

# Critical Questions in Education Conference

Presented by the

Academy for Educational Studies

## **2025 Conversation theme:**

The journey toward understanding  
teaching and learning

Monday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>

**Conference Registration**

**Light breakfast buffet**

7:30—9:30

**Greetings and Announcements**

**8:00**

Steven P. Jones

Executive Director, Academy for Educational Studies

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**First Concurrent Session**

**8:30 – 9:30**

### **1. Enlivening learning: Thinking classrooms and school gardens**

Paper/presentation

#### **School gardens and kitchens: Challenges and implications for the neoliberal meritocracy**

Michael Szolowicz, California State University, Bakersfield

Is learning that promotes the common good neglected? Standardized tests emphasize competitiveness for meritocratic neoliberal markets whereas school gardens emphasize socially-based learning. What role should gardens play in education?

#### **Learning by doing: Implementing Building Thinking Classrooms in an elementary mathematics content pedagogy course**

Rebecca Gault, University of West Georgia

Experience how Building Thinking Classrooms transforms preservice elementary teachers'

understandings of mathematics instruction through active participation, visible thinking strategies, and standards-aligned collaborative problem-solving.

## **2. Mapping our educational journeys**

Paper/presentation

### **Mapping journeys: Early childhood educators' reflections on learning, teaching, and transformation in a midwestern undergraduate program**

Maria J. Ruiz-Martinez, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Leanne Evans, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Margaret Bartlett, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Through education journey maps, early childhood educators reflect on their pivotal moments in learning and teaching. Their narratives, shared as testimonios, capture the complex interplay between identity, lived experiences, and teaching.

### **Mapping academic lineage: Examining spheres of influence in local education agencies**

Daniel Casebeer, Seton Hill University

Melissa Tamburrino, Seton Hill University

Alycia Derr, Seton Hill University

Krista McWilliams, Seton Hill University

In addition to exploring the storehouse of school memories of teacher educators and their students, this presentation visually examines their sphere of influence, vis-à-vis the ripple effect in local schools.

## **3. Strategies for special education teachers: Helping second language students**

Paper/presentation

### **How do teachers design curriculum for second language learners who also qualify for special education?**

Penelope Keough, National University, San Diego CA

A blueprint to implement Culturally Responsive Teaching curriculum which provides equity in a general education classroom for students whose second language is English (ELL) who also qualify for special education.

### **Embracing diversity in special education teacher preparation programs: Student and faculty perspectives from U.S. and Spanish universities**

Patricia Peterson, Northern Arizona University

Spanish and U.S. researchers investigated inclusive strategies utilized in teacher preparation classrooms. Results led to recommendations for special education teacher preparation programs using inclusive practices and Universal Design for Learning.

#### **4. Opening up pathways and opportunities for non-traditional students**

Paper/presentation

##### **Relationship trumps technique: Building communities of care and belonging for post-traditional students**

Cindy Ryan, Western Oregon University

In this presentation, we examine how an instructor's own familial background helped influence how she works to create and maintain cultures of belongingness and care for post-traditional pre-service teachers.

##### **GED to EdD: The journey of a life-long learner**

Amanda Downard, McKendree University

Our past, present, and future can shape our success as educators and the success of our students. We can make a difference by incorporating three important practices into our teaching.

#### **5. "Students, these days . . . "**

Paper/presentation

##### **Reaching and teaching Gen Z**

Kristin Chamberlain, Ohio University

Laura M. Harrison, Ohio University

As a mental health clinician and professor and higher education professor, we will explore the student mental health crisis and its implications for teaching and learning.

##### **Teaching rewired students**

Barb Ramos, Simpson College

Students have changed! We will consider the impact of smartphones, social media, and an online presence on students and what this means for educators and the teaching and learning process.

#### **Second Concurrent Session**

**9:40 – 10:40**

#### **6. Education in a threatening and unstable political environment**

Paper/presentation

##### **This crisis is bigger than the Trump circus: How we got here**

Joseph C. Wegwert, Northern Arizona University

This paper examines the current dysfunctional political environment, its serious threats to democratic life and institutions, and offers an analysis of the historical and cultural forces at work.

## **How can affective pedagogies help educators persist/resist in troubling times?**

Kelly E. Demers, Saint Anselm College

This paper explores how pedagogical approaches rooted in affect theory can build a teacher educator's capacities to help preservice teachers resist/persist repressive educational policies.

### **7. Twists and turns in our educational journeys**

Paper/presentation

## **Unexpected pivotal moments**

Cheryl Bailey, Mount Mary University

Pivotal moments in my journey came in unexpected ways. Encountering students that surprised me, a classroom observation, and a chance meeting at a review panel shaped my teaching.

## **All sides of the desk: Simultaneous experiences as a student, professor, and administrator**

Sarah Johnson, Oklahoma State University

Navigating education from all sides, this session examines the unique perspective of a simultaneous student, professor, and administrator, highlighting challenges, opportunities, and how these roles intersect to reshape leadership, pedagogy, and professional growth in education.

### **8. Stress in the classroom—and ideas about how it might be lessened**

Paper/presentation

## **The effects of stress on information processing and learning**

Mark Staal, American Board of Professional Psychology

This presentation will focus on the effects of different stressors on attentional processing, memory, and resulting human judgment and decision-making. Time pressure, emotional strain, fatigue and task load reduce the volume and quality of information processed, causing reduced attention, degraded memory, and less effective learning. Protective factors and compensatory strategies will be explored.

