## Agenda

**Las Vegas, NV · November 2–4**

### Wednesday, November 2

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>7:00–8:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Registration</td>
<td>Grand Salon</td>
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| 8:00–9:45 a.m. | **Keynote**—Todd Whitaker  
*Motivating People During Difficult Times* | Grand Ballroom Gold |
| 9:45–10:00 a.m.| Break                                                                 |                  |
| 10:00–11:30 a.m.| Breakouts                                                             |                  |
| 11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.| Lunch (on your own)                                                |                  |
| 1:00–2:30 p.m. | **Keynote**—Kenneth C. Williams  
*Shift Happens: Learning for Some Versus Learning for All* | Grand Ballroom Gold |
| 2:30–2:45 p.m. | Break                                                                 |                  |
| 2:45–4:15 p.m. | Breakouts                                                             |                  |

### Thursday, November 3

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| 8:00–9:30 a.m. | **Keynote**—Douglas Reeves  
*From Leading to Succeeding: The Seven Elements of Effective Leadership in Education* | Grand Ballroom Gold |
| 9:30–9:45 a.m. | Break                                                                 |                  |
| 9:45–11:15 a.m.| Breakouts                                                             |                  |
| 11:15 a.m.–12:45 p.m.| Lunch (on your own)                                               |                  |
| 12:45–2:15 p.m.| **Keynote**—Timothy D. Kanold  
*Leading and Living a Positive, Highly Engaged, High-Energy, and Well-Balanced Work Life* | Grand Ballroom Gold |
| 2:15–2:30 p.m. | Break                                                                 |                  |
| 2:30–4:00 p.m. | Breakouts                                                             |                  |

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| 8:00–9:30 a.m. | **Keynote**—Yong Zhao  
*Counting What Counts: Reframing Education Outcomes* | Grand Ballroom Gold |
| 9:30–9:45 a.m. | Break                                                                 |                  |
| 9:45–11:30 a.m.| **Keynote**—Anthony Muhammad  
*All Means All: The Rebirth of Egalitarianism* | Grand Ballroom Gold |
# Breakouts at a Glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presenter &amp; Title</th>
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<td>The Six Secrets of Highly Effective Mathematics</td>
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Session Descriptions

Cassandra Erkens
Leading Leaders
In a collaborative culture, leadership happens at all levels of the organization, and it cannot be left to chance that the work will be done well. Remarkable leaders are intentional and transparent in their leadership work. They design for leadership to be explored, practiced, and mastered in micro and macro moments. Cassandra Erkens explores the consistent practices that leaders at every level of successful PLC organizations use to create meaningful change.

In this session, participants:
- Identify the leadership practices of successful leaders in collaborative cultures.
- Evaluate processes and strategies for developing leadership capacity.
- Identify strategies and actions that can shift culture and address conflict.

Modeling What Matters
Systemic change does not simply happen after a single workshop or even a series of workshops. Systemic change happens when leaders model the way and then engage staff in exploring those transparent practices. Research consistently highlights a need for better assessment practices at the classroom level. Fortunately, quality assessment practices are also quality leadership practices. This session explores how to model quality assessment practices through intentional leadership efforts.

In this session, participants:
- Understand the role of leadership in supporting significant change efforts.
- Identify the leadership practices that align with quality formative assessment.
- Evaluate options for engaging staff in the experience of quality formative assessment.

Timothy D. Kanold
[KEYNOTE] Leading and Living a Positive, Highly Engaged, High-Energy, and Well-Balanced Work Life
It is easy to be sapped by the relational energy and chaos of a school culture, but educators can create practices in their personal and professional lives to sustain balance and have a solid impact on the world around them. In this session, participants examine the irrefutable benefits of an energized and well-balanced school life. Timothy D. Kanold draws from his book The Five Disciplines of PLC Leaders to offer insights and tools for living and leading a more dynamic and fully engaged life. He provides researched strategies on becoming part of a relationally intelligent PLC culture and shows how PLC teachers and leaders can effectively engage every day on a powerful educational journey.

