

Wednesday, August 12

6:30–8:00 a.m.	Registration and Continental Breakfast	Rooms TBD
8:00–9:45 a.m.	Keynote —Sarah Schuhl <i>More Than a Moment: The Power of Being a PLC</i>	
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:30 a.m.	Breakout Sessions	See page 2.
11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)	
1:00–2:30 p.m.	Breakout Sessions	See page 2.
2:30–2:45 p.m.	Break	
2:45–3:45 p.m.	Keynote —Aaron Hansen <i>Reclaiming Our Souls Before Schools Become Obsolete</i>	

Thursday, August 13

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Registration and Continental Breakfast	Rooms TBD
8:00–9:45 a.m.	Keynote —Anthony Muhammad <i>Transforming School Culture 2.0: Why Culture Is Important Today, Tomorrow, and Forever</i>	
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:30 a.m.	Breakout Sessions	See page 2.
11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)	
1:00–2:30 p.m.	Breakout Sessions	See page 2.
2:30–2:45 p.m.	Break	
2:45–3:45 p.m.	Team Time —Presenters aid in your collaborative team discussions.	

Friday, August 14

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Continental Breakfast	Rooms TBD
8:00–9:30 a.m.	Breakout Sessions	See page 2.
9:30–9:45 a.m.	Break	
9:45–11:45 a.m.	Keynote —Janel Keating <i>From Building the PLC House to Living in It</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	Wednesday, August 12		Thursday, August 13		Friday, August 14
	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
Aaron Hansen	Trading Fear for Hope: Inspiring Students to Reach Their Full Potential Room TBD	Owning Their Learning: Rethinking Instruction and Intervention and Who Owns It Room TBD	Hero Makers: A PLC Framework for Empowering and Motivating Students to Own Their Learning Journey* Room TBD	How to Develop PLCs for Singletons and Small Schools Room TBD	Hero Makers: A PLC Framework for Empowering and Motivating Students to Own Their Learning Journey Room TBD
Janel Keating	Demystifying the PLC Process: Key Elements for Effective Collaboration—Elementary Room TBD	Demystifying the PLC Process: Key Elements for Effective Collaboration—Secondary Room TBD	Aligning PLCs Districtwide: From the Boardroom to the Classroom Room TBD	Elementary Interventions Beyond WIN Time Room TBD	Daunting Yet Doable: The Roles of the Principal and Guiding Coalition Room TBD
Anthony Muhammad	All Hands on Deck! Keys to Building a Collaborative Culture Room TBD	Improving Professional Practice to Advance Student Learning Room TBD	“So, How Do We Get Buy-In?” Leveraging the Guiding Coalition to Build Consensus Room TBD	Does All Still Mean All? Balancing Professional Obligation and Populism Room TBD	We Are Ready for PLC Greatness! How Do We Go Back and Convince Others to Join In? Room TBD
Sarah Schuhl	Together We Can Accelerate Student Learning to Grade Level and Beyond Room TBD	Math Success for All: Tier 1 and Tier 2 Instruction That Works Room TBD	Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Secondary Schools Room TBD	From Scores to Learning: Effective Grading Practices Room TBD	Create Common Assessments to Use in a Culture of Learning Room TBD

Agenda is subject to change.

Session Descriptions—Day 1

MORNING KEYNOTE

Sarah Schuhl

More Than a Moment: The Power of Being a PLC

A professional learning community focuses on ensuring high levels of learning for all students. But what does it *really* mean to be a PLC across a school or district? PLCs are not a trend, initiative, or moment in time; they are a way of being. A school or district operating as an effective PLC at Work personifies three big ideas while using four critical questions to guide the work of collaborative teams. The work can seem daunting without a roadmap or vision for how to collaborate efficiently and effectively. Sarah Schuhl clarifies this work using practical tools, protocols, and examples. Participants are challenged to move from *doing* PLCs to *being* a PLC.

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.