## **Strategies to build resiliency and to reduce the negative effects of stress on learning**

Laura Staal, University of North Carolina at Pembroke

Participants will explore effective and engaging strategies, including the use of storytelling and bibliotherapy, to promote resilience and to reduce anxiety in the classroom. Time will be provided for attendees to share and reflect on additional methods and teaching practices utilized in their respective educational settings.

### **9. Leadership and followership: Arguments for both**

Paper/presentation

## **A teacher leader's journey of self-discovery: Teaching, learning, and leading**

Nathan Bond, Texas State University

Teachers often act as leaders without knowing about teacher leadership. This presentation

recounts a professor's journey to discovering how earlier in his career he was a high school teacher leader.

**The journey toward following well: Understanding the role of followership in teaching and teacher education**

Kelly Lenarz, Trinity Christian College,

This presentation explores the often-overlooked role of followership in teaching and teacher education, examining how effective followership complements leadership, enhances school culture, and contributes to impactful, collaborative learning environments in K-12 education.

**10. Alternative pathways to becoming a teacher**

Paper/presentation

**Who will teach the children?**

Chin-Hsiu Chen, Salisbury University

Amber Meyer, Salisbury University

The future of early childhood education programs requires questioning how traditional teacher preparation can recruit and retain non-traditional early childhood educators through self-advocacy and professionalism.

**Dare to be different**

Darlene B. Marnich, Point Park University

As the only provider of this alternative certification path in Pennsylvania, this presentation will describe the partnership between Point Park University and ABCTE to help alleviate the teacher shortage.

**Third Concurrent Session**

**10:50 – 11:50**

**11. Looking back at “recent” history:**

**Key events and policies that helped shape education**

Paper/presentation

**Recalling a center stage 1960's debate: Measurable learning objectives**

Jayson Evaniuck, Anderson University

Timothy L. Simpson, Morehead State University

This presentation will revive late 1960's debates over measurable objectives in the classroom. Despite victory for proponents of measurable objectives, their objections were inadequately addressed and garner renewed attention today.

**The calamitous republic: How NCLB and 9/11 killed democracy in American schools**

Matthew Schertz, University of Montana

NCLB and 9/11 combined to collectively shape the loss of core democratic practices over the past quarter century—denying young adults habits that would make them critical consumers of information. Barbara Tuchman’s masterpiece—*A Distant Mirror: The Calamitous 14<sup>th</sup> Century*—elucidates the darkness of that era and helps shed light on the chaos that has recently consumed our republic.

## **12. Sharing stories of our educational journeys**

Panel discussion

### **Securely attached to learning: Early memories**

Siobhan Rhea Dalrymple, Governors State University

Amy Beth Wagner, Governors State University

Glenna Lambert Howell, Governors State University

Presenters describe core memories of pivotal persons and life episodes, linking those to theories/current best practices and relating these key experiences to presenters/ attachment style, resilience, and academic success.

## **13. Play in the classroom**

Paper/presentation

### **Immersing young girls in interactive, engaging STEM play: What did we learn?**

Tingting Xu, Stephen F. Austin State University

Lexa Jack, Kinectory Learning Centers

This study explored young girls’ interactive engagement in engineering play. Results revealed non-biased engineering play for young children and calls for age-appropriate, play-based engineering learning experiences for all children.

### **Play in the classroom: It’s not just fun, it’s evidence-based**

Marna K. Winter, Elon University

Evidence-based mini-play sessions foster mindfulness, joy, and community—preparing students for deeper learning. This session highlights playful strategies that enhance engagement, critical thinking, and collaboration in higher education classrooms.

## **14. The journey from K-12 student to educational leader: Easing the way**

Panel discussion

### **From community classrooms to academic leadership: Bridging K-12 and higher education for educator preparation**

Karen Granger, University of North Carolina at Pembroke

Kelly Ficklin, University of North Carolina at Pembroke

Jennifer Whittington, University of North Carolina at Pembroke

This session highlights the journey from K-12 teaching to higher education leadership, offering strategies to bridge sectors, enhance teacher preparation, and foster collaboration for impactful educator development and leadership growth.

**15. Helping students find information and get their writing done**  
Paper/presentation

**Information literacy and higher education**

Wesley Adam Stroud, Oklahoma State University

This presentation will highlight the pathways to accomplishing learning outcomes related to information literacy within undergraduate programs at Oklahoma State University.

**Helping college students write**

Laura M. Harrison, Ohio University

I will discuss my recently published book, *Helping College Students Write* and facilitate conversation about helping students find their voice, especially in the age of generative artificial intelligence.

**Lunch**

**11:50 -- 1:20**

On your own

**Fourth Concurrent Session**  
**1:20 – 2:20**

**16. The academic journeys of Black scholars**  
Paper/presentation

**Navigating grief and identity: The emotional journey of Black scholars in academia**

Andrew Tobias Thomas, Augusta University

This presentation explores the emotional impact of grief, identity, and systemic barriers Black scholars in pursuit of a doctorate face in academia, emphasizing how these experiences shape their academic journeys and sense of belonging.

**Classroom teacher at age 14: A critical reflection on the learning that comes from 55 years as a minority educator**

Althea Pennerman, Salisbury University

This presentation will provide a reflective analysis of 55 years of teaching. The presenter will focus, first of all, on what is critical for the teacher, then what is critical for the learner.

**17. The most unhappy places in our society? – Schools and colleges**  
**What can we do to change this?**

Paper/presentation

**The demoralized schoolhouse: Why are schools and colleges becoming the most unhappy places in our society?**

Brian D. Yontz, Wittenberg University

This presentation invites conversation around why and how schools and colleges have become unhappy places. Teacher attrition, external social, economic, and political pressures, and educators' moral centers will be the basis of this presentation.