In this session, participants:
- Examine the importance of leading a high-energy life in a PLC culture.
- Understand how to personally and professionally live in the flow every day.
- Discover ways to pursue and sustain increased balance and energy and the positive changes this can effect at work and home.
**Becoming Great at Leading and Sustaining Change**

Taking on leadership roles can be a real challenge, because it requires the ability to lead other adults and to sustain elements of the expected culture. This session is designed to help budding leaders in a variety of roles, from central office leadership to school-site administration, deans, counselors, instructional coaches, and program leaders.

Timothy D. Kanold closely examines three aspects of work in education that support leadership of a sustainable change culture. Participants learn an easy-to-use process for creating a practical vision and using the vision to focus time and energy on issues that really matter. Educators examine the roles they play in providing meaningful feedback that supports the change expected.

Investing the effort to become great in these actions serves educators and those they lead. Having a clear understanding of what it means to produce high-quality change results in improving student achievement every day, all year long. These three attributes also hold the promise of helping educators become people that others naturally want to follow.

In this session, participants learn to:
- Create and use the power of vision: the voice of authority.
- Use vision to obtain focus: change to the right things!
- Understand formative feedback: inspire implementation of vital adult behaviors.

**The Six Secrets of Highly Effective Mathematics Instruction**

This motivational and engaging session is based on the Solution Tree 2015 handbook series: *Beyond the Common Core: A Handbook for Teaching Mathematics in a PLC at Work™.*

Series editor, author, and national mathematics education leader Dr. Timothy D. Kanold explores what to expect and what should no longer be tolerated in daily mathematics lessons. Participants learn how to use critical formative assessment and observational feedback in day-to-day mathematics instruction.

Participants also examine six “Instructional Swords” to use throughout their careers. These research-confirmed secrets of effective instruction move beyond normal checks for understanding and include creative ways to provide meaningful learning experiences and increase student perseverance on higher-level-cognitive-demand math tasks during class via productive struggle.

**Anthony Muhammad**

[KEYNOTE] All Means All: The Rebirth of Egalitarianism

Equality is the cornerstone of a public school system. In this session, participants examine the root causes of the achievement gap and leaders’ responsibility to create equitable learning environments. Since behavior is a product of thinking, a crucial first step is examining the mindsets of schools who work to liberate all students as opposed to those schools that seem content with historical inequality. Leaders must guide their staff through the process of tough and honest reflection, and Anthony Muhammad models that important process.
The Will to Lead: Creating Healthy School Cultures (Part 1)
In this session, Anthony Muhammad addresses the importance of transformational leadership. School culture provides the context for all good strategies. Today’s era of constant change requires leadership that develops human capital. A leader who understands how to motivate, develop, and build a consensus is thus worth his or her weight in gold.

In this session, participants:
- Understand the true meaning and value of school culture.
- Understand the importance of developing a shared mission and vision.
- Learn strategies to improve emotional intelligence and staff motivation.

The Will to Lead: Creating Healthy School Cultures (Part 2)
In this session, Anthony Muhammad explains the behaviors of a transformational leader. Together, participants address the issue of staff resistance to change and the leader’s role in building consensus. Participants explore three key areas: managing frustration, creating a culture of collaboration, and fair and reasonable accountability.

In this session, participants understand:
- How to analyze and manage staff frustration
- How to construct and protect productive collaborative relationships
- The balance between support and accountability

Overcoming the Achievement Gap Trap: Liberating Mindsets to Effect Change
Anthony Muhammad explores the connection between personal and institutional mindsets and academic achievement gaps. The issue of inequality in student learning outcomes has been studied and debated for many years. Dr. Muhammad seeks to establish that the primary culprit in the fight to overcome the achievement gap is rooted in our thinking.

