participants learn specific, manageable changes they can implement immediately to restore trust, accuracy, and sanity to grading.

Using real classroom cases and research-aligned practices, participants explore:

- How evidence-based models create clearer, more defensible pictures of learning than traditional and standards-based models
- Why human judgment, when structured, is more reliable than traditional grading practices
- How calibration and inter-rater reliability reduce bias and teacher stress
- Why grade disputes drop when grades are grounded in evidence instead of averages

Session Descriptions—Day 3

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Anisa Baker-Busby

Coaching the Right Work: Using Collaboration to Drive Learning, Action, and Results

Many schools have collaboration time, but far fewer see the results they expect. In this session, Anisa Baker-Busby examines how coaching can transform collaborative teams into highly effective engines for improvement. Grounded in *The Handbook for Highly Effective Teams in a PLC at Work* (Solution Tree, 2025), participants explore how coaches help teams establish clarity, develop shared norms and goals, engage in collective inquiry, and respond to student learning with urgency. Dr. Baker-Busby highlights how effective coaching supports teams through different stages of learning, fosters a culture of collective responsibility, and ensures collaboration remains focused on student learning rather than activity or compliance. Educators and leaders gain concrete coaching strategies to strengthen team effectiveness and sustain continuous improvement.

Participants can expect to:

- Understand how coaching strengthens collaborative teams by maintaining a focus on learning, action, and results.
- Identify effective coaching practices that support collective inquiry, shared responsibility, and timely response to student learning.
- Determine practical coaching actions to move teams toward sustained effectiveness and continuous improvement.

Brandon Jones

Abandoning Archaic Practices: A Radical Hope for the Next Generation

An archaic practice is defined as any embedded practice that is not leading to higher levels of learning. Our students' values, preferred methods of learning, and factors that motivate them have changed through the years. Has our system for reaching, supporting, and teaching changed with them? Unfortunately, for too many schools, the answer is a resounding no. A typical response is to continue piling more responsibilities and expectations on educators. Instead of learning together and implementing research-backed strategies, we chase the next new program and initiative, hoping it will save the ship from sinking. In doing so, initiative fatigue quickly sets in, and even those with the best intentions begin to act out of rote compliance.

Thankfully, we have the authority and the ability to improve our course of action—to begin prioritizing a limited number of policies and practices that directly improve the motivation, preparation, and learning of our students. To make room for these best strategies, we must also

identify and remove the archaic practices that are demotivating students and hindering learning so the healing process in our schools can begin.

Participants can expect to:

- Compare the learning needs of different generations of students.
- Examine a systematic process for identifying, removing, and replacing archaic practices that are not leading to higher levels of learning.
- Explore common archaic practices in leadership, teaching, and learning that, if abandoned, will improve the motivation and preparation of students.

Brig Leane

The PLC Dashboard: The Guide to Implementing and Sustaining the PLC Process

This session is for leaders who are eager to start (or restart) the PLC process back on campus in a way that is focused, will produce quick wins, and will be sustainable for busy educators. Based on his newest book, *The PLC Dashboard* (Solution Tree, 2025), Brig Leane explores exactly what effective teams and singletons should produce and what leaders should monitor. Brig gives leaders a doable roadmap outlining the three keys that guide schools through the PLC process as well as insights into how and why leaders should monitor team progress.

Participants in this session:

- Explore exactly what teams and singletons should produce.
- Learn methods to effectively monitor the PLC process in a low-tech way.
- Examine ways to address resistance.

Cheyana Leiva

Making Instruction Explicit in the PLC Process

In a PLC at Work, instruction is not a separate conversation; it is embedded in every aspect of the collaborative process. As teams engage in the four critical questions of a PLC—clarifying essential learning, monitoring student progress, and responding through intervention or extension—they must make intentional instructional decisions that directly impact student outcomes. In this session, Cheyana Leiva focuses on helping leaders and collaborative teams make instructional practice visible, intentional, and actionable within PLC conversations. Participants learn how to ensure teams consistently connect instructional practices to prevention, intervention, and acceleration so collaboration results in improved teaching and learning.

Participants in this session:

- Build shared understanding of how instruction is embedded within the PLC process.
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- Align instructional practices to ensure student success.

Mike Mattos

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

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

Participants learn how to:

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

Maria Nielsen

Help Your Team: From Hot Mess to On Fire

Every team hits a rough patch. The question is — what happens next?