**The more we change, the more we stay the same**

Michael B. Cowan, Brigham Young University

This presentation examines five critical and persistent issues in K-12 education—teacher shortages and retention, equity and access, mental health and well-being, curriculum controversies, and school safety—and highlights the need for systemic solutions.

**18. Teaching is tough: Burnout—and how to recover after a hard day in the classroom**  
Paper/presentation

**Teacher burnout: Using the Maslach Burnout Inventory to examine teachers' years of experience, grade level and subject taught**

Sophia Paljevic, New York City Public Schools

Christina C. Pfister, Siena College

We report results of a study examining teacher burnout across three demographic characteristics (years of experience, subject taught, and grade level) using the Maslach Burnout Inventory—and discuss implications.

**My name is “no”; my sign is “no”; my number is “no”: Know how to let it go after a hard teaching day**

A. Suzie Henning, Eastern Washington University

This presentation will highlight strategies for recovery after a hard teaching day. Discussion will include a toolbox with adult social emotional learning skills for self-regulation, self-awareness, and self-care.

**19. “Follow the rules, kid” – Maybe not the thing to say to promote prosocial behaviors**  
Paper/presentation

**Developmental bibliotherapy to promote prosocial behavior—A tale of two Harolds: *Harold and the Purple Crayon* (1955) and *Harold Loves His Woolly Hat* (2018)**

Angela Brown-Burchett, Seacrest Country Day School

Developmental bibliotherapy uses shared reading and thoughtful discussions to promote prosocial behaviors. This presentation entitled A Tale of Two Harolds explores the prosocial insights illustrated in *Harold and the Purple Crayon* by Crockett Johnson (1955) and *Harold Loves His Woolly Hat* by Verne Koursky (2018).



**The underdetermination problem: How children generalize learned rules to novel action**

Emma Xiong, Duke University

We designed an experimental paradigm to understand how young children generalize learned rules to novel situations. Findings inform education and policy, highlighting strategies for developmentally appropriate classroom management.

**20. When unconscious bias rules: The cost to students**

Paper/presentation

**Distorted assumptions: Unconscious bias and its impact on equity for students with disabilities**

Nicole P. Farrow, University of the District of Columbia

This session explores how unconscious bias and distorted assumptions about students with disabilities perpetuate inequities. It offers strategies rooted in neurodiversity and University Design for Learning to foster equitable classrooms.

**Caste-based attribution of academic success in Indian elementary schools**

Steffi Elizabeth Thomas, Indiana University Bloomington

Caste permeates all aspects of life in India, shaping social norms, access, and influencing teaching and learning dynamics in classrooms.

**Fifth Concurrent Session**

**2:30 – 3:50**

**21. Challenging our assumptions about the purposes of education—especially in doctoral programs**

Paper/presentation

**Preserve or transform: Rethinking the purpose of schooling**

Kristin Schumacher, Indiana University Bloomington

Given the contentious political climate in the United States, we must ask: Are teachers meant to preserve the identities of their students, or are they charged with opening minds?

**Interpellation: Processing assignments and conceptualizing learning**

Paul Parkison, University of North Florida

By bringing the dynamics of interpellation into conscious awareness, we open a space within which to work towards more equitable, compassionate, and imaginative solutions to complex challenges.

**22. Seeking security—in the neighborhood school, on campus, and nationally**

Paper/presentation

**Navigating a changing world: Shaping future national security through innovative education and partnerships**

Kimberly Black, Chicago State University

This presentation discusses the importance of national security awareness education for K-12 and reports on progress of an ODNI-funded project to educate diverse national security and intelligence professionals at the postsecondary level.

**Why would I want to be a teacher? Perception of gun violence in schools from future teachers**

Elizabeth “Beth” Hammond, University of South Carolina Beaufort

McKenzie Wray, University of South Carolina Beaufort

In this presentation, we explore ideas of future educators and possible strategies for preparing them for the possibility of experiencing gun violence in their classrooms.

**A quantitative study of college students’ perceptions of campus security**

Acquaah K. Boakye, Bowling Green State University

The presentation examines whether college students’ perceptions of campus safety in some selected schools in Ohio vary by age and gender by assessing perceptions across four safety dimensions: Physical, emotional event/social, and facility usage.

**23. Education from a conservative lens**

Paper/presentation

**Education: Public good or individual right?**

Nancy Rice, University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee

Historically, voucher programs have targeted marginalized students, providing equitable access to education. But recently, priorities have shifted. Learn how universal vouchers may be game-changers in this policy arena.

**Teachers’ role in free markets: How teachers abet the foundations of free market capitalism**

Samuel B. Hardy, III, Augusta University

Teachers influence a free market economy with two of the four factors of production being human factors: labor and entrepreneurial ability. An educated populace makes production and consumption decisions needed for the effective functioning of a market driven, free enterprise system.

**The role of economics within the hidden curriculum: Reflections on curriculum and pedagogy**

Lynda George, Central Connecticut State University

This presentation examines the relationship between four urban middle school history class projects and Jean Anyon’s study on student work in working class, middle class and elite schools—and the role economics plays in what and how students are taught.

## **24. Artificial intelligence: It's here, and not going away**

Paper/presentation

### **Pre-service teacher apprehension with artificial intelligence toolsets: An educator preparation dilemma**

Holly Rice, Cameron University

Emily Finney-Miller, Cameron University

Chris Keller, Cameron University

This presentation explores pre-service teacher apprehension with the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in the classroom. Presenters will discuss how these tools can impact classroom practice, both positively and negatively.