Participants come to understand:
- The true meaning and value of school culture
- The power of mindsets and their influence on educator effectiveness
- How to shift from damaging mindsets (superiority and inferiority) to high levels of efficacy (liberation mindset)

Transforming School Culture
Anthony Muhammad addresses the issue of conflicting agendas within schools. A high-performing school has a very clear purpose, and high levels of learning for all students. Participants examine the barriers to aligning individual agendas with the organization’s agenda, and what all parties must do to develop the synergy necessary to guarantee learning. Participants use the theoretical framework developed by Dr. Muhammad in the book Transferring School Culture: How to Overcome Staff Division (2009) as the basis for developing a collaborative culture.
In this session, participants learn:
- How staff division develops and how to prevent it
- How to heal old social and professional wounds
- How to create an environment where every professional can thrive

**Douglas Reeves**

**[KEYNOTE] From Leading to Succeeding: The Seven Elements of Effective Leadership in Education**

In this interactive keynote address, Douglas Reeves shares the results from his latest book *From Leading to Succeeding* (Solution Tree Press, 2016). Participants learn the latest research on:

- Systems thinking in action
- Passion and purpose
- Building and maintaining trust
- Focus and fragmentation
- Leverage: What matters most?
- Leading change
- Sustainability

**Next Generation Accountability: Getting the Most From ESSA**

With the passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Congress has granted greater discretion to leaders at the district and school level than at any time in the past twenty years.

In this interactive keynote, participants:

- Identify new accountability indicators that are unique to the individual needs of each district and school.
- Learn how to integrate 21st century skills of creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, and communication into school and district accountability systems.
- Create new cause indicators to show stakeholders how leaders, teachers, and parents influence student achievement.
- Integrate quantitative and qualitative accountability indicators to provide the most holistic and accurate picture of performance in districts and schools.

Participants engage with Douglas Reeves directly through text and Twitter throughout the presentation. Participants also receive free downloadable tools that can be used immediately to improve leadership and learning in their school systems.

**Leadership Self-Assessment: Building a Resilient Leadership Team**

In this interactive session, participants engage in a series of self-assessments designed to maximize the capabilities of each leader and the entire leadership team. As a result of this session, participants have a clear roadmap of next steps to improve the ability and resilience of their leadership team.
Julie Schmidt

Yes We Can! General and Special Educators Collaborating in a Professional Learning Community

In this session, Julie Schmidt focuses on teams, structures, and roles in a PLC that support high levels of collaboration in general and special education and the shifts necessary to make those levels a reality. She delves into the historic opportunity to improve access to rigorous academic content standards and what makes that feasible. Julie draws attention to the importance of a guaranteed and viable curriculum for all in closing the achievement gap, a process for prioritizing and unpacking standards as a team, and the long-term implications for writing Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals.

In this session, participants:
- Consider the role of special educators on various collaborative teams and structures.
- Examine the development of a culture of shared learning experiences.
- Gain clarity on potential decision-making guidelines for individual students regarding exposure to grade-level targets.

Capacity and Change

In this session, participants dig into the important work of a guiding coalition in the PLC journey and explore the role of leaders at all levels (administration, teacher leaders, and so on). Understanding the change process and what to expect is paramount to the success of any school improvement plan and critical as an organization develops into a deeply embedded professional learning community. Julie Schmidt explains how loose-and-tight and systemic leadership are crucial to ongoing sustainability.

In this session, participants:
- Consider leadership through the lens of their current role.
- Examine what it takes to develop a guiding coalition.
- Explore the change process and what to expect when it happens.

Eric Twadell

Leading by Design: Four Essential Conversations for District, School, and Team Leaders in Creating and Sustaining Professional Learning Communities

District, school, and team leaders play an important role in the development of professional learning communities (PLCs). This session explores the essential characteristics and responsibilities of leaders in creating and sustaining a culture of collaboration and shared responsibility in a PLC.

In this session, participants:
- Take part in four leadership conversations that focus on building coherence and clarity for the work of leaders in a PLC.
- Discover how effective leaders facilitate a culture of shared responsibility.
- Examine strategies that effective leaders must utilize to develop a learning-centered culture in districts, schools, and teams.
It's the Culture, Silly: Leading the Cultural Shift to Evidence-Based Grading and Reporting in a Professional Learning Community

Participants explore the leadership practices essential to shifting a school culture to one based on evidence-based grading and reporting and a fundamental purpose of learning rather than teaching. Leaders explore the elements required to facilitate cultural change and rethink the assumptions regarding traditional grading practices, thus developing an understanding of practices consistent with learning.

