Monday, August 3

6:30–8:00 a.m.	Registration and Continental Breakfast	Rooms TBD
8:00–9:45 a.m.	**Keynote**—Mike Mattos *All In! Digging Deeper Into Becoming a True Professional Learning Community*	
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**—Maria Nielsen *Coming soon!*	

Tuesday, August 4

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Registration and Continental Breakfast	Rooms TBD
8:00–9:45 a.m.	**Keynote**—Anthony Muhammad *Transforming School Culture 2.0: Why Culture Is Important Today, Tomorrow, and Forever*	
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.	

Wednesday, August 5

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**—Luis F. Cruz *Resistance Is a Natural Byproduct of Implementing PLCs: How to Confront It and Win*	

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	Monday, August 3		Tuesday, August 4		Wednesday, August 5
	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.
Luis F. Cruz	Breaking Through the Initialisms: Connecting PLC and RTI to Ensure High-Quality Learning for Every Student* Room TBD	Tears in the Tiers: Addressing Neglected Essential Actions During RTI at Work Implementation Room TBD	Embracing English Language Development and Supporting Bilingual Students With the PLC Process Room TBD	Breaking Through the Initialisms: Connecting PLC and RTI to Ensure High-Quality Learning for Every Student Room TBD	Knowledge Is Not Power Until It Is Applied: Turning Your PLC Institute Experience Into Action Room TBD
Sharon V. Kramer	First Best Instruction: Prevention Before Intervention Room TBD	Ignite a New Era of Instruction Through Accelerated Learning* Room TBD	Differentiate to Accelerate, But How?* Room TBD	Ignite a New Era of Instruction Through Accelerated Learning Room TBD	Differentiate to Accelerate, But How? 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	The Best Intervention Is Prevention: Planning Proactive Supports Room TBD
Maria Nielsen	*Coming soon!* Room TBD	*Coming soon!* Room TBD	*Coming soon!* Room TBD	*Coming soon!* Room TBD	*Coming soon!* Room TBD
Regina Stephens Owens	The *Why* Effect 2.0: Intentional Systems Produce Inspirational Cultures 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 *and* at Home! Room TBD	Different by Design: Small, Virtual, Innovative, and Singleton PLCs Room TBD	Educators Are Learners, Too! Stop Telling, Start Teaching Room TBD

Presenter	Monday, August 3		Tuesday, August 4		Wednesday, August 5
	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.
Michael Roberts	Being the Educator Sherpa: Leading PLCs from the Classroom, Front Office, and District Office Room TBD	What We Say Matters: The Language of Possibility Room TBD	The Data Session for People Who Don't Like Data and Those Who Want to Use It Better Room TBD	Enriching the Learning: Answering Question Four by Building Meaningful Extensions Room TBD	Shifting From Me to We: Jumpstarting PLCs Room TBD
Jeanne Spiller	From Standards to Learning Progressions Room TBD	The Path to Better Results: Quality Instruction, Focused Teams, and Targeted Supports Room TBD	Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Elementary Schools Room TBD	Leading From the Central Office: Anchor, Amplify, and Accelerate PLC Work Room TBD	All Means All: Mindsets and Moves That Elevate Every Learner Room TBD
Mona Toncheff	Together We Can Accelerate Student Learning to Grade Level and Beyond Room TBD	Making Learning Visible: Learning Targets as the Heart of a Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum Room TBD	Math Success for All: Tier 1 and Tier 2 Instruction That Works Room TBD	Activating the Keys of Formative Assessment to Create a Culture of Learning Room TBD	From Scores to Learning: Effective Grading Practices 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

Luis F. Cruz

Breaking Through the Initialisms: Connecting PLC and RTI to Ensure High-Quality Learning for Every Student
In the world of education, initialisms like PLC and RTI often come with the promise of improving student outcomes, but they can also lead to confusion when educators struggle to see how these frameworks fit together. In this session, Luis F. Cruz, coauthor of *Taking Action: A Handbook for the RTI at Work Process,* 2nd ed. (Solution Tree, 2024), guides participants in making sense of the many initialisms and how they align to create a unified, student-centered approach. Participants leave with a clear understanding of how to connect the dots between PLC and RTI, ensuring a coherent strategy that supports all students in reaching their highest levels of learning.

