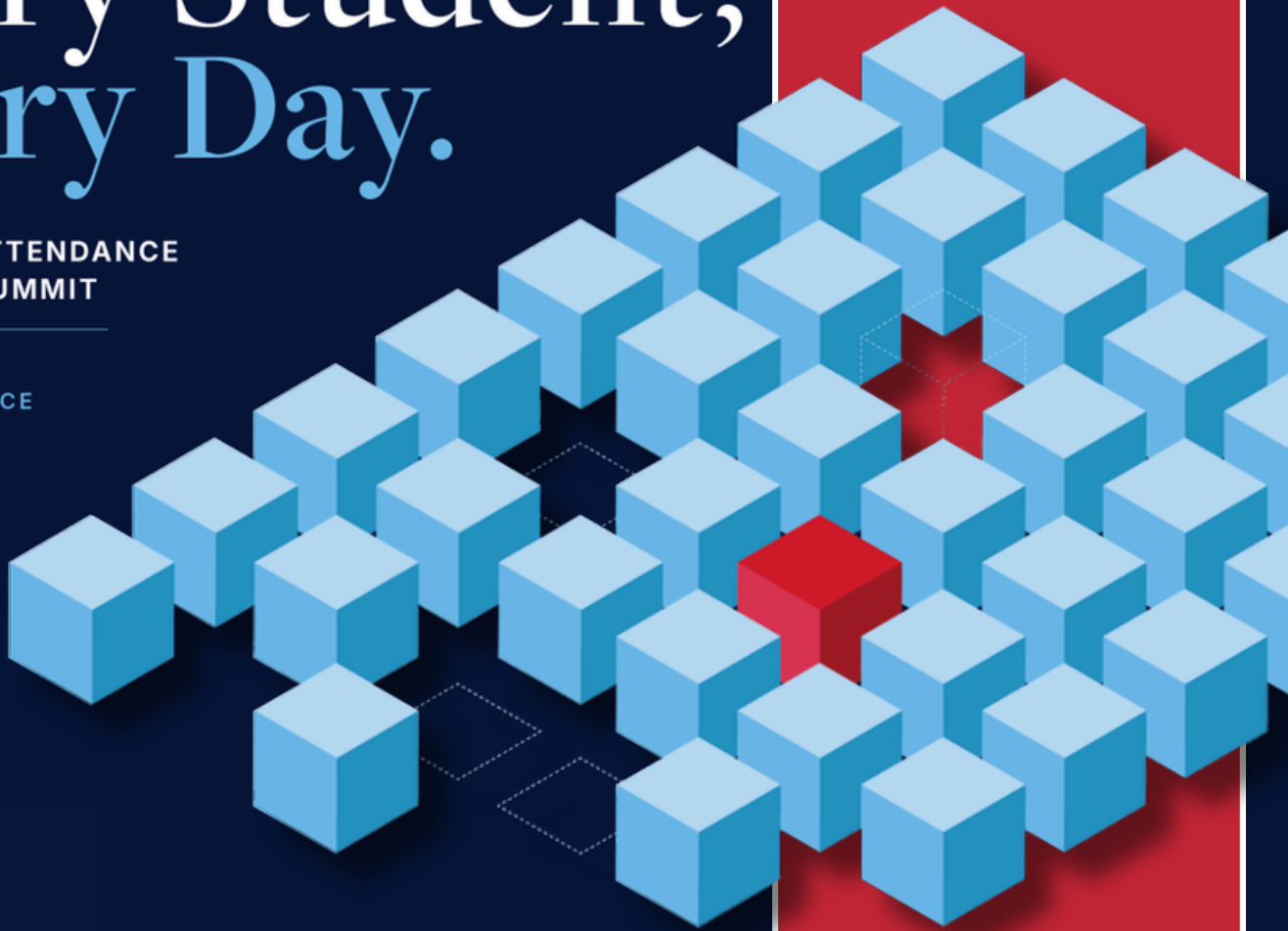


Every Student, Every Day.

MISSISSIPPI ATTENDANCE
LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

THE POWER OF
DAILY ATTENDANCE



Program Guide
Lake Terrace Convention Center
Sept 30 – Oct 2, 2026



Welcome!

To the Mississippi Attendance Leadership Summit

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the Mississippi Attendance Leadership Summit, and thank you for your commitment to ensuring that every student has the opportunity to succeed.

Attendance is about far more than compliance—it is about connection, opportunity, and student success. Every day a student is present is another opportunity to learn, build relationships, and move one step closer to graduation and a successful future. Our work is not simply about counting days; it is about removing barriers, strengthening partnerships with families, and creating schools where every student feels valued and wants to be present.

This summit brings together educators, school attendance officers, administrators, counselors, community partners, and state leaders who share a common purpose. Over the next three days, you will hear from experts, learn promising practices from across Mississippi and the nation, and collaborate with colleagues who face many of the same challenges. My hope is that you leave not only with new ideas and resources, but also with renewed purpose and confidence in the important work you do every day.

As we continue implementing Mississippi's updated attendance laws and strengthening our statewide approach to student success, we have an opportunity to shift the conversation from simply responding to absenteeism to proactively building a culture where attendance matters and every student is supported.

