

# Agenda

## Hollywood, CA • September 28–30

### Wednesday, September 28

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Registration
	Continental Breakfast
8:00–9:45 a.m.	<b>Keynote</b> —Luis F. Cruz <i>Simplifying Response to Intervention: Four Essential Guiding Principles</i>
9:45–10:00 a.m.	Break
10:00–11:30 a.m.	<b>Breakouts</b>
11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)
1:00–2:30 p.m.	<b>Keynote</b> —Austin Buffum <i>Concentrated Instruction: Designing and Refining Our Instruction Around Student Learning</i>
2:30–2:45 p.m.	Break
2:45–4:15 p.m.	<b>Breakouts</b>

### Thursday, September 29

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Registration
	Continental Breakfast
8:00–9:30 a.m.	<b>Keynote</b> —Austin Buffum <i>Convergent Assessment: Connecting the Dots to Increase Student Learning</i>
9:30–9:45 a.m.	Break
9:45–11:15 a.m.	<b>Breakouts</b>
11:15 a.m.–12:45 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)
12:45–2:15 p.m.	<b>Keynote</b> —Mike Mattos <i>Certain Access: How to Create a Multitiered System of Support</i>
2:15–2:30 p.m.	Break
2:30–4:00 p.m.	<b>Breakouts</b>
4:00–4:45 p.m.	Team Time <i>A collaboration time for your team. Presenters are available for help in team discussion.</i>

### Friday, September 30

7:00–8:00 a.m.	Continental Breakfast
8:00–10:15 a.m.	<b>In-Depth Seminar</b> —Austin Buffum & Brian K. Butler <i>Putting It All Together: Creating a Multitiered System of Supports—Elementary</i>
	<b>In-Depth Seminar</b> —Mike Mattos & Luis F. Cruz <i>Putting It All Together: Creating a Multitiered System of Supports—Secondary</i>
	<b>In-Depth Seminar</b> —Nicole Dimich Vagle <i>Putting It All Together: Linking Instruction, Assessment, and Interventions</i>
10:15–10:30 a.m.	Break
10:30–11:30 a.m.	<b>Keynote</b> —Mike Mattos <i>Eating the Elephant: Transforming Ideas Into Action</i>

Agenda is subject to change.

## Breakouts at a Glance

Presenters & Titles	Wednesday, September 28		Thursday, September 29	
	10:00–11:30 a.m.	2:45–4:15 p.m.	9:45–11:15 a.m.	2:30–4:00 p.m.
<b>Austin Buffum</b>				
Creating a Culture of Collective Responsibility: From Believing to Doing	X			
The Chicken <i>and</i> the Egg: Behavioral Interventions as Part of RTI at Work		X		
Digging Deeper Into the Teaching Cycle—Secondary			X	
Top-Down, Bottom-Up, or Both?				X
<b>Brian K. Butler</b>				
Collaboration in the Core—Why Are We Here?	X			
Concentrated Instruction: Mason Crest’s Process for Identifying the Essentials—Where Do We Need to Go?		X		
Elementary Teaching—Assessing Cycle			X	
Certain Access at Mason Crest—Elementary				X
<b>Luis F. Cruz</b>				
From a 20th Century Leadership Team to a 21st Guiding Coalition	X			
If Your Teams Cannot Collaborate Effectively, Then “Forget About It!”		X		
Staff Resistance to the RTI Process: What Do We Do When Colleagues at Our Site Refuse to Participate?			X	
Applying the Four Cs of RTI to Ensure Learning for English Learners				X
<b>Mike Mattos</b>				
Digging Deeper Into the RTI at Work Pyramid: Creating Collaborative Teams	X			
Learning CPR: Making Your Current Site Interventions More Effective		X		
Teaching Will: Effective Secondary Behavior Interventions			X	
It’s About Time: Planning Interventions and Extensions in Secondary School				X
<b>Nicole Dimich Vagle</b>				
Schoolwide Data: What Is Our Current Reality?	X			
Concentrated Instruction—Secondary		X		
Analyzing Formative Assessment Student Work Products			X	
Investing Students in the RTI Process				X

Agenda is subject to change.