### **Transformative teaching with artificial intelligence: Balancing innovation and ethics through Bloom's taxonomy in education**

Jane Beese, Youngstown State University

This study examines artificial intelligence's (AI) potential to enhance learning across Bloom's Taxonomy levels in educational settings, while navigating ethical complexities to provide research-driven insights for responsible, effective AI integration in teaching.

### **Faculty perspectives on artificial intelligence (AI) integration in higher education: A survey study**

Stephen Curda, National Louis University

Jon Oelke, National Louis University

Leslie Curda, National Louis University

As AI reshapes higher education, this study reveals how faculty navigate the complex balance between embracing innovation and maintaining academic integrity in their classrooms.

## **Sixth Concurrent Session**

**4:00 – 5:00**

## **25. It's 2025. . . So what should be different about teaching and schools?**

Paper/presentation

### **The art and science of teaching—An analysis of teacher traits in 1994 vs. 2024**

Carrie L. Kracl, University of Nebraska – Kearney

Josephina Kracl, University of Nebraska – Lincoln

This presentation compares the practices of a teacher who started her career in 1994 and her daughter just starting her teaching career in 2024—drawing on key insights from Richard Allington's work on exemplary teachers, looking at Time, Texts, Teach, Talk, Tasks, and Test and works on the science of reading.

### **Disrupting education: Reimagining time**

Anne M. Hornak, Central Michigan University

David G. Hornak, Holt Public Schools

The traditional school calendar, with long summer breaks, is outdated. Research shows learning loss, especially for disadvantaged students. This session will explore alternative calendars that better meet the needs of today's students.

## **26. A better, more unifying, vision for teaching and learning**

Paper/presentation

**Is what we were taught (and now teaching) dividing the United States? What's the alternative?**

Araceli Feliz, California State University, Sacramento

Rose Borunda, California State University, Sacramento

How do we teach, now, to unite a divided nation? The book to be discussed provides testament to a way forward that seeks to unify and transcend this fractured nation.

## **Teaching critical thinking: An urban place-based experience**

Terry Stockton, Grand Valley State University

Place-based experiences (PBE) with critical coursework represent an effective experiential teaching strategy for promoting self-efficacy and reducing implicit bias. This presentation examines the elements of an effective PBE model.

## **27. Working together makes things better**

Paper/presentation

**Developing a pedagogical intervention that targets collaborative outcomes beyond the group project**

Susan R. Wynn, Duke University

Jeslyn Brouwers, Duke University

Alissa Rivero, Duke University

We designed and implemented a pedagogical classroom intervention to improve students' group project experiences, targeting challenges with accountability and communication, addressing negative and inflexible norms around collaborative learning, and promoting workplace readiness.

**From preparation to community: Influence and evolution of a teaching assistant program in a teacher education program**

Michael Downton, McKendree University

The influence, evolution, and impact of a teaching assistant program in a teacher education program classroom will be discussed.

## **28. The task of leadership: Helping teachers help students**

Paper/presentation

**Curriculum leadership to support teachers in transforming classroom practices**

Russell Clark, Anderson University

Curriculum leaders serve as catalysts for change. They especially need to support teachers in transforming their classroom practice so they produce measurable student progress. This presentation invites an open discussion on enhancing leadership in curriculum development.

**The problems we face: Perspectives from graduate students in educational leadership**

Jill Waliczek, Saginaw Valley State University

Explore how graduate students' action research reveals systemic challenges and insights through their chosen topics, offering valuable perspectives to inform leadership preparation and foster equitable educational practices.

**Dinner**

On your own

**Conference Reception**

Complimentary beer and wine

Monday, 7:15 – 9:00 P.M.

**Featured Presentation**

**The Public Square**

**Monday, 8:00 – 9:15 P.M.**

Details forthcoming

Tuesday, February 4<sup>th</sup>

**Conference Registration**

**Breakfast buffet**

7:30—9:30

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**Seventh Concurrent Session**

**8:15 – 9:15**

**29. Mental health awareness**

Paper/presentation

**Trauma sensitive pedagogy: A humanistic approach to effectively prepare teacher candidates for today's classroom**

Shelly B. Harris, Texas A&M University, Central Texas

This presentation addresses the need to develop a humanistic curricula approach to meet the needs of students who struggle with trauma. Participants will engage in a discussion of current and proposed future practices and how these decisions will impact educator preparation programs.

**When teaching goes beyond academics: Mental health and your role as an instructor**

Linda D. Culbertson, Grove City College

Through examining research on mental health and actively involving participants, this session will create a springboard for action in the area of mental health awareness in the classroom setting.

**30. Our journey as educators—and how Parker Palmer and Victor Hugo help us see it**

Paper/presentation

**My courage to teach: Exploring the inner landscape of my teacherly life through Parker Palmer's book, *The Courage to Teach***

Jennifer Kagan, Oswego State University

I will explore themes in *The Courage to Teach* and reflect on its premise that teaching cannot be reduced to technique.

**Book that has impacted my thinking about schools, teaching, and learning: *Les Misérables* (Victor Hugo, 1862)**

Edward Podsiadlik, University of Illinois Chicago

This presentation will examine themes and motifs from Victor Hugo's (1862) *Les Misérables* to inspire others to rethink, reimagine, and revitalize their experiences as educators, readers, citizens, and human beings.

