



Agenda

Marshalltown, IA • November 24–25, 2025

Monday, November 24

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Registration and Continental Breakfast	Rooms TBD
8:00–9:45 a.m.	Keynote —Julie A. Schmidt <i>Learn It: How Did We Get Here?</i>	
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:30 a.m.	Breakout Sessions	See page 2.
11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	Lunch (provided)	
12:30–2:00 p.m.	Breakout Sessions	See page 2.
2:00–2:15 p.m.	Break	
2:15–3:15 p.m.	Power Hour: An Interactive Think Tank —Participants address challenges in students who are beginning to thrive, unlocking their full potential through targeted support. Tapping into the knowledge and experience in the room, participants bring best practices to life!	

Tuesday, November 25

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Registration and Continental Breakfast	Rooms TBD
8:00–9:45 a.m.	Keynote —Heather Friziellie <i>Living Yes We Can: Bringing Beliefs to Life</i>	
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00–11:30 a.m.	Breakout Sessions	See page 2.
11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	Lunch (provided)	
12:30–2:00 p.m.	Breakout Sessions	See page 2.
2:00–2:15 p.m.	Break	
2:15–4:15 p.m.	Keynote —Jeanne Spiller <i>Yes We Can: Leading With Purpose, Navigating Challenges, and Inspiring Change</i>	

Agenda is subject to change.

Breakout Sessions at a Glance

Rooms are listed beneath titles in *blue italics*.

Presenter	Monday, November 24		Tuesday, November 25	
	10:00–11:30 a.m.	12:30–2:00 p.m.	10:00–11:30 a.m.	12:30–2:00 p.m.
Matthew Blackmore	Seamless Success: Integrating SDI for Unified Student Support <i>Room TBD</i>	All Learners Thrive: Crafting Inclusive Narratives in Education <i>Room TBD</i>	Building Bridges to Success: Learning Progressions for Every Learner <i>Room TBD</i>	Co-Teaching Elevated: Strategies for Powerful Collaboration and Student Gains <i>Room TBD</i>
Megan Clarke	Building Collaborative PLAAMPs to Set Your Students' Course <i>Room TBD</i>	Collaborative IEPs: Life-Changing Goals Designed to Bring About Progress <i>Room TBD</i>	Specially Designed Instruction (SDI): What Does It Look Like and Feel Like in Real Life? <i>Room TBD</i>	Yes, Even When the Answer Is No <i>Room TBD</i>
Heather Friziellie	Bringing Out the Best: Creating an <i>All Means All</i> Collaborative Culture <i>Room TBD</i>	All Behavior Is Communication, Like It or Not! <i>Room TBD</i>		Now Is the Time: Leading the RTI Way! <i>Room TBD</i>
Julie A. Schmidt		Beneath the Surface: Aligning Beliefs and Behaviors for a Culture of Success <i>Room TBD</i>	Maximizing Impact Through High-Leverage Collaboration <i>Room TBD</i>	Leading for All: Guiding Teams Toward Inclusive Excellence <i>Room TBD</i>
Jeanne Spiller	Using Learning Progressions to Plan the Journey to Mastery <i>Room TBD</i>	Elevating Excellence: Designing Lessons That Inspire High Expectations for All Students <i>Room TBD</i>	Coteaching Unleashed: A Framework for Impactful Collaboration and Student Success <i>Room TBD</i>	Grading and Reporting Student Learning With IEPs <i>Room TBD</i>

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Session Descriptions—Day 1

KEYNOTE

Julie A. Schmidt

Learn It: How Did We Get Here?

For decades, schools have grappled with the persistent achievement gap between students entitled to special education services and those in general education classes. Julie A. Schmidt explores the historical, systemic, and instructional factors that have contributed to these disparities. It is time to focus on deconstructing the silos that have been built over time to ensure that all educators are focused on high-leverage collaborative practices that ensure high levels of learning for *all*.

Participants in this session:

- Challenge the mindsets and practices that undermine an *all means all* culture.
- Consider the historical and systemic factors that have led to persistent achievement gaps.
- Identify the six core principles of *Beyond Labels* work.
- Create a sense of urgency to implement best practices that push schools beyond labels so *all* students thrive regardless of their educational needs.

MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Matthew Blackmore

Seamless Success: Integrating SDI for Unified Student Support

In this session, Matthew Blackmore focuses on empowering educators to deliver specially designed instruction (SDI) that is fully aligned with grade-level standards, thereby accelerating learning for all students. Participants learn how to break down traditional barriers between general and special education, fostering a truly unified and collaborative support system. Matthew equips educators with practical tools and strategies, including the innovative use of AI, to create instruction that is not only efficient and collaborative but also precisely targeted to meet the diverse needs of every learner.

Megan Clarke

Building Collaborative PLAAFPs to Set Your Students' Course

Join Kristen Bordonaro in this engaging session and delve into crafting robust present levels of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP)—the essential first step in creating an instructional roadmap tailored to each student's unique needs. Participants leave with the confidence to build PLAAFPs that set the stage for meaningful, life-changing IEPs.

Participants in this session:

- Discover how to gather meaningful input from everyone involved in supporting the student, ensuring a holistic understanding of their strengths and challenges.
- Identify opportunities for teamwork and shared expertise to create a richer, more accurate picture of each student's present levels.
- Explore and implement a consistent structure for developing PLAAFP statements that are clear, effective, and actionable.
- Learn how to write PLAAFPs that authentically reflect where a student is in their learning journey while highlighting their strengths and addressing areas for growth.

Heather Friziellie

Bringing Out the Best: Creating an *All Means All* Collaborative Culture

When working to meet the needs of *all* learners in the constantly changing education system, leaders must keep their “compass north” while making the most of all staff and faculty and remaining true to the beliefs and actions to truly live *all means all*.

Participants in this session:

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

Jeanne Spiller

Using Learning Progressions to Plan the Journey to Mastery

Participants in this session explore how learning progressions are a powerful tool for general and special educators to structure instruction, check for understanding, and develop targeted interventions that lead students toward mastery of priority standards.

Participants in this session:

- Define learning progressions and explain their role in scaffolding instruction toward mastery.
- Analyze how learning progressions clarify learning pathways and create instructional entry points.
- Use learning progressions to assess student understanding and develop responsive interventions.
- Design a sample learning progression aligned to a priority standard, incorporating assessment checkpoints and scaffolds for diverse learners.

AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Matthew Blackmore

All Learners Thrive: Crafting Inclusive Narratives in Education

In this session, Matthew Blackmore guides educators in understanding the profound impact of labels on student identity, behaviors, and perceived potential. Participants explore and identify cultural barriers that influence student learning, reflecting on their own practices. Matthew empowers educators to create actionable steps to shift mindsets, enabling them to focus on students as unique individuals and foster learning environments free from the constraints of labels.

Megan Clarke

Collaborative IEPs: Life-Changing Goals Designed to Bring About Progress

An individualized education program (IEP) isn't just a document; it's a blueprint for success. Participants explore how to design collaborative life-changing IEP goals that are aligned with grade-level standards and backed by a clear, actionable implementation plan. Kristen Bordonaro empowers participants to rethink the IEP process, equipping them with tools and strategies to foster high levels of learning for every student.

Participants in this session:

- Discover four essential tests that ensure their goals meet the highest standards of impact and rigor.
- Learn how general education, special education, and related services can come together to create goals that are truly individualized.
- Build a step-by-step plan to implement goals effectively, from establishing baselines to celebrating achievement.

Heather Frizellie

All Behavior Is Communication, Like It or Not!

Supporting students with challenging behaviors is a reality for all educators. However, there are some key ways to help make behavior better—or worse. In this session, Heather Frizellie dives into how participants can improve student behaviors strategically.

Participants in this session:

- Understand essential research behind behavior as communication.
- Explore tools to identify causes of behaviors and a variety of problem-solving strategies to improve certain behaviors.
- Practice using a protocol when a behavior support plan is needed for Tier 3 intervention.

Julie A. Schmidt

Beneath the Surface: Aligning Beliefs and Behaviors for a Culture of Success

Organizational culture is much like an iceberg: What we see above the surface only tells part of the story. Beneath the visible structures, policies, and practices lie deep-seated beliefs, assumptions, and norms that shape the way organizations function, often in ways that go unnoticed. In this session, Julie A. Schmidt explores the alignment of behaviors and beliefs, equipping participants with the tools to analyze and understand both the seen and unseen forces driving their school culture.