Thank you for the difference you make in the lives of Mississippi's students and families. Your dedication, compassion, and persistence are changing lives every day. I am grateful for your service and excited for the meaningful conversations and learning that lie ahead.

Thank you for being here, and welcome to the Mississippi Attendance Leadership Summit.

Sincerely,

Dr. Bryan Marshall

Associate State Superintendent
Office of Innovation and Support Systems
Mississippi Department of Education

Conference At A Glance

September 30, 2026

8:30 am – 8:45 am	Welcome & Introductions
8:45 am – 10:00 am	Opening Keynote — Dr. Bill Daggett, Founder and Executive Chair, SPN/NDPC
10:15 am – 11:00 am	Update / State of Schools Dr. Bryan Marshall
11:00 am – 12:30 pm	Lunch
12:30 pm – 1:30 pm	Breakout Session Block 1
1:45 pm – 2:45 pm	Breakout Session Block 2
3:00 pm – 4:00 pm	Breakout Session Block 3

October 1, 2026

8:30 am – 9:45 am	Plenary Session - Local Success Stories
10:00 am – 11:00 am	Breakout Session Block 1
11:00 am – 12:30 pm	Lunch
12:30 pm – 1:30 pm	Breakout Session Block 2
1:45 pm – 2:45 pm	Breakout Session Block 3
3:00 pm – 4:00 pm	Breakout Session Block 4

October 2, 2026

8:30 am – 9:45 am	Keynote Session - Kelly Brinkman
10:00 am – 11:00 am	Breakout Session Block 1
11:00 am – 12:30 pm	Lunch
12:30 pm – 1:30 pm	Plenary Session - National Field Experts
1:45 pm – 2:45 pm	Breakout Session Block 2
3:00 pm – 4:00 pm	Breakout Session Block 3

Conference Agenda: Wednesday, September 30

	8:30 - 8:45 am	8:45 - 10:00 am	10:15 - 11:00 am	11:00 am - 12:30 pm	12:30 - 1:30 pm	1:45 - 2:45 pm	3:00 - 4:00 pm
Exhibit Hall		Welcome & Introductions	Opening Keynote (Dr. Bill Daggett)	Update / State of Schools (Dr. Bryan Marshall)		Dr. Robert Peters Creating a Comprehensive Plan to Increase School Attendance	Dr. Brian Clarida Igniting Potential: Empowering Every Student to Rise Above the Odds
Garden Room					Dr. Brian Clarida Igniting Potential: Empowering Every Student to Rise Above the Odds	Jeremy Andrews SAO Portal Training	Jeremy Andrews SAO Portal Training
Forrest 1 & 2					Dr. Felicia Turner Family Matters Part I: Seeing Families Differently	Dr. Doran Gresham CREATE the Conditions for Student Success	Dr. Doran Gresham CREATE the Conditions for Student Success
Lamar 1 & 2					Dr. David Moore Defining and Mobilizing High-Impact Attendance Teams	Dr. Cherie Goins READ THE FIELD — Attendance Is the Signal: Seeing What the Data Is Really Telling Us	Dr. Cherie Goins READ THE FIELD — Attendance Is the Signal: Seeing What the Data Is Really Telling Us
Lakeview 1					Dr. Usamah Rodgers Beyond Truancy—Earn-to- Learn Strategies That Keep Students Engaged	Dr. Usamah Rogers Beyond Truancy—Earn-to- Learn Strategies That Keep Students Engaged	Dr. Felicia Turner Family Matters Part I: Seeing Families Differently
Lakeview 2					Dr. Lane Freeman The Attendance Professional's AI Starting Point	Dr. Lane Freeman The Attendance Professional's AI Starting Point	Dr. David Moore Defining and Mobilizing High- Impact Attendance Teams

Conference Agenda: Thursday, October 1

	8:30 - 9:45 am	10:00 - 11:00 am	11:00 am - 12:30 pm	12:30 - 1:30 pm	1:45 - 2:45 pm	3:00 - 4:00 pm	
Exhibit Hall	Plenary Session - Local MS Success Stories (School Districts)	Jeremy Andrews SAO Portal Training	LUNCH (Offsite)	Crystal Creel & Melissa Banks PowerSchool and MSIS Coding Session	Stephanie Permenter & Melissa Banks SAMS and MSIS Coding Session	Dr. Usamah Rodgers High-Wage Pathways Without a Four-Year Degree	
Garden Room		Dr. Brian Clarida Bridging Hearts and Homes: Building Trust with Our At-Risk Families		Cherie Goins FROM PLAYBOOK TO PRACTICE: CALL THE PLAY — Move the Chains	Dr. Cherie Goins FROM PLAYBOOK TO PRACTICE: CALL THE PLAY — Move the Chains	Dr. Cherie Goins FROM PLAYBOOK TO PRACTICE: CALL THE PLAY — Move the Chains	
Forrest 1 & 2		Dr. Felicia Turner Family Matters Part II: Connecting with Families Differently		Dr. Usamah Rodgers High-Wage Pathways Without a Four-Year Degree	Dr. Felicia Turner Family Matters Part II: Connecting with Families Differently	Dr. Felicia Turner Family Matters Part II: Connecting with Families Differently	
Lamar 1 & 2		Dr. Usamah Rodgers High-Wage Pathways Without a Four-Year Degree		Dr. David Moore Translating Attendance Data into Strategic Practice	Dr. Brian Clarida Bridging Hearts and Homes: Building Trust with Our At-Risk Families	Dr. Brian Clarida Bridging Hearts and Homes: Building Trust with Our At-Risk Families	
Lakeview 1		Dr. Lane Freeman Building the Plan: AI Support for Individualized Attendance Intervention		Dr. Lane Freeman Building the Plan: AI Support for Individualized Attendance Intervention	Dr. Lane Freeman Building the Plan: AI Support for Individualized Attendance Intervention	Dr. David Moore Translating Attendance Data into Strategic Practice	
Lakeview 2		Dr. David Moore Translating Attendance Data into Strategic Practice		Dr. Doran Gresham Engagement by Design: Reaching Students with Exceptionalities Through Access, Voice, and Active Learning	Dr. Doran Gresham Engagement by Design: Reaching Students with Exceptionalities Through Access, Voice, and Active Learning	Dr. Doran Gresham Engagement by Design: Reaching Students with Exceptionalities Through Access, Voice, and Active Learning	