### **31. Thinking clearly about the nature of “leadership”**

Paper/presentation

#### **Ethical and moral leadership: A timely conversation**

Janet Hindman, West Texas A&M University

Gary Bigham, West Texas A&M University

Join a robust conversation about ethical leadership, the ethical/legal demands and dilemmas leaders face, and moral leaders who inspired, challenged, and united people even in a time of deep division.

#### **Leadership: Contemporary debates in research literature**

Michael Hylen, Anderson University

This presentation focuses on the challenges leadership preparation programs face in preparing 21<sup>st</sup> Century leaders in a global community. Perspectives about “leadership” and “leading” will be shared.

### **32. Shifting from deficit thinking to asset-based views**

Panel discussion

#### **~~Disability, disorder, deficit~~ neurodiversity – Asset based models for today’s classrooms**

Eileen Cyr, Springfield College, MA

Valerie Annear, Springfield College, MA

Keisha Maxwell, Springfield College, MA

Lisa Hall, Springfield College, MA

Shannon Daniels, Springfield College, MA

This presentation examines frameworks and strategies for a mindset shift from deficit to asset-based views of Neurodiversity. Participants are encouraged to examine the feasibility of “bringing these strategies home.”

### **33. Our educational journeys—and how we change along the way**

Paper/presentation

#### **Development of teachers’ beliefs about their teaching and learning, from the beginning**

Louis L. Warren, East Carolina University

This presentation explores how novice teachers’ beliefs evolve through classroom experiences, mentorship, collaboration, and self-reflection, emphasizing teaching efficacy, professional growth, and the impact of teacher confidence on student development.

#### **“Because I loved being a sub”: From avocation to vocation**

Byung-In Seo, Chicago State University

All educators have an educational journey they travelled. The goal of this session is to create an educational Travel Club where participants share their excursions and expeditions across the scholastic universe.

Featured Presentation

**Academy Conversation**

**9:25 – 10:45**

Humor and the Academy: Lessons from *Straight Man*  
on Personal Growth and Professional Practice

Louise Yoho, Elizabeth N. Christian,  
Faye LaDuke-Pelster, Jarret D. Moore

**Eighth Concurrent Session**

**11:00 – 12:20**

**34. Rethinking our approach to teaching and learning**

Paper/presentation

**Letting go of transactional education: Pedagogy of contributive justice**

Paul Parkison, University of North Florida

What would it mean to approach education from the perspective of contribution rather than distribution or redistribution? Focus on our contribution to learning and wonder in the classroom is transformative.

**Converge to diverge: Using core values to reinvigorate professional joy**

Robin Duncan, California Baptist University

Keith A. Walter, California Baptist University

Are accreditation demands, enrollment/retention benchmarks, and departmental politics sabotaging your joyful journey as a teacher? This session will illustrate how developing a shared praxis can reinvigorate professional fulfillment.

**35. Healing the trauma of marginalized teachers and education students**

Paper/presentation

**Healing the trauma of White supremacy in teacher education: A decolonizing, Indigenous teaching perspective**

Heather Macías, California State University, Long Beach

This paper proposes a decolonizing teaching framework combining culturally affirming pedagogies, funds of knowledge, Barrio pedagogy, and Indigenous ontology to heal the educational, systemic trauma of marginalized pre- and in-service teachers.

**Give me five! A reflective journey towards equity and transformation in literacy education**

Madeleine Mejia, California State University, Fullerton

Give Me Five – A framework that empowers K-12 educators to reflect on biases and instructional choices, sparking an ongoing journey of equity and transformation in literacy instruction and teaching practices.



### **36. STEM education—especially in an age of climate change** Paper/presentation

#### **Educating in an age of climate change: Preparing students for the social and emotional realities of a changing climate**

Suzie Henning, Eastern Washington University

Brian Henning, Gonzaga University

This presentation will discuss how to prepare educators to address climate literacy in ways that empower students to seek out change and to build hope about an uncertain future.

#### **BioMath: Bridging the gap between math and science**

Rikki Lee Marzan, King/Drew Magnet High School of Medicine and Science

Crystal Villa, King/Drew Magnet High School of Medicine and Science

The separation of math and science in education limits interdisciplinary integration. Aligning Algebra 1 and Biology promotes collaboration, real-world applications, and improved student performance on assessments by bridging disciplines.

#### **Co-creating connected STEM graduate courses: A journey in collaborative course design for teacher education**

Rebecca Gault, University of West Georgia

Stacey Britton, University of West Georgia

Two professors share their collaborative journey developing integrated online STEM graduate courses, demonstrating how intentional co-creation enhances interdisciplinary learning experiences for working teachers pursuing advanced degrees.

### **37. Mentoring, coaching, and supporting teachers** Paper/presentation

#### **Using a community of reflective practitioners to support pre-service teacher development**

Basil Conway, Columbus State University

Michael Dentzau, Columbus State University

Kimberly Shaw, Columbus State University

This presentation focuses on the development of a Community of Reflective Practitioners (CRP) to support pre-service STEM teachers through symposiums that utilize a dilemma protocol and experiences in high-need classrooms.

#### **The power of mentoring**

Jaime Coyne, Sam Houston State University

Tori Hollas, Sam Houston State University

Abbie Strunc, Sam Houston State University

Tershundrea Branch, Sam Houston State University

Jeffrey Sullivan, Sam Houston State University

In our presentation, we share our implementation of a mentoring model in our grant funded school counseling program.

**Coaching and supporting the body, mind, and spirit of educators through a servant leadership model**

Josh Lichty, Viterbo University

Discover a comprehensive framework to holistically develop and empower educators, guiding their journey with a servant leadership model that fosters growth, purpose, and meaningful impact in their communities.