Participants in this session:
- Understand how multitiered systems of support (MTSS) complement and strengthen the PLC process, creating a seamless system of support for all students.
- Explore how a guaranteed and viable curriculum is essential in developing common formative assessments (CFAs), and how this foundation supports the effectiveness of MTSS.
- Participate in an interactive activity designed for immediate application, enabling them to support and share the learning with colleagues who were unable to attend.

Sharon V. Kramer

First Best Instruction: Prevention Before Intervention

The most effective intervention is the one that never has to happen. In this session, Sharon Kramer dives into the power of first best instruction. Learn how to design Tier 1 lessons that are robust enough to meet the needs of diverse learners from the start. Stop playing catch-up and start leading with instruction that sticks.

Participants examine:
- The essential elements of effective scaffolding
- The role of check-for-understanding cycles
- How to create an instructional environment where prevention is the priority

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.

Anthony Muhammad

All Hands on Deck! Keys to Building a Collaborative Culture

In this session, Anthony Muhammad addresses the cornerstone of the PLC process: collaboration. Learn how teachers, support staff, school administration, and central office all work together to improve school learning. Dr. Muhammad discusses alignment and coherence at every level of the system, including two key areas: creating a culture of collaboration and how to create an environment where people embrace collective responsibility.

Participants can expect to:
- Learn how to construct and protect productive collaborative relationships.
- Understand how to create organizational coherence and ensure collaboration at every level of the school community.
- Grasp the importance of cooperation over power or authority.

Maria Nielsen

Coming soon!

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.

Michael Roberts

Being the Educator Sherpa: Leading PLCs from the Classroom, Front Office, and District Office

Success is never linear. Like the Sherpa people of the Himalayas who are hired to get climbers to the top of the world's highest mountains, building and leading a professional learning community is never easy. It does not matter if one is a classroom teacher, coach, or facility or district administrator, building a lasting collaborative culture often feels like two steps forward and one step backward. Not only is this feeling okay, but it should be expected. Michael Roberts discusses the importance of supporting fellow educators through the difficult times that can be expected and those that come as a surprise.

Participants in this session discover:
- How to assess where they are on their PLC journey and how to plot the route they will take to improve collaborative processes and outcomes
- The importance of expecting educators to progress at different paces when it comes to collaborating and supporting peers and staff through those progressions without lowering expectations for collaborative success

Jeanne Spiller

From Standards to Learning Progressions

In this session, Jeanne Spiller guides educators through a practical process for converting standards into clear, sequenced learning progressions. Participants examine the essential knowledge and skills within a standard and map the steps students take toward proficiency.

Jeanne highlights how transparent learning pathways strengthen planning, instruction, and shared expectations.

Participants in this session:
- Analyze a standard to determine the key knowledge and skills students must develop.
- Create a concise learning progression outlining the pathway to proficiency.
- Identify aligned evidence that informs instructional decisions at each step.

Mona Toncheff

Together We Can Accelerate Student Learning to Grade Level and Beyond

Acceleration is not about moving faster. It is about ensuring all students engage in meaningful, grade-level content while receiving the support they need to be successful. Participants in this session examine the underlying meaning of acceleration for all and the mindsets that influence how schools respond to unfinished learning. They explore the differences between remediation and acceleration, identify common challenges that limit access to grade-level learning, and consider how instructional and leadership decisions can either reinforce or disrupt these gap-creating patterns.

Participants in this session:
- Identify which of the six acceleration mindsets most closely reflects current school practices and which must still be addressed.
- Determine specific actions teams can take to shift toward an acceleration model focusing on giving all students access to grade-level learning.

AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Luis F. Cruz

Tears in the Tiers: Addressing Neglected Essential Actions During RTI at Work Implementation

Through the RTI at Work process, staff members must commit to essential actions across the three tiers. Sometimes educators neglect key steps and weaken interventions that students need. Luis F. Cruz shares steps that teachers often ignore or bypass. He describes the ill effects and how to avoid them by adhering to all actions in the RTI at Work process.

Sharon V. Kramer

Ignite a New Era of Instruction Through Accelerated Learning

Despite countless articles, blogs, podcasts, and conferences, progress remains elusive in closing the achievement gap and increasing student learning. This isn't due to a lack of effort but a flawed approach. Remediation, the traditional strategy, holds students back. Instead, we need acceleration—a model that empowers *all* students to reach grade level and beyond.

Participants discover:
- Why acceleration works and how it can transform their classroom
- How to build on your students' existing knowledge and skills
- Actionable steps you can take tomorrow to accelerate learning for all

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.

Anthony Muhammad

Improving Professional Practice to Advance Student Learning

A PLC collaborates to improve student learning by stimulating professional learning. Many schools do not consider the learning for professionals as sacred as student learning. The PLC process operates under the assumption that adult learning is the catalyst for student learning. In this session, Anthony Muhammad introduces a process that will allow each school designing ongoing professional learning to support their professionals, which translates into greater performance for students.

Participants can expect to:
- Analyze a comprehensive set of data to identify areas for growth.
- Produce an effective and efficient professional learning system for educators.
- Generate a culture of intellectualism.

Maria Nielsen

Coming soon!

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

Michael Roberts

What We Say Matters: The Language of Possibility
Many educators talk negatively about students and peers, and if those people are ever called on the language, they respond that it does not mean anything; they are just "blowing off steam." Michael Roberts shows that language does matter. Participants are introduced to brain anatomy and how that anatomy can make some people hold an inherently negative bias and how that bias can be modified.

Participants in this session:
- Gain an understanding of how one's language can negatively affect expectations for students' achievement.
- Explore how word choice reveals implicit biases and why those biases need to be addressed.
- Acquire some skills for addressing colleagues who use negative language when discussing students and peers.

Jeanne Spiller

The Path to Better Results: Quality Instruction, Focused Teams, and Targeted Supports
School improvement accelerates when teams strengthen what matters most: high-quality Tier 1 instruction, a disciplined PLC process, and intentional, targeted intervention systems. In this session, Jeanne Spiller equips educators with practical tools to tighten instructional practice, collaborate with greater focus, and respond strategically to student learning needs. Participants learn clear actions they can take in the next thirty days to drive measurable, schoolwide improvement.

Participants in this session:
- Strengthen Tier 1 instruction by identifying and implementing high-leverage practices that improve student learning immediately.
- Use the PLC process to analyze evidence, make timely instructional adjustments, and drive team action.

- Build or refine an intentional intervention system that targets essential needs and accelerates student progress.

Mona Toncheff

Making Learning Visible: Learning Targets as the Heart of a Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum

A textbook or a standards document alone is not a guaranteed and viable curriculum. A curriculum becomes guaranteed when every teacher, team, and student understands the learning targets and success criteria for the essential standards. The curriculum is viable when it is possible for all students to learn the essential standards in the school year.

In this session, Mona Toncheff focuses on strengthening the first critical PLC question: What do we want students to learn? Participants learn how to support teams with unpacking standards into clear, student-friendly learning targets that make expectations transparent and actionable for both students and teachers. Mona models practical tools and protocols for unpacking standards, refining learning targets, and developing success criteria that ensure a guaranteed and viable curriculum at all levels.

Participants in this session:
- Examine how to translate standards into daily learning targets that reflect the full intent and rigor of the standard.
- Explore how well-defined success criteria clarify what proficiency looks like and how it supports consistent instruction and assessment.
- Identify ways learning targets and success criteria empower students to monitor, reflect on, and take ownership of their learning.