Conference Agenda: Friday, October 2

	8:30 - 9:45 am	10:00 - 11:00 am	11:00 am - 12:30 pm	12:30 - 1:30 pm	1:45 - 2:45 pm	3:00 - 4:00 pm	
Exhibit Hall	Keynote Kelly Brinkman When Generations Connect: Engaging Today's Learners While Preparing Tomorrow's Workforce		LUNCH (Offsite)	Plenary Session (National Field Experts)		Dr. Robert Peters Breaking Barriers and Improving Attendance: High-Impact Strategies for Our Most Vulnerable Learners	
Garden Room		Dr. Brian Clarida Every Student, Every Day: Charting Pathways to Keep Kids in School			Chronic Absenteeism Report & Review	Dr. Doran Gresham Somebody Should Know Their Names: Mentoring, Belonging, and the Programs That Help Students to Stick Around	
Forrest 1 & 2		Dr. Felicia Turner Family Engagement Part III: Transforming Family Engagement Together			Dr. Felicia Turner Family Engagement Part III: Transforming Family Engagement Together	Dr. Brian Clarida Every Student, Every Day: Charting Pathways to Keep Kids in School	
Lamar 1 & 2		Dr. Doran Gresham Somebody Should Know Their Names: Mentoring, Belonging, and the Programs That Help Students to Stick Around			Dr. Usamah Rodgers Beyond the Resume—Teaching the Employability Skills Employers Expect	Dr. Usamah Rodgers Beyond the Resume—Teaching the Employability Skills Employers Expect	
Lakeview 1		Dr. Lane Freeman The Message That Brings Them Back: Family Communication and AI.			Dr. Lane Freeman The Message That Brings Them Back: Family Communication and AI.	Dr. David Moore Data to Action: Driving Student Retention and Financial Stability	
Lakeview 2		Dr. David Moore Data to Action: Driving Student Retention and Financial Stability			Dr. Cherie Goins FROM PLAYBOOK TO PRACTICE: MOVE THE CHAINS — Turning Attendance Strategies Into Measurable Student Progress towards Graduation	Dr. Cherie Goins FROM PLAYBOOK TO PRACTICE: MOVE THE CHAINS — Turning Attendance Strategies Into Measurable Student Progress towards Graduation	

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

8:30 am – 11:00 am — Opening Keynote Session & Updates

Exhibit Hall

Mississippi Department of Education

Welcome & Introductions

Dr. Bill Daggett

Opening Keynote

Dr. Bryan Marshall

Update/State of Schools

12:30 pm – 1:30 pm — Concurrent Breakout Sessions

Garden Room

Dr. Brian Clarida

Igniting Potential: Empowering Every Student to Rise Above the Odds: This session focuses on equity and resilience, reinforcing that maintaining high expectations for all students—regardless of background, circumstance, or prior struggle—is essential to meaningful success. Participants will examine academic, social-emotional, and systemic barriers that undermine student confidence. Shifting from a deficit lens to an asset-based approach, the session equips educators and mentors with practical strategies to foster self-efficacy, grit, and academic agency. Through interactive exercises, attendees will examine culturally responsive practices that pair rigorous expectations with robust relational support. Educators will leave with actionable support plans and concrete tools to eliminate achievement gaps, raise standards, and create a school culture where every student is challenged, valued, and empowered to succeed.

Forrest 1 & 2

Dr. Felicia Turner

Family Matters Part I: Seeing Families Differently: What if the families we sometimes describe as “uninvolved,” “unresponsive,” or “hard to reach” are facing barriers we haven’t yet recognized? Perhaps they’re not hard to reach; we simply need to rethink how we reach them. In Part I of the Family Matters journey, participants will challenge common assumptions about family engagement and examine how school practices and everyday interactions shape whether families feel seen, valued, welcomed, and heard. Through reflection, discussion, and practical strategies, participants will explore the difference between parent involvement and authentic family engagement and consider the school experience from families’ perspectives. The journey begins with a simple but powerful shift: before we can effectively engage families, we must first acknowledge who they are, what they bring, and how they experience us.