# Session Descriptions



## Austin Buffum

### **Concentrated Instruction: Designing and Refining Our Instruction Around Student Learning**

Rather than asking how to raise scores, collaborative teams should ask what specifically students need to master and how they can construct a plan for instruction, intervention, and enrichment to accomplish the goal of mastery for every student.

In his keynote, Austin Buffum helps teams clarify how to identify the essential knowledge and skills students must master to be successful in school and in life.



### **Convergent Assessment: Connecting the Dots to Increase Student Learning**

Assessment *converges* collective responsibility, concentrated instruction, and certain access to meet the unique needs of each individual student. This interactive keynote highlights the critical understandings and strategies that collaborative teacher teams need in order to use assessment to *improve* student achievement, not merely to measure and record it. The guiding question, *Where are we now?*, frames the thinking and processes of powerful convergent assessment.

### **Creating a Culture of Collective Responsibility: From Believing to Doing**

Collective responsibility is built on two assumptions: 1) We, as educators, must accept responsibility to ensure high levels of learning for all students, and 2) all students are capable of learning at high levels.

Participants in this session:

- Assess their own school's beliefs relative to the two assumptions above.
- Acquire tools and strategies to create this condition in their school.
- Examine the differences between cultural change and structural change.

### **The Chicken *and* the Egg: Behavioral Interventions as Part of RTI at Work**

The most at-risk students usually lack the will and the skill necessary for success. Successful interventions require teachers to address the specific causes of a student's difficulties, not just the symptoms. Focusing holistically on causes relating to will and skill helps educators pinpoint the origins of students' struggles and then resolve them more effectively.

Participants in this session:

- Learn the "pro-solve" process from the book *Uniting Academic and Behavior Interventions: Solving the Skill or Will Dilemma*.
- Use the pro-solve process as part of a team to design academic and behavioral interventions based on a student's case study.
- Understand how behavioral interventions are organized, implemented, and monitored according to the RTI at Work™ inverted pyramid and three particular teams.



= Keynote

# Session Descriptions

## **Austin Buffum**

### **Digging Deeper Into the Teaching Cycle—Secondary**

Austin Buffum provides additional information regarding the teaching–assessing cycle discussed in the “Convergent Assessment” keynote. By structuring informal and formal assessments that provide feedback to students and teachers alike, more students experience success on summative, end-of-unit assessments.

Participants in this session:

- Unwrap standards into learning targets.
- Design assessment strategies at the target level.
- Develop a unit assessment map that answers the question, Where are we now?, at each step of learning.

### **Top-Down, Bottom-Up, or Both?**

Why are so many schools and districts struggling to reap the benefits of RTI? Some mistakenly view RTI as a new way to qualify students for special education—a process of trying a few token, regular interventions before referring struggling students for traditional special education testing and placement. Others implement RTI from a compliance perspective, doing just enough to meet mandates. Still others’ RTI efforts are driven by a desire to raise test scores, which too often leads to practices counterproductive to the guiding principles of RTI.

Austin Buffum explores the findings in two articles and applies these findings to the leadership aspects of RTI at the school site and the central office. Participants learn the difference between bureaucratic and professional change strategies while examining their own RTI implementation efforts. Dr. Buffum facilitates a structured dialogue among site and central office staff as they share best practices for best supporting and sustaining RTI efforts across entire districts or systems.

## **Austin Buffum & Brian K. Butler**

### **In-Depth Seminar**

#### **Putting It All Together: Creating a Multitiered System of Supports—Elementary**

This seminar guides participants through the process of creating a multitiered system of interventions. Based on RTI at Work™ guiding principles, this process includes embedded Tier 1 core support, targeted Tier 2 supplemental help, and intensive Tier 3 interventions.

Participants in this session:

- Complete, as a team, the RTI at Work™ inverted pyramid.
- Review essential elements of the RTI process.
- Identify current strengths, areas of improvement, and immediate action steps.

# Session Descriptions

## **Brian K. Butler**

### **Collaboration in the Core—Why Are We Here?**

High-quality Tier 1 instruction is critical to helping every child achieve high levels of learning. To ensure this instruction, adult learning should be intentional and inclusive. Professional development should not be a one-shot, sit-and-get lecture or workshop, but rather a multifaceted, collective, and ongoing approach. Educators who continually engage in job-embedded professional development can help guarantee high-quality Tier 1 instruction and learning for all students.