AFTERNOON KEYNOTE

Maria Nielsen

Coming soon!

Session Descriptions—Day 2

KEYNOTE

Anthony Muhammad

Transforming School Culture 2.0: Why Culture Is Important Today, Tomorrow, and Forever
This decade has proven that there is only one constant, and that constant is change. We have experienced a global pandemic and different political parties leading the government. Despite all this change, children still need to be educated, and the best way to educate them, regardless of external dynamics, is to operate as a professional learning community. Schools that create healthy, strong cultures produce an environment where PLCs can thrive. Participants in this session explore why a focus on healthy school culture is timeless and why it is our responsibility to create a learning-focused environment today, tomorrow, and forever.

Participants in this session:
- Understand the contemporary factors that impact school culture and why these challenges must be addressed effectively.
- Understand the interdependent relationship between professional habits, behaviors, and student learning.
- Learn practical ways to improve their school culture immediately in the pursuit of PLC greatness.

MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Luis F. Cruz

Embracing English Language Development and Supporting Bilingual Students With the PLC Process
While research consistently shows that the PLC process is effective in helping all students achieve at high levels, educators must make intentional adjustments to meet the needs of diverse learners—especially those acquiring English as an additional language. In addition, educators must collectively contribute to English language development by embracing both designated and integrated ELD instructional approaches. In this session, Luis F. Cruz shares his expertise in both the PLC process and working with English learners to equip participants with strategies for ensuring these students thrive within the PLC framework.

Participants in this session:
- Discover how to adapt key components of the PLC process to promote academic success for emergent bilingual students, ensuring equitable learning opportunities for all.
- Learn how to differentiate between designated and integrated instruction to continuously develop the English language for students learning English as an additional language.

Sharon V. Kramer

Differentiate to Accelerate, But How?

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

Participants in this session:
- Learn the difference between *proactive* and *reactive* differentiation.
- Understand how a team develops a learning plan that includes differentiation before, during, and after instruction.

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.

Anthony Muhammad

"So, How Do We Get Buy-In?" Leveraging the Guiding Coalition to Build Consensus

In his 25 years as a PLC leader, the question Anthony Muhammad gets most often is: How do we get buy-in? In this session, Dr. Muhammad provides research guidance on responding to resistance and strategically building consensus for the PLC at Work process. Participants in this session lean on the change management framework presented in *Time for Change: Four Essential Skills for Transformational School and District Leaders* (Solution Tree, 2019) coauthored by Anthony Muhammad and Luis Cruz. This framework leverages four critical leadership skills proven to build consensus: 1) communication, 2) trust building, 3) capacity building, and 4) accountability.

Participants can expect to:
- Learn how to organize and sustain a functional guiding coalition.
- Learn how to apply the *Time for Change* framework to real-world problems.
- Learn how to properly assess their culture and strategically plan to overcome resistance to change.

Maria Nielsen

Coming soon!

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.

Michael Roberts

The Data Session for People Who Don't Like Data and Those Who Want to Use It Better

Michael Roberts explores practices for collecting and analyzing data, avoiding common data mistakes, and using data to help students learn more, while reminding educators that behind

each number is a child. This child-centered approach to data will help teams react to student learning quicker and more effectively.

Participants in this session:
- Learn strategies to use data better.
- Gain an understanding of the difference between correlative and causal data and why it is important to get to causal data to more effectively support students.
- Learn the decision pull strategy for considering data and how it can save their collaborative team many hours of frustration.

Jeanne Spiller

Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Elementary Schools
Schools that function as professional learning communities 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* in action.
- Review and reflect on the essential elements of Tiers 1, 2, and 3 intervention.
- Examine the most common RTI mistakes.
- Identify essential structures for RTI success.
- Reflect on critical reminders regarding process and criteria.