Lamar 1 & 2

Dr. David Moore

Defining and Mobilizing High-Impact Attendance Teams: Building an effective attendance strategy requires moving beyond individual efforts to establish a cohesive, cross-functional attendance review team. Drawing on Superintendent Dr. David Moore’s experience in Indian River Schools, this session outlines how district and school leaders can structure teams that drive real accountability. Participants will explore how administrators, counselors, teachers, and social workers can collaborate to analyze the root causes of chronic absenteeism rather than relying on isolated interventions. Dr. Moore will examine clear role definitions, cross-team alignment protocols, and collaborative workflows that transform attendance monitoring from a compliance task into a system-wide priority. Attendees will leave with a structured blueprint to define team responsibilities, assign ownership, and cultivate the trust needed to execute a coordinated, high-impact attendance plan across their school or district.

Lakeview 1

Dr. Usamah Rodgers

Beyond Truancy—Earn-to-Learn Strategies That Keep Students Engaged: What if a student’s attendance problem is actually an economic one? This session challenges traditional definitions of truancy by examining the financial pressures and family responsibilities that contribute to chronic absenteeism. Participants will explore how youth apprenticeships, paid internships, work-based learning, and flexible scheduling can serve as effective earn-to-learn models—enabling students to meet financial needs while staying connected to school and on track for graduation. Through student-centered scenarios, attendees will practice identifying underlying economic barriers, leveraging student strengths, and coordinating support among schools, employers, community colleges, and workforce agencies. Educators and leaders will leave with a preliminary Earn-to-Learn Student Support Action Plan ready for implementation in their schools or organizations.

Lakeview 2

Dr. Lane Freeman

The Attendance Professional’s AI Starting Point: This opening session provides a practical foundation for applying artificial intelligence to attendance, engagement, and dropout prevention. Participants will explore what these tools do well, where they fall short, and how to achieve useful results without a technical background or a district rollout. Emphasis throughout is on keeping people in the decision seat: AI can help organize information, surface patterns, and reduce paperwork, but judgments about students remain human. Participants will work with accessible tools and leave with a small set of approaches they can apply immediately in their own role, along with a clear sense of appropriate boundaries.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

1:45 pm – 2:45 pm — Concurrent Breakout Sessions

Exhibit Hall

Dr. Robert Peters

Creating a Comprehensive Plan to Increase Attendance in Schools

As school and district teachers and leaders, we routinely examine national, state, and local school data. All patterns point to declining student attendance nationwide. The push and pull between virtual and face-to-face teaching over the past three years has created a disconnect, and many students have disengaged from our school systems. The teacher-student relationship is the critical foundation for success in schools, but it requires engaging strategies at the leadership and teaching levels to recover and re-engage students' hearts and minds. During this session, Robert will share strategies from the most rapidly changing schools that have been proven to engage students and increase attendance. Please attend this engaging session, which creates growth opportunities for you and your team through planning and collaboration on strategies to re-engage students and increase attendance.

Garden Room

Jeremy Andrews

SAO Portal Training

Forrest 1 & 2

Dr. Doran Gresham

CREATE the Conditions for Student Success: Using MTSS to Keep Students Present, Engaged, and Moving Forward: Chronic absenteeism is rarely an isolated problem; it signals misalignment across surrounding systems. In this interactive session, Dr. Doran Gresham introduces the CREATE framework as a practical way to strengthen Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) across attendance, engagement, behavior, and academic progress. Participants will explore how universal practices, targeted interventions, and individualized supports can work together rather than as disconnected programs. Using a realistic student case study, attendees will identify key CREATE and MTSS levers, determine immediate actions for adults, and build a focused 30-day response plan. Drawing on Successful Practices Network research, the presentation emphasizes collective efficacy, family engagement, and evidence-based progress monitoring. Educators will leave with actionable tools to organize support, evaluate intervention impact, and move beyond guesswork toward measurable student success.

Lamar 1 & 2

Dr. Cherie Goins

FROM PLAYBOOK TO PRACTICE: READ THE FIELD: Attendance Is the Signal: Seeing What the Data Is Really Telling Us for Dropout Prevention. Attendance data signals that something is happening but rarely tells the whole story. In this interactive session, participants move beyond simple absence counts to interpret attendance patterns as early indicators of disengagement, changing life circumstances, or dropout risk. Through student scenarios, rapid-response activities, and "film study," attendees will practice analyzing attendance alongside academic, behavioral, relational, and family contexts to uncover root causes before disengagement leads to departure. Participants will learn to distinguish surface data from actionable insight and separate facts from underlying assumptions. Attendees will leave equipped with the Attendance Signal Scan tool to build comprehensive student profiles, enabling teams to evaluate student needs accurately and protect at-risk students before a crisis strikes.

Lakeview 1

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WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

3:00 pm – 4:00 pm — Concurrent Breakout Sessions

Exhibit Hall

Dr. Brian Clarida

Igniting Potential: Empowering Every Student to Rise Above the Odds: This session focuses on equity and resilience, reinforcing that maintaining high expectations for all students—regardless of background, circumstance, or prior struggle—is essential to meaningful success. Participants will examine academic, social-emotional, and systemic barriers that undermine student confidence. Shifting from a deficit lens to an asset-based approach, the session equips educators and mentors with practical strategies to foster self-efficacy, grit, and academic agency. Through interactive exercises, attendees will examine culturally responsive practices that pair rigorous expectations with robust relational support. Educators will leave with actionable support plans and concrete tools to eliminate achievement gaps, raise standards, and create a school culture where every student is challenged, valued, and empowered to succeed.