As teachers move toward becoming truly interdependent teams, challenges are inevitable. This engaging session helps educators recognize common team struggles and shift their thinking and practices to ensure high levels of learning for every student. Participants examine the habits of highly effective teams, analyze real-world scenarios, and identify clear strategies to move their team forward with purpose and momentum.

Participants in this session:

- Identify common challenges that limit a team’s effectiveness.
- Develop strategies to address obstacles through norms, breach of norms, and collective commitments.
- Leave with practical tools and renewed confidence to move your team from stuck to strong — and from hot mess to on fire.

Regina Stephens Owens

Your Physical, Mental, and Relational 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. Developing the relationship and wellness skills necessary to be part of an effective PLC at Work team takes its toll physically, mentally, and emotionally. The PLC life is one of “emotional and relational labor.” It is easy to experience fatigue from the daily noise and intense, often quick-changing expectations of the educator’s work life.

Participants in this session use the Wellness Solutions for Educators™ framework (co-authored by Dr. Timothy D. Kanold and Dr. Tina H. Boogren) to take a deep dive into the physical, mental, and relational wellness challenges that exist in the daily PLC life of an educator. Participants explore specific strategies for renewing the daily energy required to positively impact their students and

colleagues. Participants are (re)invigorated, (re)inspired, and (re)connected to the benefits of a sustainable, joyful, and thriving home and PLC work life.

Participants can expect to:

- Discover brain research associated with their physical, mental, emotional, and social wellness.
- Consider concrete strategies for renewing their energy and incorporating wellness routines into daily life.
- Explore concrete strategies for reducing and avoiding the daily exhaustion of the educator's life.
- Learn mindfulness routines that build collaborative relationships and joy routines that stick.
- Learn how to choose a daily well-balanced professional and personal life.

Steve Pearce

Guiding Coalitions That Drive the PLC Process

Leading the PLC at Work process is not a journey any school leader can—or should—navigate alone. A strong guiding coalition is essential to drive meaningful change and ensure the successful implementation of PLC practices. While many schools have leadership teams, not all operate as true guiding coalitions that actively lead the PLC process. In this session, participants will uncover the transformative power of guiding coalitions and gain practical insights into how to build and sustain them. Learn how to move beyond traditional leadership structures and create a coalition that champions collaborative learning and drives lasting school improvement.

Participants in this session:

- Define what a guiding coalition is and why it is vital to PLC success.
- Identify who should be part of the guiding coalition to maximize influence and impact.
- Explore the essential work guiding coalitions should lead and support to foster a thriving PLC.
- Gain practical strategies to develop, strengthen, and empower your guiding coalition for sustained success.

Anthony R. Reibel

Engaged and Successful Yet Still Dependent: When Good Teaching Is Not Enough

Many classrooms look successful, orderly, engaging, and productive, yet students remain dependent on teachers. Drawing on classroom experience and research, Anthony R. Reibel names a common but rarely addressed problem: instruction that engages students without making them accountable for their own learning. Participants gain a sharper lens for seeing agency in everyday instruction and practical design moves they can apply immediately. Anthony demonstrates how to build classrooms where structure and ownership coexist rather than

choosing between control or chaos. The result is learning that no longer depends on teacher management but on students who can think, act, and regulate their learning with purpose.

Participants can expect to:

- Examine why both highly controlled and loosely student-centered classrooms often produce the same outcome—low agency—and what to design for instead.
- Learn clear, observable strategies that shift learning from compliance and activity to ownership, self-regulation, and agency.
- Develop a shared language for identifying agency in practice and concrete moves for strengthening it without sacrificing rigor or structure.

KEYNOTE

Regina Stephens Owens

Courageous Capacity: Sustaining a Culture of Care and Competency

This session is a reset for educators and leaders who care deeply and are ready to move from running on empty to growing with renewed energy and hope. Participants explore how everyday choices—not perfection or heroics—can create cultures where people feel seen, supported, and equipped to sustain learning. Participants examine adult learning through the lens of competence as an act of care and discover how growing and sustaining their skills and continuous learning become powerful ways to show care for themselves, others, and their communities.

Participants learn how to:

- Design systems that support well-being and help everyone grow.
- Foster a sense of value, connection, and support for every adult.
- Encourage risk-taking to build bold capacity and transform learning.