Participants in this session:

- Understand organizational culture through the iceberg model.
- Analyze the visible and invisible aspects of their organization's culture, identifying how surface-level behaviors reflect (or fail to reflect) deeper beliefs and values.
- Identify potential hidden barriers below the surface and explore implicit norms, assumptions, and perceptions that may act as barriers to achieving a cohesive, inclusive, and results-oriented culture.
- Consider and engage in structured activities that support the work of examining beliefs and actions in a system.

Jeanne Spiller

Elevating Excellence: Designing Lessons That Inspire High Expectations for All Students

In this session, Jeanne Spiller explores the critical relationship between high expectations and student success, emphasizing the importance of equitable learning opportunities for all. Participants engage in a structured lesson-planning process that integrates academic rigor, student engagement, and differentiation, ensuring all learners are challenged and supported.

Participants in this session:

- Explore the relationship between high expectations and student success, focusing on fostering equitable opportunities for all learners.
- Learn and practice a process for lesson planning that integrates academic rigor, engagement, and differentiation to meet diverse student needs.
- Identify methods to ensure lessons are accessible and challenging for all students, incorporating universal design for learning principles.

Session Descriptions—Day 2

MORNING KEYNOTE

Heather Friziellie

Living *Yes We Can*: Bringing Beliefs to Life

Shifting mindsets is only part of the *Yes We Can* journey. In order to truly make change happen, educators must use tools to turn beliefs into action. In this session, Heather Friziellie digs into the tools aligned to the core principles and allots time for participants to reflect on what can help them move their context forward. Get ready to make a plan for shifting from knowing to doing!

MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Matthew Blackmore

Building Bridges to Success: Learning Progressions for Every Learner

In this session, Matthew Blackmore focuses on the critical role of learning target progressions in ensuring all students can successfully access grade-level content. Educators evaluate the significance of these progressions and identify strategic points to effectively build the bridge to meet the diverse needs of all learners. Participants also apply various tools and strategies, including the integration of AI, to efficiently create robust learning progressions that guide students from foundational to complex skills.

Megan Clarke

Specially Designed Instruction (SDI): What Does It Look Like and Feel Like in Real Life?

Kristen Bordonaro and participants work together to deepen their understanding and redefine how they deliver specially designed instruction (SDI) to meet the unique needs of every learner. Participants experience a powerful combination of reflection, action planning, and collaboration, empowering them to transform the way SDI is implemented in their classrooms.

Participants in this session:

- Identify the key criteria that define SDI and gain a clear understanding of what it is—and what it is not.
- Explore where to begin and how to grow their SDI practices for maximum impact.
- Develop an intentional plan to co-create and deliver SDI through strong partnerships with their teams.
- Wrap up with a dynamic Q&A where their insights and questions guide them in growing together as thought partners.

Julie A. Schmidt

Maximizing Impact Through High-Leverage Collaboration

High-leverage collaboration between general and special educators is essential for ensuring all students, including those with identified disabilities, receive high-quality, rigorous instruction. However, with scheduling structures and limited time, educators must be strategic in their collaboration.

Participants in this session:

- Identify *what* general and special educators should be collaborating on.
- Consider how to prioritize the collaborative team meetings special educators should attend when they cannot attend all of them.
- Examine the impact of pre-unit planning for *all*.

Jeanne Spiller

Coteaching Unleashed: A Framework for Impactful Collaboration and Student Success

Matthew Treadway examines the impact of traditional coteaching practices on student learning and reflects on how to improve. Participants explore the components of a more effective coteaching framework that fosters greater collaborative instruction. Jeanne and Matthew provide practical strategies and tools to enhance efficiency and effectiveness, empowering teachers to create inclusive classrooms where all students achieve higher levels of learning.

By the end of this session, participants can expect to:

- Evaluate the impact of traditional coteaching practices on student learning.
- Identify the components of a more effective coteaching framework and explain how they support greater collaborative instruction.
- Apply strategies and tools to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of coteaching in their classrooms.

AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Matthew Blackmore

Co-Teaching Elevated: Strategies for Powerful Collaboration and Student Gains

In this session, Matthew Blackmore guides educators in evaluating the impact of traditional co-teaching practices to understand their strengths and limitations. Participants identify the key components of a more effective co-teaching framework designed for impactful collaboration. Matthew provides educators with practical strategies to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of instruction within co-taught classrooms, ultimately enhancing student success.

Megan Clarke

Yes, Even When the Answer Is No

How do we ensure meaningful learning for students who may not function independently after high school? Participants in this session explore the latest research and strategies to answer this critical question: “What do we want *this* student to know and be able to do?” Kristen Bordonaro offers a powerful blend of research, collaboration, and actionable planning. Together, participants redefine how they support their most complex learners, ensuring they have opportunities for growth, independence, and success on their terms.

Participants in this session:

- Dive into what it means to identify essential learning targets for students with significant needs.
- Collaboratively develop individualized learning targets rooted in alternate standards to drive meaningful progress.
- Learn to build cohesive, team-driven IEP goals that maximize every instructional opportunity while honoring each student’s unique potential.

Heather Friziellie

Now Is the Time: Leading the RTI Way!

Implementing an effective response to intervention (RTI) framework is certainly about understanding the essential elements, but it also requires leadership of the system to successfully ensure that *all* students learn. Heather Friziellie leads an interactive think tank focused on growing leadership and leverage of RTI practices in all contexts.

Participants explore ways they as leaders in their sites—both formal and informal—can:

- Learn essential steps for building and enriching relationships through change across contexts but specifically related to RTI.
- Lean in and learn about strategies for improving RTI structures and processes, including mistakes to avoid making along the way.
- Explore a strategy for critically examining a master schedule to create opportunities for change.
- Connect answering PLC question three with answering PLC question four.

Julie A. Schmidt

Leading for All: Guiding Teams Toward Inclusive Excellence

Participants in this session focus on leading inclusive practices in their school or district. Regardless of their professional background and experience, Julie A. Schmidt equips participants

with a balance of leadership theory, real-world strategies, and practical tools to ensure leaders can effectively guide their teams in this critical work.

Participants in this session:

- Enhance their ability to lead an *all means all* culture within their school or district regardless of their prior experience or role.
- Explore key leadership principles that support the successful implementation of practices that go beyond labels.
- Learn to guide reflective discussions that promote educator growth and commitment to inclusive education.
- Explore tools to support more inclusive practices in their school.

Jeanne Spiller

Grading and Reporting Student Learning With IEPs

In this session, Jeanne Spiller explores strategies for grading students with IEPs that align with grade-level expectations while accounting for individual growth. Participants examine the principle that students with IEPs are general education students first and discuss how grading practices can support equity, access, and meaningful learning outcomes.

Participants in this session:

- Discover why grading should be based on grade-level standards rather than below-grade-level work.
- Recognize how aligned grading practices promote high expectations, inclusivity, and equitable learning opportunities.
- Learn inclusive and equitable grading strategies for students with IEPs.
- Explore the importance of communicating grades and progress transparently with students and families.

AFTERNOON KEYNOTE

Jeanne Spiller

Yes We Can: Leading With Purpose, Navigating Challenges, and Inspiring Change

Leadership is not just about holding a position; it's about all educators inspiring action, fostering resilience, and leading change with unwavering commitment. Jeanne Spiller explores the mindset and strategies necessary to overcome challenges and drive meaningful school transformation. Participants learn how collaborative leadership, collective responsibility, and a solutions-oriented approach can create lasting impact. Through real-world examples and practical applications, Jeanne empowers leaders at all levels to embrace challenges, build strong teams, and implement sustainable change.

Participants in this session:

- Explore how shared vision, trust, and collective efficacy empower teams to drive meaningful change.
- Learn strategies to address resistance, navigate obstacles, and sustain momentum in the face of adversity.
- Shift from problem identification to proactive problem solving, fostering a culture of innovation and continuous improvement.
- Discover how leaders can create structures that encourage ownership, responsibility, and commitment to shared goals.
- Gain actionable tools to support PLCs, strengthen collaboration, and implement change effectively.