Garden Room

Jeremy Andrews

SAO Portal Training

Forrest 1 & 2

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Family Matters Part I: Seeing Families Differently: What if the families we sometimes describe as "uninvolved," "unresponsive," or "hard to reach" are facing barriers we haven't yet recognized? Perhaps they're not hard to reach; we simply need to rethink how we reach them. In Part I of the Family Matters journey, participants will challenge common assumptions about family engagement and examine how school practices and everyday interactions shape whether families feel seen, valued, welcomed, and heard. Through reflection, discussion, and practical strategies, participants will explore the difference between parent involvement and authentic family engagement and consider the school experience from families' perspectives. The journey begins with a simple but powerful shift: before we can effectively engage families, we must first acknowledge who they are, what they bring, and how they experience us.

Lakeview 2

Dr. David Moore

Defining and Mobilizing High-Impact Attendance Teams: Building an effective attendance strategy requires moving beyond individual efforts to establish a cohesive, cross-functional attendance review team. Drawing on Superintendent Dr. David Moore's experience in Indian River Schools, this session outlines how district and school leaders can structure teams that drive real accountability. Participants will explore how administrators, counselors, teachers, and social workers can collaborate to analyze the root causes of chronic absenteeism rather than relying on isolated interventions. Dr. Moore will examine clear role definitions, cross-team alignment protocols, and collaborative workflows that transform attendance monitoring from a compliance task into a system-wide priority. Attendees will leave with a structured blueprint to define team responsibilities, assign ownership, and cultivate the trust needed to execute a coordinated, high-impact attendance plan across their school or district.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1

8:30 am – 9:45 am

Exhibit Hall

Local MS Success Stories

Best Practices Pannel featuring Rankin County, and New Albany districts.

10:00 am – 11:00 am — Concurrent Breakout Sessions

Exhibit Hall

Jeremy Andrews

SAO Portal Training

Garden Room

Dr. Brian Clarida

Bridging Hearts and Homes: Building Trust with Our At-Risk Families: Strong trust between schools and families is the foundation for holding high academic and behavioral expectations for all students. When families and educators align, they create a unified support system that fosters student growth and persistence. This session examines how everyday school interactions build or erode trust, focusing on families facing language barriers, cultural mismatches, or past negative experiences with schools. Participants will analyze barriers to family engagement and explore proactive, culturally responsive outreach strategies. Educators will learn how transparent communication helps families understand, embrace, and reinforce high expectations at home. Attendees will leave with a targeted action plan to build authentic family partnerships that nurture student resilience, uphold high standards, and strengthen school community ties.

Forrest 1 & 2

Dr. Felicia Turner

Family Matters Part II: Connecting with Families Differently: Schools contact families every day, but contact and connection are not the same. So, can we talk? More importantly, can we rethink how we talk with families to build connection rather than simply deliver information? In Part II of the Family Matters journey, participants will explore how trust, communication, and relationships shape whether families remain recipients of information or become genuine partners. Through relatable school-family scenarios and practical strategies, participants will examine the difference between simply talking to families and meaningfully communicating with them, and discover ways to foster authentic, two-way interactions across a variety of roles and settings. The next step is connection: moving beyond simply reaching families to intentionally connect with them in ways that build trust, strengthen relationships, and make authentic partnership possible.

Lamar 1 & 2

Dr. Usamah Rodgers

High-Wage Pathways Without a Four-Year Degree: To expand options for postsecondary success, educators must help students identify high-demand career pathways accessible through short-term credentials, apprenticeships, industry certifications, and community college programs. Grounded in industries vital to Mississippi's economy—including advanced manufacturing, mechatronics, healthcare, logistics, and IT—this session shows how to guide students toward lucrative careers without a four-year degree. Through an interactive career-matching exercise, participants will practice linking student interests and CTE experiences to entry-level opportunities, wage progression, and continued education. Attendees will leave with a practical Career Pathway Mapping Tool to strengthen student advising, align career planning with local labor market needs, and broaden postsecondary access for all learners.

Lakeview 1

Dr. Lane Freeman

Building the Plan: AI Support for Individualized Attendance Intervention: This hands-on session moves from general capabilities to specific applications in intervention planning and is designed for participants new to AI or continuing from Day 1. Participants will develop an individualized plan for a student who has crossed an attendance threshold, using AI to accelerate drafting, organize supporting information, and prepare documentation. The session addresses how to align this work with existing district processes and state expectations. Attention is given to what should and should not be delegated to a tool at each stage. Participants will leave with a working draft and a repeatable process they can adapt to their own context. Participants should bring a laptop or tablet and will be able to choose from several AI tools during the session.