Mona Toncheff

Math Success for All: Tier 1 and Tier 2 Instruction That Works
Mathematics collaborative teams are made of teachers who work tirelessly to grow student learning. Yet, despite every effort, too many students in too many schools are struggling. What can be done? It starts with mathematics teams having an intentional and focused learning plan for the year, every unit of instruction, and each daily lesson. Participants in this session explore how teams effectively plan for grade-level learning and mathematical reasoning in each unit and give students access to learning grade-level standards in lessons through targeted Tier 1 and Tier 2 instruction. Participants examine research-affirmed teaching actions that maximize student learning during a mathematics lesson and learn how to incorporate mathematical rigor, balanced mathematical tasks, and student engagement.

Participants use the Mathematics at Work™ lesson design framework to:
- Examine research-affirmed teaching actions that maximize student learning during a mathematics lesson (Tier 1).
- Explore team actions and strategies for accelerating student learning to grade level and beyond using intentional Tier 1 and Tier 2 instruction.

Luis F. Cruz

Breaking Through the Initialisms: Connecting PLC and RTI to Ensure High-Quality Learning for Every Student

In the world of education, initialisms like PLC and RTI often come with the promise of improving student outcomes, but they can also lead to confusion when educators struggle to see how these frameworks fit together. In this session, Luis F. Cruz, coauthor of *Taking Action: A Handbook for the RTI at Work Process,* 2nd ed. (Solution Tree, 2024), guides participants in making sense of the many initialisms and how they align to create a unified, student-centered approach. Participants leave with a clear understanding of how to connect the dots between PLC and RTI, ensuring a coherent strategy that supports all students in reaching their highest levels of learning.

Participants in this session:
- Understand how multitiered systems of support (MTSS) complement and strengthen the PLC process, creating a seamless system of support for all students.
- Explore how a guaranteed and viable curriculum is essential in developing common formative assessments (CFAs), and how this foundation supports the effectiveness of MTSS.
- Participate in an interactive activity designed for immediate application, enabling them to support and share the learning with colleagues who were unable to attend.

Sharon V. Kramer

Ignite a New Era of Instruction Through Accelerated Learning

Despite countless articles, blogs, podcasts, and conferences, progress remains elusive in closing the achievement gap and increasing student learning. This isn't due to a lack of effort but a flawed approach. Remediation, the traditional strategy, holds students back. Instead, we need acceleration—a model that empowers *all* students to reach grade level and beyond.

Participants discover:
- Why acceleration works and how it can transform their classroom
- How to build on your students' existing knowledge and skills
- Actionable steps you can take tomorrow to accelerate learning for all

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.

Anthony Muhammad

Does All Still Mean *All*? Balancing Professional Obligation and Populism
The first big idea of a PLC at Work is to ensure high levels of learning for all. As professionals, we are clear that all students can learn, but we are also aware that students learn differently and at different paces. How will your professionals respond when outside forces and agendas clash with research and best practice? In this session, Anthony Muhammad addresses the challenge of navigating populism and the implementation of best practice.

Participants in this session:
- Understand the professional and moral obligation of committing to learning for *all.*
- Find ways to navigate around populist barriers to best practice.
- Learn how to shift from damaging mindsets (superiority and inferiority) to high levels of collective efficacy (liberation mindset).

Maria Nielsen

Coming soon!

Regina Stephens Owens

Different by Design: Small, Virtual, Innovative, and Singleton PLCs
Small schools—charter, innovative, online—face big questions:
- How do we do it?
- How do we engage CTE, fine arts, PE?
- What about singletons?
- Where do we start?
- How do we sustain it?

In this session, Regina Stephens Owens demonstrates how participants can design and implement the PLC process in their school or district. Participants learn how to navigate nuances of being different, how to develop teams with meaningful work, and strategies for effective implementation.