Aaron Hansen

Trading Fear for Hope: Inspiring Students to Reach Their Full Potential

Maslow, Rogers, Jung, Frankl, and Campbell all believed in the idea that people all crave one common thing. They all saw it a little differently, but they all saw the striving toward this “thing” as a fundamental human need just as powerful as the drive for safety, food, shelter, and belonging. Once we see it, even a glimpse of it, we will trade comfort, ease, and even distraction of devices in pursuit of it. It gives us a direction to aim and motivation to move. It’s something we can see in others, even though we often can’t see it in ourselves. It’s this little ethereal idea of what we could be if we really tried. It’s part of our purpose, it’s beautiful, and we call it *potential*.

Participants in this session:

- Learn what the great thinkers of the past thought about the human need even our most reluctant learners have to find purpose, develop meaning, and reach their full potential.
- Reconnect with their own personal purpose and vision and align with their potential to have an even greater impact on their students, team, school, and community.
- Explore steps their team can take to help students develop a real and compelling vision for their future.

Janel Keating

Demystifying the PLC Process: Key Elements for Effective Collaboration—Elementary

Participants in this session observe four effective elementary teams collaborating. Janel Keating demonstrates the collaboration tools these teams use to impact Tier 1 instruction and Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions.

Participants can expect to:

- Observe effective collaboration.
- Interact with a well-designed unit plan and a protocol to analyze evidence of learning (common formative assessment).
- Learn the power of establishing norms, accountability protocols, and collective commitments.

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.

Sarah Schuhl

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

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.

Aaron Hansen

Owning Their Learning: Rethinking Instruction and Intervention and Who Owns It

Students must become owners of their learning in order to truly reach the levels of rigorous learning being demanded of them. Participants are challenged to rethink the traditional role of a teacher who delivers lessons, and begin taking on the role of a facilitator who intentionally develops students into learners. This process involves helping students self-assess, monitor, and self-select intervention or extension, resulting in decreased teacher stress, better results, and a method for intentionally developing students' sense of self-efficacy.

Participants can expect to:

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

Janel Keating

Demystifying the PLC Process: Key Elements for Effective Collaboration—Secondary

Participants in this session observe collaboration among four effective secondary teams, including a singleton team. Janel Keating demonstrates the collaboration tools these teams use to impact Tier 1 instruction and Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions.

Participants can expect to:

- Observe effective collaboration.
- Interact with a well-designed unit plan and a protocol to analyze evidence of learning (common formative assessment).
- Learn the power of establishing norms, accountability protocols, and collective commitments.

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.

Sarah Schuhl

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.

AFTERNOON KEYNOTE

Aaron Hansen

Reclaiming Our Souls Before Schools Become Obsolete

AI already outperforms us at what schools were built to teach. It writes better essays, solves harder math, assesses learning more effectively, and individualizes instruction in ways schools never have. Other professions are becoming obsolete. Is teaching next? Yet many cling to our old role of delivering content, celebrating marginal gains on state tests built for an economy that no longer exists. The real question is no longer how we teach, but why. What is our new role when information is infinite, struggle optional and thinking is automated? The role of a teacher is changing! It's more difficult- but it is more beautiful, more compelling, more soulful, and filled with hope!

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

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.

Aaron Hansen

Hero Makers: A PLC Framework for Empowering and Motivating Students to Own Their Learning Journey

All too often students sit passively in compliance doing just enough to get by, while others refuse to even try. Shift students’ mindsets from one of compliance, apathy, and even victimization to a new story of hope where they become the hero in their own story. Help learners discover purpose, ownership, and the courage to try, face failure, and persevere. This is a new story for teachers and leaders, too—one of renewed fulfillment, purpose, and excitement for their work as they use the six-step framework to help students develop a strong sense of self-efficacy and motivation.

Participants in this session:

- Learn how to use a six-step framework for helping students take ownership and developing a strong sense of self-efficacy.
- Understand some of the psychological and sociological principles of why students often don’t really try and the steps teachers follow to change that mindset.
- Become re-inspired and reinvigorated for their calling—their profession!