Lakeview 2

Dr. David Moore

Translating Attendance Data into Strategic Practice: Attendance data signals that something is happening, but raw numbers rarely tell the full story. This session shows school and district leaders how to look beyond aggregate daily counts to uncover root causes and targeted insights. Dr. David Moore explains how Indian River Schools uses detailed subgroup data, grade-level transition spikes, and early-warning risk indicators to shift from reactive policy enforcement to proactive, data-informed practices. Participants will explore methodologies for conducting root-cause analyses, identifying pre-truancy trends at critical transition points, and evaluating whether existing attendance policies inadvertently create barriers to persistence. Leaders will leave with practical diagnostic strategies to evaluate local data, challenge superficial excuses, and design purposeful interventions aligned with the true drivers of absenteeism.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1

12:30 pm – 1:30 pm — Concurrent Breakout Sessions

Exhibit Hall

Crystal Creel & Melissa Banks

PowerSchool and MSIS Coding Session

Garden Room

Dr. Cherie Goins

FROM PLAYBOOK TO PRACTICE: CALL THE PLAY: Move the Chains: Strategic Interventions for Dropout Prevention. Identifying an attendance concern is only the first step in effective dropout prevention; the real challenge is choosing an intervention that aligns with why the student is missing school. This fast-paced session challenges one-size-fits-all attendance strategies and focuses on smarter decision-making to keep at-risk learners on track to graduate. Participants will analyze realistic student scenarios, identify specific attendance barriers, and match targeted supports directly to root causes. Attendees will clarify staff roles, establish clear ownership of next steps, and learn to recognize when an intervention doesn't fit the problem. Participants will leave with the Attendance Intervention Decision Guide—a practical framework for selecting the right response, owner, timeline, and evidence of progress across multi-tiered dropout prevention supports.

Forrest 1 & 2

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Lakeview 2

Dr. Doran Gresham

Engagement by Design: Reaching Students with Exceptionalities Through Access, Voice, and Active Learning: Getting students into the classroom is essential, but meaningful access to rigorous content keeps them engaged. Grounded in Dr. Gresham's work with Arizona schools and the Successful Practices Network, this hands-on session focuses on strengthening MTSS Tier 1 core instruction to boost participation, academic discussion, and student ownership—especially for students with disabilities and exceptional learning needs. Participants will explore VAKT—a multimodal instructional approach that integrates visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile experiences—alongside the ACT framework (Anchor learning, Customize access, and Think through higher-order reasoning). Attendees will actively experience these Tier 1 strategies, redesign a sample classroom task, and learn how subtle universal design adjustments eliminate learning barriers. Educators will leave with actionable tools to move beyond passive compliance, making core instruction accessible, active, and deeply engaging for all students.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1

1:45 pm – 2:45 pm — Concurrent Breakout Sessions

Exhibit Hall

[Stephanie Permenter & Melissa Banks](#)
SAMS and MSIS Coding Session

Garden Room

[Dr. Cherie Goins](#)

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Forrest 1 & 2

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Bridging Hearts and Homes: Building Trust with Our At-Risk Families: Strong trust between schools and families is the foundation for holding high academic and behavioral expectations for all students. When families and educators align, they create a unified support system that fosters student growth and persistence. This session examines how everyday school interactions build or erode trust, focusing on families facing language barriers, cultural mismatches, or past negative experiences with schools. Participants will analyze barriers to family engagement and explore proactive, culturally responsive outreach strategies. Educators will learn how transparent communication helps families understand, embrace, and reinforce high expectations at home. Attendees will leave with a targeted action plan to build authentic family partnerships that nurture student resilience, uphold high standards, and strengthen school community ties.

Lakeview 1

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Lakeview 2

[Dr. Doran Gresham](#)

Engagement by Design: Reaching Students with Exceptionalities Through Access, Voice, and Active Learning: Getting students into the classroom is essential, but meaningful access to rigorous content keeps them engaged. Grounded in Dr. Gresham's work with Arizona schools and the Successful Practices Network, this hands-on session focuses on strengthening MTSS Tier 1 core instruction to boost participation, academic discussion, and student ownership—especially for students with disabilities and exceptional learning needs. Participants will explore VAKT—a multimodal instructional approach that integrates visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile experiences—alongside the ACT framework (Anchor learning, Customize access, and Think through higher-order reasoning). Attendees will actively experience these Tier 1 strategies, redesign a sample classroom task, and learn how subtle universal design adjustments eliminate learning barriers. Educators will leave with actionable tools to move beyond passive compliance, making core instruction accessible, active, and deeply engaging for all students.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1

3:00 pm – 4:00 pm — Concurrent Breakout Sessions

Exhibit Hall

Dr. Usamah Rodgers

High-Wage Pathways Without a Four-Year Degree: To expand options for postsecondary success, educators must help students identify high-demand career pathways accessible through short-term credentials, apprenticeships, industry certifications, and community college programs. Grounded in industries vital to Mississippi's economy—including advanced manufacturing, mechatronics, healthcare, logistics, and IT—this session shows how to guide students toward lucrative careers without a four-year degree. Through an interactive career-matching exercise, participants will practice linking student interests and CTE experiences to entry-level opportunities, wage progression, and continued education. Attendees will leave with a practical Career Pathway Mapping Tool to strengthen student advising, align career planning with local labor market needs, and broaden postsecondary access for all learners.