**Lunch**

**12:20 -- 1:30**

On your own

**Ninth Concurrent Session**

**1:30 – 2:50**

**38. Teaching amidst the swirl of social life and political craziness**

Paper/presentation

**Pedagogy of structured disorganization: Navigating learning during highly propagandized political climates**

Chad J. Sloss, Wittenberg University

Trump's recent political propaganda (about Haitian immigrants eating cats and dogs) empowered anti-immigrant sentiments and created a tough environment for schools and colleges. This presentation focuses on the Pedagogy of Structured Disorganization, an approach that I used to strengthen learning and academic/career adaptability.

**The swirl of social life—and the loss of the soul**

Steven P. Jones, Missouri State University

Our family and school lives shape us as teachers—and so do our social lives. This presentation examines how we see our “selves” in our social world, often at the cost of our “souls.”

**39. Mom, dad, and our younger years: How they most powerfully influence our educational journeys**

## Paper/presentation

### **My healing journey of adultism**

Shushan Vardanyan, University of Mississippi

Discover my journey from an authoritarian Kindergarten teacher to an assistant professor challenging adultism, redefining education's purpose, and embracing healing through transformative teaching and parenting.

### **The problematic of privilege, power and mental health**

Eric J. Weiner, Montclair State University, NJ

This presentation reflects on my journey from high school dropout to a Ph.D., and then to a full professor. I discuss some of the implications for educators who employ problematic theories of power and privilege—theories that can make it difficult for them to identify and help students from “privileged” backgrounds who struggle (as I did) with mental health disorders.

### **How values and beliefs influence teaching practices**

Luronda Jennings, Dalton State College

Values and beliefs influence our understanding of teaching and learning, which shape our teaching practices. Let's explore the importance of embracing differences, interests, and learning styles, to increase student engagement.

## **40. Reimagining the role of the teacher**

### Paper/presentation

### **Beyond the death of the teacher**

Laura Rychly, Augusta University

Borrowing from Roland Barthes's essay, “The Death of the Author,” I invented a framework called “beyond the death of the teacher” that makes possible a reimagining of the role of “teacher”—a role that centers on agency and how we can realize our democratic ideal.

### **Returning to Socratic discussion in our classrooms: Arriving back at the start and knowing it for the first time**

Betsy Burrows, Brevard College

After years embracing technology, personalized learning, and creating hands-on activities, I have returned to my first learned pedagogy. I share a case study presentation and discussion on rebuilding focus, civil discourse, literacy, and critical thinking with our students.

### **Co-creating learning and teaching: Empowering student inquiry with “I Wonder” projects**

Marna K. Winter, Elon University

I Wonder projects transform learning by fostering curiosity, collaboration, and belonging. Rooted in research, this session highlights co-teaching strategies that empower students, deepen engagement, and reimagine traditional learning through student-driven exploration.

## **41. Special education programs: Some important questions**

### Paper/presentation

**Questioning and doubting ourselves: Inclusion for all? Or individualization for all? District standard versus parent preference**

Kristin Wiseley, Western Illinois University

We are taught to believe in inclusive education for children with disabilities; however, what about the desires and preferences of those children's parents regarding their child's educational environment?

**On being informed of parents' rights and student safeguards to improve meaningful involvement among multi-disciplinary team members**

Elizabeth Vanderburg, Tarleton State University

The high literacy level of SEA special education legal compliance notices creates an environment of misinformation of parent rights and student safeguards that impacts informed decision-making and meaningful involvement.

**Special education: Why don't teacher shortages end, and what does it mean for our future?**

James Forgan, Florida Atlantic University

For over three decades there has been a shortage of special education teachers. This presentation will discuss issues and concerns—and invoke ideas for preparing, recruiting, and retaining special education teachers.

**42. How to teach math**

Paper/presentation

**Math molded me**

Keesha Aldridge, California State University, Dominguez Hills

Excelling in mathematics didn't come naturally to me—it took a special teacher to nurture and believe in me. That teacher molded me into the successful educator I am today.

**Inviting the senses into mathematics education and research**

Higinio Dominguez, Michigan State University

This presentation highlights how inviting all the senses into mathematics education and research can create opportunities for more inclusive teaching and learning, and more ethical ways of doing research.

**The influence of an online adaptive math intervention program on students' math attitude and math achievement as measured through i-Ready diagnostic test scores**

Susana Ortega, California State University, Dominguez Hills

In this study, the i-Ready program was implemented in an eighth-grade math classroom to determine if the use of the i-Ready program influenced students' math achievement and their math attitudes.

**Tenth Concurrent Session**

**3:00 – 4:00**

### **43. Our journeys as teachers: Lessons learned along the way**

Paper/presentation

#### **Tripping over myself and dropping the marker: Stories of being human while teaching**

Robin Ebert Mays, Washington State University

Allowing yourself to be human in the classroom can look very chaotic. From dropping the marker to running late, how we model recovery from human mistakes is important, too.

#### **In my teacher-education era: Reflections from WHS (Room 206), FHS (Room 405), and NAU (Room 190)**

Annie Watson, Northern Arizona University

Through pictures, stories, and artifacts, I share my 15-year journey from English teacher to College of Education professor, digging into my greatest quandaries and missteps.

### **44. Planning summer camps—Where joy and learning happen**

Paper/presentation

#### **Making space for joy**

Holly Dolan, Clark University

Annie Cohn, Worcester Public Schools (Worcester, MA)

We share our work building a summer learning community where children are offered opportunities to play, create, collaborate, and develop independence—and how this work reinvigorates our instructional practices.