In this session, participants examine how to:

- Build language, knowledge, and expectations through structured, whole-staff learning.
- Create master schedules that involve all staff.
- Plan meetings for grade-level teams.
- Develop lesson plan models that focus on differentiation in Tier 1.
- Work as coteachers to learn and reflect together in real time.

### **Concentrated Instruction: Mason Crest’s Process for Identifying the Essentials—Where Do We Need to Go?**

Brian K. Butler shows how staff members at Mason Crest Elementary were introduced to the process of identifying essential standards and using them to drive instruction. The Virginia school is a showcase for success and received Solution Tree’s first DuFour Award in 2016 for demonstrating exceptional levels of student achievement.

In this session, principal Brian K. Butler provides examples of an organic approach that unfolds during team meetings. It involves identifying essential standards, creating formative assessments, and developing a unit outline—all to inform what instruction looks like. Participants also learn to write “I can” statements in student-friendly language that align to essential standards. Students use “I can” statements to set goals and build ownership of their learning.

Teachers can return to their schools ready to increase student achievement and help their collaborative teams develop a common interpretation of standards and rigor.

### **Convergent Assessment: Data Diving and Finding Pearls—Where Are We Now?**

The formative assessment process is fluid and occurs often during each lesson. Collaborative teams identify what is essential for students to know, creating common assessments to target each skill, but teams need to use data in a laser-like manner. It means diving deep, but in doing so, teachers can find the pearls that inform their practices.

Brian K. Butler provides a data set and protocol for examining assessment information to target interventions and extensions and to identify teaching strategies. Participants practice answering the questions, How do we respond when students haven’t learned? How do we respond when they already know it? They also learn how to build time for analysis into the regular practice of collaborative teams.

Brian introduces the “skill ladder” for targeting the entry point of learning for students, and teachers practice using it. He also engages participants in role-playing activities, and they should attend with other members of their school teams, if possible.

# Session Descriptions

## **Brian K. Butler**

### **Certain Access at Mason Crest—Elementary**

In 2016, Mason Crest Elementary was singled out as Solution Tree's first DuFour Award recipient, an accolade for demonstrating exceptionally high levels of student achievement. In this session, principal Brian K. Butler offers Mason Crest as a case study in how to ensure learning for students and adults.

Brian focuses on the school's data-analysis protocol and a progress-monitoring process that allows staff to reflect on their own teaching and make learning more intense for all students. He focuses on three key questions: Where do we need to go? Where are we now? How do we get every child there?

Attendees learn how to create flexible and fluid student-grouping scenarios based on skills or concepts students need to learn. In doing so, they learn how to translate Mason Crest's principles of certain access into success at their schools.



## **Luis F. Cruz**

### **Simplifying Response to Intervention: Four Essential Guiding Principles**

Many schools struggle to realize the powerful potential of RTI because they are too focused on paperwork and protocols, think too rigidly to meet the unique needs of each school, and view RTI narrowly as a means of qualifying kids for special education.

In this session, Luis F. Cruz shares a new way of thinking about RTI and simplifies the process to four essential elements: collective responsibility, concentrated instruction, convergent assessment, and certain access.

### **From a 20th Century Leadership Team to a 21st Century Guiding Coalition**

The effective implementation of a system that responds when students do not initially learn is complex and requires a concerted, well-informed effort. Who better to ignite this movement than a combination of teachers, staff, and administrators working together as a guiding coalition? Luis F. Cruz explains the need for such a team to mold the culture necessary to successfully implement RTI mindsets and practices. Participants discover the difference between a school's often antiquated leadership team and the powerful potential of a guiding coalition focused on ensuring all students learn at high levels.

Participants can expect to:

- Learn how a guiding coalition generates the collective responsibility needed to help all students learn at high levels.
- Understand that implementing the RTI process is challenging without a firm understanding of the different roles teams throughout the school need to undertake.
- Understand the need for various stakeholders, especially teachers, to align effective leadership practices with the implementation of essential RTI processes.



# Session Descriptions

## **Luis F. Cruz**

### **If Your Teams Cannot Collaborate Effectively, Then “Forget About It!”**

Is effective teacher collaboration synonymous with collective planning? Is sharing resources with one another what collaboration looks like for the most part? In this session, Luis F. Cruz shares the pivotal role collaboration plays when attempting to implement RTI practices. Participants discover what teams must take into consideration when identifying and unpacking essential standards and how to extrapolate clear learning targets from these standards.