Todd Whitaker

[KEYNOTE] Motivating People During Difficult Times

Having high-energy staff members is critical to the success of every school and district. Everyone who works with students must come to school in a positive frame of mind each day. This is even more challenging during difficult times. In this session, Todd Whitaker focuses on ways for educational leaders to motivate themselves and everyone in their organization. Attendees also learn how to take away the power from any negative people in the workplace. During good times, it is nice to have a positive focus, but during challenging times, it is a necessity.

Have You Shifted Your Monkey Today?

In many schools and districts, the best teachers often end up doing too much while the worst employees do too little. There may even be educators who work at avoiding work. In this session, Todd Whitaker explains how to handle those who whine, pout, or complain endlessly. Using insights from the book Shifting the Monkey, Dr. Whitaker helps participants understand how to lead their schools more effectively by creating responsible, hardworking, and motivated employees.

Friday Focus: A Weekly Staff Memo That Works

In this workshop, Todd Whitaker presents the "Friday Focus," a weekly staff memo that motivates, organizes, sensitizes, and serves as an impetus for change throughout the school. Principals learn how to use an existing tool—the staff bulletin, blog, or email—to help establish expectations, build belief systems, and provide a tool for continuous school improvement. Dr. Whitaker shares samples along with specific techniques that enable all principals to infuse energy and excitement into their staff on a continual basis.

Dealing With Difficult Teachers

Resistant, negative, mediocre—whatever they are called, they are the most difficult staff members with whom to work. Todd Whitaker shows how to affect, regulate, or eliminate these members using role-playing, specific examples, and exact strategies educators can implement immediately. Every institution has difficult staff, and every principal has the power to improve their school by reducing the influence of negative leaders and motivating less effective teachers, all while maintaining the respect of the faculty.

What Great Principals Do Differently

What are the specific qualities and practices of great principals that elevate them above the rest? Blending school-centered studies and experience working with hundreds of administrators, Dr. Whitaker focuses on the 18 things that the most successful principals do. Participants leave knowing what great
principals do differently, why these things make them more effective, and how to immediately implement each of these practices into their schools.

Kenneth C. Williams

[KEYNOTE] Shift Happens: Learning for Some Versus Learning for All

Why do some schools show steady progress implementing PLCs while others stall? Some successful schools benefit from being located in the “right area” and have access to better teachers, better leaders, or better funding. While many factors influence the creation of a PLC culture, by far one of the biggest distinctions between schools that thrive and those that barely survive is recognizing the subtle shifts in practice that make seismic differences. These paradigm shifts determine whether schools have a culture of learning for some or a culture of learning for all. Kenneth C. Williams helps make clear the shifts required to move schools in the direction of high levels of learning for every child, including the shift from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset.

Starting a Movement: How a Guiding Coalition Leads From the Front

Reculturing a school into a professional learning community is a movement, and a movement begins with a small, select group of staff members willing to lead from the front.

Kenneth C. Williams makes the case for why schools must rethink the role of the traditional school leadership team and provides guidance and a toolkit of resources on transitioning instead into a powerful guiding coalition. Participants explore the differences in forms of leadership, which require more than a name change, as well as the required competencies of its members.

12 Angry Men: The Power of Productive Conflict

Kenneth C. Williams uses the classic film 12 Angry Men as a lens to discuss qualities that characterize effective teams, including:

- Open inquiry
- Accepting responsibility for decision making
- Participation of team members
- Productive conflict to discover ideas and reveal new information
- The essential role of diversity in decision making

The film explores consensus-building techniques among a group of men whose diverse personalities create intense conflict. Kenneth shows how teams face and overcome similar challenges to collaborate and succeed. The primary learning outcome is for participants to gain ideas to substantially improve team effectiveness.

Yong Zhao

[KEYNOTE] Counting What Counts: Reframing Education Outcomes

What human qualities and abilities should be valued and measured as education outcomes? Answers to this question directly affect educational policy and practice. Yong Zhao discusses why the pursuit of traditional test scores has led to misconceived policies and misdirected practical efforts to improve
education. Dr. Zhao presents a list of potentially more valuable outcomes that have been ignored traditionally. He challenges the traditional assessment framework and proposes a new framework that emphasizes diversity, collaboration, long-term outcomes, and non-academic outcomes.