#### **Pivotal moments in the journey to camp**

Ruth E. Jefferson, Ball State University

This presentation details essential planning steps for summer camps for at-risk children. Lessons learned about funding, program planning, staffing, and interventions from a variety of camps will be shared.

### **45. Teacher identities: How we can see and understand them**

Paper/presentation

#### **A book that has impacted my thinking about schools, teaching, and learning: *The Red Badge of Courage* (Stephen Crane, 1895)**

Edward Podsiadlik, University of Illinois Chicago

Significant passages from *The Red Badge of Courage* are examined to provoke discourse and to inspire individual and collective reflection of our personal and professional identities.

#### **Teacher identities and lineages: Tracing our narratives of becoming**

Erin Stutelberg, Salisbury University

Morgan Rush, Salisbury University

Emma Cohn Matthews, Salisbury University

Together, we theorize our *lineage of teacher identity development* as an endeavor passed down (and up) across time and space as we reflect on our collective stories of becoming teachers.

#### **46. When educational leaders fail, and how they might succeed**

Paper/presentation

##### **Promoting self-advocacy and resilience for first year teachers**

Samantha Lopez, Florida Atlantic University

Exploring a personal experience from a first-year teacher struggling with self-doubt shows how teachers can understand the importance of relationship building and become empowered to self-advocate against toxic school cultures.

##### **Carrying the human spirit forward: The power of storytelling in ethical leadership**

Janet Hindman, West Texas A&M University

Through vivid storytelling and videos, this presentation demystifies essential mechanisms using art, literature, and culture to demonstrate how innovative course design may be used to agitate, innovate, and orchestrate change.

#### **Eleventh Concurrent Session**

**4:10 – 5:10**

#### **47. Bringing research and practice together in meaningful ways**

Panel discussion

##### **Working in cognitive dissonance: Classrooms as places where critical praxis and traditional practice meet**

Laura Rychly, Augusta University

Graduate students from Augusta University

This panel asks Ed.S. students to speak about the cognitive dissonance they experience as they try to bring research and practice together in meaningful ways for their K-12 learners.

#### **48. When university leaders want to remove diversity terminology**

Panel discussion

##### **A culture that sustains: Courageous resistance to curricular overreach**

Albert M. Jimenez, Kennesaw State University

Nicholas Clegorne, Kennesaw State University

Sheryl Croft, Kennesaw State University

Chinasa Elue, Kennesaw State University

We discuss how university leadership bypassed governance protocols to demand the removal of diversity terminology. We discuss how curricular overreach erodes faculty agency—and how one department fought such overreach.

#### **49. Building meaningful relationships between teachers and students**

## Panel discussion

### **Building relationships: The anchor in education**

Hazel S. Woods, Tulane University

Claudine Davis, Tulane University

Nancy P. Turner, The New Teacher Project

Kenya Campbell, Xavier University of New Orleans

This session highlights meaningful relationships between teachers and students in the classroom setting. Education preparation providers will share their experiences of meaningful student-teacher interactions, in K-12 school and preparation programs.

### **50. Education students in clinical settings: Helping them by building strong relationships**

Paper/presentation

### **Growing together: Research and tools to promote relationship building in the classroom**

Jacquelyn Sernau, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

This presentation explores how forming strong relationships can impact teacher and student success. This session will highlight recent research that offers tools to foster positive working relationships for all teachers but specifically highlights the connection between student teachers and their cooperating teachers.

### **Data driven seminars to support year-long residency**

Kelli Miguez, McNeese State University-Lake Charles, La

Fara Seal, McNeese State University-lake Charles, La

The session will include seminar processes and structures, including the impact of data analysis on topics and pacing and the incorporation of social-emotional support.

Wednesday, February 5<sup>th</sup>

**Conference Registration**

**Light breakfast buffet**

7:30—9:30

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**Twelfth Concurrent Session**

**8:00 – 9:00**

**51. Schools as a pathway to opportunity—not a conduit to incarceration**

Paper/presentation

**Education’s impact: Lifting up or locking down?**

Kimberly Nolan, Northeastern University

This presentation reviews data from “Getting Out of South Carolina’s Juvenile Justice System,” exploring factors leading to children’s incarceration and how educators can improve school retention and skill development.

**52. Literacy practices: From the traditional family to artificial intelligence**

Paper/presentation

**An examination of the literacy practices of young children and their fathers in China and United States**

Wei Gu, Grand Valley State University

The purpose of this study is to compare the family literacy practices carried out by fathers of young children in China and the United States. Two-hundred fifty (250) American fathers of elementary student and 250 Chinese fathers of elementary students were recruited in a comparative study.

**Trends in education: AI in language education**

Abir El Shaban, IC for Language and Education Programs (ICLEPs)

Participants will discover how AI transforms ESL classrooms through personalized learning, intelligent feedback, and immersive tools using authentic examples. They will gain practical insights into integrating AI to overcome common teaching challenges and enhance student outcomes.

**53. Neoliberalism and the public schools**

Panel discussion

**A “right” turn in education**

Kristin Schumacher, Indiana University Bloomington

Steffi Elizabeth Thomas, Indiana University Bloomington

Yunmeng Zhang, Indiana University Bloomington

Moaaz Hamid, Indiana University Bloomington

Neoliberalism is a debatable term, but it is a way to understand the state of education. From vouchers, to the nonprofit sector, to the idea of meritocracy, neoliberalism is embedded.