Participants can expect to learn:

- The difference between ineffective “coblaboration” and effective collaboration
- The process of identifying standards all students are expected to learn at high levels and unpacking them to generate learning targets to build common formative and summative assessments

### **Staff Resistance to the RTI Process: What Do We Do When Colleagues at Our Site Refuse to Participate?**

Embracing the RTI process requires staff members to shift from the status quo. However, changing policies, practices, and procedures is challenging, and certain members may resist implementation. Luis F. Cruz introduces preventative measures teams can use to proactively address resistance.

Participants can expect to learn:

- Why resistance is an expected reaction when attempting to implement the RTI process
- The difference between rational and irrational forms of resistance and how to address each
- How to create the collective responsibility necessary to ensure effective implementation

### **Applying the Four Cs of RTI to Ensure Learning for English Learners**

While the English learner population continues to grow in schools across the nation, few schools have been able to demonstrate significant levels of learning for this critical cohort. Do educators lack the pedagogical skills to promote learning for these students? Do schools lack the resources? Luis F. Cruz, a former and current English learner, explains the practical integration of collective leadership and the four Cs (collective responsibility, concentrated instruction, convergent assessment, and certain access) as it applies to intervention for English learners.

Participants can expect to:

- Learn how the formation of an English learner task force aids intervention.
- Understand the importance of building common language, knowledge, and expectations around job-embedded professional development through structured whole-staff learning opportunities.
- Discover that not all English learners require the same instruction and, as a result, must first integrate *concentrated instruction* to determine critical next steps to ensure high levels of learning.

# Session Descriptions



## Mike Mattos

### **Certain Access: How to Create a Multitiered System of Support**

How do educators guarantee that all children learn at high levels? Mike Mattos addresses this vital question and explains the critical role of support professionals in the RTI at Work™ process, including counselors, psychologists, librarians, and speech therapists.

In this session, participants:

- Learn how to create a system of supplemental and intensive interventions.
- Identify students in need of extra help.
- Explore options for resource allocation and staff responsibilities.
- Create processes for quality problem solving.
- Determine when special education identification is appropriate.



### **Eating the Elephant: Transforming Ideas Into Action**

*How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time.* Implementing RTI can be daunting. The key is to break the process into meaningful bites. In this keynote, Mike Mattos assists participants in creating practical action steps to implement the four Cs of RTI: collective responsibility, concentrated instruction, convergent assessment, and certain access. Participants leave with a doable implementation plan and the inspiration to get started.

### **Digging Deeper Into the RTI at Work Pyramid: Creating Collaborative Teams**

RTI is a collaborative process in which staff members take collective responsibility for the success of all students. To achieve this goal, three critical teams drive the RTI process: collaborative teacher teams, a school leadership team, and a school intervention team. Mike Mattos discusses team configurations and responsibilities, offering practical ideas for making teams highly effective.

Participants in this session:

- Learn options for successful teacher team configuration.
- Address how to form teams for singleton teachers.
- Discuss how support staff, such as school psychologists, counselors, or librarians, fit into collaborative teams.
- Define the characteristics of an effective site-intervention team.

### **Learning CPR: Making Your Current Site Interventions More Effective**

A system of interventions can only be as effective as the individual interventions that comprise it. Despite honorable intentions, many schools implement interventions that don't work, primarily because their efforts are not aligned to the characteristics of effective interventions. In this breakout, participants learn the six essential characteristics of effective interventions and a powerful process to apply them.

The most significant difference between a traditional school and a PLC is how each responds when students don't learn. Mike Mattos shows how to *create powerful responses* (CPR) when students don't learn.



= Keynote

# Session Descriptions

## **Mike Mattos**

### **Teaching Will: Effective Secondary Behavior Interventions**

Every secondary school has students who fail because they lack the will and scholarly behaviors needed to succeed. Skills like motivation and responsibility are not genetic traits. They can be taught, reinforced, and required at school. Mike Mattos provides practical examples and tools to assist secondary schools in creating a multitiered system of support to ensure students master the academic behaviors vital to success in the real world.