Garden Room

Dr. Cherie Goins

FROM PLAYBOOK TO PRACTICE: CALL THE PLAY: Move the Chains: Strategic Interventions for Dropout Prevention. Identifying an attendance concern is only the first step in effective dropout prevention; the real challenge is choosing an intervention that aligns with why the student is missing school. This fast-paced session challenges one-size-fits-all attendance strategies and focuses on smarter decision-making to keep at-risk learners on track to graduate. Participants will analyze realistic student scenarios, identify specific attendance barriers, and match targeted supports directly to root causes. Attendees will clarify staff roles, establish clear ownership of next steps, and learn to recognize when an intervention doesn't fit the problem. Participants will leave with the Attendance Intervention Decision Guide—a practical framework for selecting the right response, owner, timeline, and evidence of progress across multi-tiered dropout prevention supports.

Forest 1 & 2

Dr. Felicia Turner

Family Matters Part II: Connecting with Families Differently: Schools contact families every day, but contact and connection are not the same. So, can we talk? More importantly, can we rethink how we talk with families to build connection rather than simply deliver information? In Part II of the Family Matters journey, participants will explore how trust, communication, and relationships shape whether families remain recipients of information or become genuine partners. Through relatable school-family scenarios and practical strategies, participants will examine the difference between simply talking to families and meaningfully communicating with them, and discover ways to foster authentic, two-way interactions across a variety of roles and settings. The next step is connection: moving beyond simply reaching families to intentionally connect with them in ways that build trust, strengthen relationships, and make authentic partnership possible.

Lamar 1 & 2

Dr. Brian Clarida

Bridging Hearts and Homes: Building Trust with Our At-Risk Families: Strong trust between schools and families is the foundation for holding high academic and behavioral expectations for all students. When families and educators align, they create a unified support system that fosters student growth and persistence. This session examines how everyday school interactions build or erode trust, focusing on families facing language barriers, cultural mismatches, or past negative experiences with schools. Participants will analyze barriers to family engagement and explore proactive, culturally responsive outreach strategies. Educators will learn how transparent communication helps families understand, embrace, and reinforce high expectations at home. Attendees will leave with a targeted action plan to build authentic family partnerships that nurture student resilience, uphold high standards, and strengthen school community ties.

Lakeview 1

Dr. David Moore

Translating Attendance Data into Strategic Practice: Attendance data signals that something is happening, but raw numbers rarely tell the full story. This session shows school and district leaders how to look beyond aggregate daily counts to uncover root causes and targeted insights. Dr. David Moore explains how Indian River Schools uses detailed subgroup data, grade-level transition spikes, and early-warning risk indicators to shift from reactive policy enforcement to proactive, data-informed practices. Participants will explore methodologies for conducting root-cause analyses, identifying pre-truancy trends at critical transition points, and evaluating whether existing attendance policies inadvertently create barriers to persistence. Leaders will leave with practical diagnostic strategies to evaluate local data, challenge superficial excuses, and design purposeful interventions aligned with the true drivers of absenteeism.

Lakeview 2

Dr. Doran Gresham

Engagement by Design: Reaching Students with Exceptionalities Through Access, Voice, and Active Learning: Getting students into the classroom is essential, but meaningful access to rigorous content keeps them engaged. Grounded in Dr. Gresham's work with Arizona schools and the Successful Practices Network, this hands-on session focuses on strengthening MTSS Tier 1 core instruction to boost participation, academic discussion, and student ownership—especially for students with disabilities and exceptional learning needs. Participants will explore VAKT—a multimodal instructional approach that integrates visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile experiences—alongside the ACT framework (Anchor learning, Customize access, and Think through higher-order reasoning). Attendees will actively experience these Tier 1 strategies, redesign a sample classroom task, and learn how subtle universal design adjustments eliminate learning barriers. Educators will leave with actionable tools to move beyond passive compliance, making core instruction accessible, active, and deeply engaging for all students.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 2

8:30 am – 9:45 am — Keynote — Exhibit Hall

Kelly Brinkman

When Generations Connect: Engaging Today's Learners While Preparing Tomorrow's Workforce

Today's schools bring together a multigenerational workforce serving students from Gen Z and Gen Alpha, each shaped by different formative experiences, communication preferences, expectations, and approaches to learning. In this engaging closing keynote, Kelly Brinkman explores the generational mindsets influencing students, educators, leaders, and families, and what those differences mean for attendance, engagement, communication, and learning. Participants will learn how to move beyond stereotypes, recognize the strengths and needs each generation brings, and adapt their approach to build trust across generational lines.

10:00 am – 11:00 am — Concurrent Breakout Sessions

Garden Room

Dr. Brian Clarida

Every Student, Every Day: Charting Pathways to Keep Kids in School: Keeping at-risk students enrolled and engaged requires pairing relentless relational support with high expectations. Disengagement is rarely sudden; it often stems from unaddressed academic frustration and lowered expectations, allowing struggling students to slip through the cracks. This evidence-informed session focuses on early warning indicators and retention strategies that keep K–12 students challenged, connected, and progressing toward graduation. Educators and school leaders will evaluate targeted retention strategies—including mentoring, tutoring, flexible scheduling, and credit recovery—within a framework of high standards and accountability. Attendees will leave with practical tools to identify disengagement early, leverage community resources, and implement a personalized retention action plan that sustains high expectations while ensuring no student gives up on school.