Michael Roberts

Enriching the Learning: Answering Question Four by Building Meaningful Extensions

Participants in this session focus on effectively answering question four of a PLC, the most neglected question: What do we do when students already know it? Michael Roberts provides participants with ideas for creating meaningful extensions to build student skills, ways to take advantage of students' interests, and the means to support the social development of proficient students. Michael leads participants to discuss pitfalls in building extensions and develop strategies to make the work of collaborative teams more efficient.

Participants in this session:
- Explore why teams fail to adequately address question four of a PLC.
- Discover ways to ensure teams effectively answer question four by building effective extensions for students who have demonstrated proficiency.
- Understand the process for building skills and increasing interest through social extensions to ensure high levels of learning for all students.

Jeanne Spiller

Leading From the Central Office: Anchor, Amplify, and Accelerate PLC Work

Districts thrive when central office leaders create the clarity, coherence, and confidence schools need to ensure high levels of learning for all students. Grounded in the core ideas from *Leading With Intention* (Solution Tree, 2018) and *Leading Beyond Intention* (Solution Tree, 2022), this session examines how system leaders anchor teams in purpose, amplify what matters most, and accelerate the work of professional learning communities across all schools. Participants uncover the leadership moves that shift a system from good intentions to aligned, collective impact.

Participants in this session:
- Understand how central office leadership shapes culture, coherence, and capacity building across schools engaged in PLC work.
- Apply the anchor–amplify–accelerate framework to strengthen districtwide support for principals and PLC teams.
- Identify specific, high-leverage system commitments that shift practice from intention to measurable improvement for students.

Mona Toncheff

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

Knowing whether students have learned cannot be left to intuition or end-of-unit grades. In this session, Mona Toncheff focuses on the intentional use of common assessments as evidence of learning throughout a unit of instruction. Collaborative teams view assessments as a continuous, cyclical process that are used to monitor learning, surface student thinking, and inform instructional decisions.

Participants learn how to:
- Design common assessments aligned to learning targets and success criteria.
- Use assessment evidence to make timely instructional adjustments and determine next steps for learning.
- Provide meaningful feedback that supports student learning and ownership.
- Apply practical tools and protocols to strengthen instruction, promote consistency across classrooms, and keep learning at the center throughout a unit.

Session Descriptions—Day 3

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Luis F. Cruz

Knowledge Is Not Power Until It Is Applied: Turning Your PLC Institute Experience Into Action

After attending a PLC at Work institute, educators often return to their schools energized—only to encounter the challenge of fostering buy-in from colleagues who were not part of the experience. How can school leaders and teacher teams cultivate shared commitment, meaningful collaboration, and lasting implementation of the PLC process? In this closing session, Luis F. Cruz shares proven, practical strategies for helping colleagues think differently, feel differently, and ultimately do differently so that the PLC work moves beyond isolated practice and becomes embedded schoolwide.

Participants in this session:
- Gain insight into how to guide staff through necessary technical changes (the structural aspects) to ensure all students achieve at high levels.
- Learn how to promote a cultural shift (the human aspect) that supports and sustains those technical changes, creating lasting transformation in the school community.
- Gain actionable resources to facilitate both technical and cultural changes, empowering them to effectively implement the PLC process at their site.

Sharon V. Kramer

Differentiate to Accelerate, But How?

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

Participants in this session:
- Learn the difference between *proactive* and *reactive* differentiation.
- Understand how a team develops a learning plan that includes differentiation before, during, and after instruction.

Mike Mattos

The Best Intervention Is Prevention: Planning Proactive Supports

Most schools use student failure to identify those who need interventions. The problem is that if we wait for students to fail, they will! Tier 2 interventions become buried under too many needs.

Mike Mattos demonstrates academic and behavior supports and processes to proactively bolster students at Tier 1.

Anthony Muhammad

We Are Ready for PLC Greatness! How Do We Go Back and Convince Others to Join In?
After spending two transformational days learning about the power of PLC, most participants are ready to return home and get to work! Unfortunately, many of their colleagues did not share the experience. So, how do we go back home and get others on board? Anthony Muhammad outlines a process that will not only sustain the momentum experienced at this institute, but equip participants to convince others to join them on their PLC journey. Dr. Muhammad: 1) establishes philosophical agreement and shared purpose, and 2) addresses staff frustration and discomfort with change. Participants gain an abundance of practical strategies to start the process of transforming their culture when they return to their school.