### **It's About Time: Planning Interventions and Extensions in Secondary School**

What does an effective secondary school intervention process look like? Mike Mattos provides participants with practical, proven intervention ideas, including how to create a schoolwide process to identify students for extra help and how to create time for intervention and extension in the master schedule.

## **Mike Mattos & Luis F. Cruz**

### **In-Depth Seminar**

#### **Putting It All Together: Creating a Multitiered System of Supports—Secondary**

This seminar guides participants through the process of creating a multitiered system of interventions. Based on RTI at Work™ guiding principles, this process includes embedded Tier 1 core support, targeted Tier 2 supplemental help, and intensive Tier 3 interventions.

Participants in this session:

- Complete, as a team, the RTI at Work™ inverted pyramid.
- Review essential elements of the RTI process.
- Identify current strengths, areas of improvement, and immediate action steps.

## **Nicole Dimich Vagle**

### **Schoolwide Data: What Is Our Current Reality?**

A focused analysis of schoolwide data is essential when committing to collective responsibility for *all* student learning. Which students are or are not learning at high levels in each grade or course? What academic and behavioral issues do adults in the building need to address? These questions and others paint a picture of student needs that staff can collectively work to solve. The data—properly compiled, analyzed, and addressed—is a critical part of understanding student needs and informing plans to help students gain confidence and learn at high levels.

In this session, participants:

- Identify the types of qualitative and quantitative data needed to address academic and behavior realities.
- Determine data currently gathered to inform a collective responsibility and data that still need to be gathered.
- Consider potential next steps based on insights from data.

# Session Descriptions

## **Nicole Dimich Vagle**

### **Concentrated Instruction—Secondary**

The task of ensuring learning can be overwhelming, but concentrated instruction provides a clear picture of what students should learn. It makes the task manageable.

Concentrated instruction is a method for building a focused, coherent plan that identifies essential or priority standards. The process increases student ownership in their learning and helps collaborative teams of teachers develop a common interpretation of standards and rigor.

How do we establish essential standards? What tools and protocols help teachers use standards in a meaningful way as part of instruction and assessment? Who should be involved in developing standards? Nicole Dimich Vagle answers these questions, providing a pathway for individual teachers and teams to ensure their instructional practices help all students achieve mastery.

### **Analyzing Formative Assessment Student Work Products**

The formative assessment process occurs naturally and often within each lesson taught throughout the day. Teachers can collect observational data to recognize common misconceptions students have about material, as well as strategies students use to complete a task. Additionally, common formative assessments provide numerical data and examples of student work. When analyzed by a team, these items offer insights into the extent students learned essential standards and next steps to help them grow. Each plays a role in helping teachers match instructional interventions to the needs of students.

In this session, participants can expect to:

- Explore ways to collect meaningful data related to student learning.
- Analyze student work to discover student levels of proficiency and identify interventions they need to achieve mastery.
- Identify ways to build time for analysis into the regular professional practice of collaborative teams.

### **Investing Students in the RTI Process**

Too often, adults take ownership of having all students learn but fail to bring students into the process. How are students able to articulate what they are learning, their strengths, and next steps? How are students learning from and acting on the specific feedback given during instruction and on assessments? How do students track their progress on essential standards? In order for student reflections on learning to be most meaningful, educators must consider how classroom culture positively influences a student's disposition and beliefs about how he or she can learn. Teachers can help students understand *why* they need an intervention and how they learn best when they are invested members of the process.

In this session, participants can expect to:

- Identify characteristics of a classroom culture focused on learning.
- Recognize powerful feedback processes with students.
- Explore ways for students to reflect through self-regulation and tracking.

# Session Descriptions

**Nicole Dimich Vagle**

**In-Depth Seminar**

**Putting It All Together: Linking Instruction, Assessment, and Intervention**

Collaborative teams must link instruction, assessment, and intervention to build a solid RTI process. The key question is, How do we do this?

Nicole Dimich Vagle shows how to separate learning targets from prioritized standards as part of designing assessments. She shares, practical tools, protocols, and examples for developing assessments that offer the best information on student learning. In the seminar, teams develop plans to implement upon returning to their schools. Participants can expect to identify key elements of assessment design that provide for meaningful interventions and student investment.