#### **54. The journey we face—and the benefits and problems with research**

Paper/presentation

##### **How doing research in teacher education has changed my thinking**

Louis L. Warren, East Carolina University

Conducting research in teacher education has reshaped my views on pedagogy, teacher preparation, and educational systems. This presentation explores key reflections, challenges, and insights into bridging theory, practice, and professional growth.

##### **Research-practice partnerships: Rethinking research, disability, and partnership norms**

Molly Buren, National Louis University

Blanca Gamez-Djokic, National Louis University

This presentation explores how “nothing about us, without us” can transform research processes and reflect on experiences conducting research with disabled student researchers and the significance of democratizing access to the production of knowledge.

#### **Thirteenth Concurrent Session**

**9:10 – 10:30**

#### **55. Engaging the family and community in a child’s education: Ways to do it better**

Panel discussion

##### **Family and community engagement: What are we doing well, and what can we do better?**

Eileen Cyr, Springfield College, MA

Valerie Annear, Springfield College, MA

Keisha Maxwell, Springfield College, MA

Amber Knight, Springfield College, MA

Marisa Santo, Springfield College, MA

Sam Garcia, Springfield College, MA

This presentation highlights successful Family Engagement strategies that are being implemented across districts and grade levels. Participants are encouraged to examine the feasibility of “bringing these strategies home.”

#### **56. Trying to tell the “American story”—especially in civics and social studies classes**

Paper/presentation

##### **Truth, democracy, and inquiry: Empowering students through critical historical engagement**

Corrine H. Hurt, University of Southern Indiana

This presentation, inspired by Jason Stanley’s *Erasing History*, explores strategies for teaching historical truths, fostering critical inquiry, and preparing students to engage critically with democratic and societal challenges.

**The three P's: Political polarization, perception, and pedagogy**

Tianka R. Sheard Mitchell, Arkansas State University

This presentation includes relevant and timely research findings exploring authentic, lived experiences of Arkansas middle school social studies teachers—especially the influence of political polarization on their pedagogical practices.

**The limits of participatory citizenship: Action civics and the struggle for justice-oriented civic participation**

Danielle R. Brown, Florida Atlantic University

This presentation utilizes Westheimer and Kahne's (2004) citizenship typology to examine how two action civics initiatives—Generation Citizen and iEngage—may empower marginalized youth by fostering civic agency and efficacy.

**57. Computer science, simulations, and computational thinking: How do they help civic responsibility and knowledge acquisition in math and science classes?**

Paper/presentation

**How do social justice-aligned performance tasks in math and computer science enhance adolescents' awareness of civic responsibility?**

Isabel Baeza, California State University, Dominguez Hills

Olivia Taylor, California State University, Dominguez Hills

Explore how integrating social justice in STEM education fosters civic responsibility in adolescents. This study highlights innovative teaching methods and their transformative impact on students' engagement and community awareness.

**The effectiveness of implementing computer simulations during a chemistry unit in a middle school science classroom**

Jerry Coronado, California State University, Dominguez Hills

This action research examines how computer simulations improve middle school science students' achievement and modeling skills, leveraging their creativity, technology skills, and engagement in a diverse seventh-grade classroom.

**Unlocking algebraic potential: How computational thinking fuels student growth in math**

James Knutson, California State University, Dominguez Hills

This presentation explores integrating computer science and Algebra 1 through coding, data manipulation, and problem-solving, thus enhancing engagement and skill retention. Educators gain insights on curriculum strategies, student outcomes, and interactive activities.

**Fourteenth Concurrent Session**

**10:40 – 11:40**

**58. The prepared teacher:**

## **Targeted training sessions and micro-credentialing**

### **Teach P.R.I.D.E. Academy: Preparing teacher candidates for student internships**

Machell Dailey, University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff

Stacy Lockett, University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff

Discover how Teach P.R.I.D.E. Academy prepares teacher candidates for success through targeted training in teaching strategies, classroom management, lesson planning, and mentorship—fostering confidence and professional growth for day-one readiness.

### **The meanings behind badges: Investigating the long-term impact of micro-credential programs on teacher practices and student outcomes**

Timothy Chang, California State University, Dominguez Hills

This study evaluates the long-term impact of micro-credential programs on teachers' pedagogical practices and student learning, analyzing strategy retention rates, reasons for discontinuation, and perceived student outcomes over four (4) years.

## **59. Academic journeys from one's home country to life and schools in the U.S.**

Paper/presentation

### **Breaking the cycle: Rethinking standardized testing and education systems**

Irem N. Balta, University of Georgia

This session explores my academic journey through Turkish and U.S. education systems, highlighting the impact of standardized testing, Freire's Banking Model, neoliberal policies, and the importance of fostering critical thinking in classrooms.

### **The journey toward understanding teaching and learning**

Christine Njeru, Florida Atlantic University

This topic focuses on the influence of pedagogical practices and experiences learned in the teachers' home countries and how these practices interact with or conflict with the norms and expectations in the new country.

## **60. When English isn't the student's (or teacher's) first language:**

**Problems and possibilities**

Paper/presentation

### **Engaging students in science classrooms through translanguaging**

Teresa Aki, California State University, Dominguez Hills

This action research examines how translanguaging in an eighth-grade science classroom enhances student engagement, joy, and identity, fostering inclusive and culturally responsive learning while promoting social-emotional well-being and equity.

### **Critical language and race theory through the lens of the three concentric circles of world Englishes: Does accent matter?**

Enkhehimeg Sharav, Montana State University

This presentation explores the *Three Circles of Englishes* model through LangCrit, highlighting how accents influence perceptions more than race, while English practices perpetuate both social hierarchies and reinforce language hegemony.

Conference Summation

11:45 – 12:15