Participants can expect to:
- Learn how to address counterproductive belief systems and form a cohesive team of student advocates.
- Understand how to analyze and manage staff frustration.
- Learn ways to understand and confront emotional barriers to improve their professional practice.

Maria Nielsen

Coming soon!

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.

Michael Roberts

Shifting From Me to We: Jumpstarting PLCs

Becoming a true professional learning community is hard. It takes time. It takes commitment. The process, and the people who believe in the process, will be challenged. Michael Roberts shows participants how to push through those challenges and to keep moving forward for the betterment of students. The journey to becoming interdependent, accountable teams is crucial. It is this journey that keeps a PLC growing and evolving to meet the needs of the students it serves.

Participants in this session:
- Discover how to create a long-term vision for their district or school and understand the skills it takes to make that vision a reality.
- Gain an understanding of the importance of developing interdependence among the staff in their district or school.

Jeanne Spiller

All Means All: Mindsets and Moves That Elevate Every Learner

This session is intentionally designed for both general and special educators who are working to ensure every student, without exception, experiences high levels of learning.

Together, participants explore the key ideas from *Yes We Can: General and Special Educators Collaborating in a Professional Learning Community* (Solution Tree, 2016) and its companion text, *All Means All: Essential Actions for Leveraging Yes We Can!* (Solution Tree, 2025). Participants examine the personal and systemic beliefs that shape our work, assess how aligned systems strengthen collaboration between general and special educators, and identify inclusive practices that make all *truly* mean *all*.

Participants in this session:
- Understand the six core principles from *Yes We Can!* and *All Means All* and their role in maximizing learning for every student.
- Examine personal and systemic beliefs that influence our work with students.
- Reflect on current practices to identify alignment gaps and needed shifts.
- Develop clear next steps to strengthen shared ownership and collective commitment in the PLC process to elevate learning for *all*.

Mona Toncheff

From Scores to Learning: Effective Grading Practices

Teachers use grades to report student learning in grade books and on report cards. Essential questions about grading exist: How do grades align with student learning and provide feedback? What is the purpose of each grade? Are grades consistent across a collaborative team? Who uses this information? As instructional and assessment practices shift to meet rigorous standards, grades too often are an afterthought that muddy accurate reports of student learning. Clarity is

needed within districts, schools, and collaborative teams so that students and other stakeholders know the meaning of each grade reported and the evidence of student learning used to generate the grade.

Participants in this session:
- Examine challenges surrounding traditional grading practices.
- Explore grading practices that share accurate and useful information related to student learning.
- Investigate grading protocols to deepen collective responses to student learning.

KEYNOTE

Luis F. Cruz

Resistance Is a Natural Byproduct of Implementing PLCs: How to Confront It and Win
Implementing the PLC process inevitably generates resistance from staff. Instead of questioning why resistance occurs, the real challenge is learning how to identify and address both rational and irrational forms of resistance. In this keynote, Luis F. Cruz draws on insights from his bestselling book coauthored with Anthony Muhammad, *Time for Change: Four Essential Skills for Transformational School and District Leaders* (Solution Tree, 2019), to equip participants with the knowledge and strategies needed to confront resistance effectively. Participants gain practical tools for guiding their colleagues through the challenges of PLC implementation and ensuring deep, lasting commitment to the process.

Participants in this session:
- Understand the difference between rational and irrational forms of resistance to change and how to respond to each.
- Learn who holds the primary responsibility for addressing resistance to change during PLC implementation and how to empower those leaders.
- Leave inspired and well-equipped to implement the "real" PLC process—versus a watered-down, "PLC Lite" version—ensuring meaningful change in their school or district.