Janel Keating

Aligning PLCs Districtwide: From the Boardroom to the Classroom

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

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.

Sarah Schuhl

Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes in Secondary Schools

If the fundamental purpose of being a professional learning community is to ensure all students learn at high levels, then there must be time embedded during the school day to provide students extra time and support to succeed. This session provides real examples showing how to create time for supplemental and intensive interventions.

Participants learn specific steps to implement a flexible secondary intervention period, including how to:

- Determine what interventions to offer each week.
- Require students to attend specific interventions.
- Monitor student attendance.
- Allocate staff.
- Extend student learning.
- Address potential obstacles.
- Do all this within teachers' contractual obligations.

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.

Aaron Hansen

How to Develop PLCs for Singletons and Small Schools

Professional learning community concepts resonate with most educators, but making collaborative learning work in small schools or for singleton teachers can be challenging. Who do you collaborate with when you're the only one who teaches what you teach? Participants in this session learn three effective models for collaboration by hearing about how real people have done the work. Aaron Hansen helps teachers understand what's possible, practical, and meaningful enough to collaborate on so they can make a plan that fits their school community's unique needs.

Janel Keating

Elementary Interventions Beyond WIN Time

In this session, Janel Keating highlights how participants can layer targeted interventions and extensions into their daily instructional routine. Participants explore a standard and what Tier 1 instruction and Tiers 2 and 3 supports would look like based on that standard. Janel shares practical strategies that teachers and teams use to support their students and demonstrates how participants can use their instructional runway. Additionally, participants discover how AI can be a valuable ally for teacher teams when planning interventions and extensions.

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).

Sarah Schuhl

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 include: 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 afterthoughts 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.

Session Descriptions—Day 3

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Anisa Baker-Busby

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

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- 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.

Aaron Hansen

Hero Makers: A PLC Framework for Empowering and Motivating Students to Own Their Learning Journey

All too often students sit passively in compliance doing just enough to get by, while others refuse to even try. Shift students' mindsets from one of compliance, apathy, and even victimization to a new story of hope where they become the hero in their own story. Help learners discover purpose, ownership, and the courage to try, face failure, and persevere. This is a new story for teachers and leaders, too—one of renewed fulfillment, purpose, and excitement for their work as they use the six-step framework to help students develop a strong sense of self-efficacy and motivation.

Participants in this session:

- Learn how to use a six-step framework for helping students take ownership and developing a strong sense of self-efficacy.

- Understand some of the psychological and sociological principles of why students often don't really try and the steps teachers follow to change that mindset.
- Become re-inspired and reinvigorated for their calling—their profession!

Janel Keating

Daunting Yet Doable: The Roles of the Principal and Guiding Coalition

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

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

—Richard DuFour

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.

Sarah Schuhl

Create Common Assessments to Use in a Culture of Learning

How do teachers, teams, and students learn from common assessments? How must they be designed and used to maximize that learning? In this session, Sarah Schuhl focuses on the intentional creation and use of common assessments as evidence of learning throughout a unit

of instruction. Together, teachers on collaborative teams use common assessments to monitor learning, reveal student thinking, and inform instructional decisions.

Participants in this session:

- Learn criteria for creating high-quality common assessments.
- Identify how teacher teams can use common assessment results to learn about instructional practices and design interventions and extensions.
- Explore how to use common assessments for student reflection and action.

KEYNOTE

Janel Keating

From Building the PLC House to Living in It

In this closing keynote, Janel Keating guides participants through the essential journey of moving from building the PLC house to living in it. She highlights how teams can shift from developing PLC products to effectively using those tools to deepen collaboration and drive meaningful results. Drawing on key learnings from the institute, Janel synthesizes the critical next steps teams must take to strengthen their PLCs and improve academic outcomes for all students. Participants gain a clear and actionable roadmap they can take back to their districts, schools, and teams to bring the true principles of a PLC at Work to life.