Forrest 1 & 2

Dr. Felicia Turner

Family Engagement Part III: Transforming Family Engagement Together: Family engagement is bigger than an event, a program, or one person's responsibility. It takes all of us. In the final part of the Family Matters journey, participants will examine how policies, practices, systems, and everyday decisions shape families' experiences with school. They will explore critical family touchpoints, identify barriers that may unintentionally hinder partnerships, and consider practical ways teachers, counselors, graduation coaches, administrators, and other school staff can share responsibility for strengthening family-school partnerships. Ultimately, the goal is transformation: moving family engagement from something schools do to how schools work, and transforming school environments into places where families know they belong, their voices matter, and their partnership is essential to student success.

Lamar 1 & 2

Dr. Doran Gresham

Somebody Should Know Their Names: Mentoring, Belonging, and the Programs That Help Students to Stick Around: Student disconnection is rarely abrupt; it unfolds gradually through missed days, academic frustration, weak relationships, and the quiet belief that one's presence does not matter. Drawing on Dr. Doran Gresham's 20-plus years of community mentoring and work with affinity initiatives such as BROTHERS (Brothers Reaching Out To Help Each Reach Success) through the Successful Practices Network, this interactive session examines how mentoring, adult advocacy, and relationship-centered programming interrupt disengagement before it leads to departure. Participants will analyze real-world disengagement scenarios and craft targeted connection plans grounded in belonging, identity, accountability, and academic support. The session highlights how mentoring programs, affinity groups, restorative practices, and structured reentry supports work together to foster resilience after setbacks. Educators will leave with actionable strategies to identify at-risk students and establish sustainable programs that ensure every student feels seen, valued, and expected.

Lakeview 1

Dr. Lane Freeman

The Message That Brings Them Back: Family Communication and AI: Notification is often the first and sometimes only contact a family receives about attendance, and the tone of that contact shapes what happens next. This hands-on session is designed for participants new to this work or continuing from earlier sessions. Participants will examine how AI can help school teams produce communication that is clear, accessible, and more likely to open a conversation rather than close one. Participants will look at examples, revise them together, and consider how factors like reading level, language, and delivery method affect response. The session also touches on tracking what works over time. Participants will leave with adaptable templates and a practical approach to improving family outreach. Participants should bring a laptop or tablet and will be able to choose from several AI tools during the session.

Lakeview 2

Dr. David Moore

Data to Action: Driving Student Retention and Financial Stability: Chronic absenteeism threatens student achievement, graduation rates, and state funding models. In this action-focused session, Dr. David Moore highlights how district leaders can use student data to build targeted attendance response systems that keep students in school and protect district resources. Drawing on evidence-based practices from the National Dropout Prevention Center, participants will examine the direct mathematical links among ninth-grade attendance, academic proficiency, graduation outcomes, and state revenue. Attendees will practice converting local data sets into customized, measurable 30-day action plans with defined ownership and progress metrics. Dr. Moore will show how clear monitoring protocols help leadership teams distinguish high-volume adult activity from actual student progress. Participants will leave equipped with frameworks to deploy data-driven interventions, measure progress, and safeguard both student futures and district financial stability.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 2

12:30 pm – 1:30 pm — Plenary Session

Exhibit Hall

Plenary Session

National Field Experts: Expert Panel featuring Dr. Bryant Marshall, Mr. Jeremy Andrews, Dr. David Moore, Dr. Doran Gresham, Dr. Brian Clarida, Moderated by Dr. Robert Peters

1:45 pm – 2:45 pm — Concurrent Breakout Sessions

Garden Room

Chronic Absenteeism Report & Review

This session provides school and district personnel with an overview of Mississippi's updated attendance requirements and training on the use of the School Attendance Officer (SAO) Portal for attendance referrals and truancy reporting. Effective July 1, 2026, Mississippi's revised compulsory attendance law established additional requirements for monitoring chronic absenteeism, notifying parents or guardians, implementing appropriate interventions, and reporting unlawful absences to School Attendance Officers. Participants will review key attendance requirements, referral procedures, and reporting expectations, as well as receive guidance on accessing and navigating the SAO Portal. The session will support school and district personnel using the portal to submit attendance referrals, document required information and facilitate timely communication with School Attendance Officers.

Forrest 1 & 2

Dr. Felicia Turner

Family Engagement Part III: Transforming Family Engagement Together: Family engagement is bigger than an event, a program, or one person's responsibility. It takes all of us. In the final part of the Family Matters journey, participants will examine how policies, practices, systems, and everyday decisions shape families' experiences with school. They will explore critical family touchpoints, identify barriers that may unintentionally hinder partnerships, and consider practical ways teachers, counselors, graduation coaches, administrators, and other school staff can share responsibility for strengthening family-school partnerships. Ultimately, the goal is transformation: moving family engagement from something schools do to how schools work, and transforming school environments into places where families know they belong, their voices matter, and their partnership is essential to student success.

Lamar 1 & 2

Dr. Usamah Rodgers

Beyond the Resume—Teaching the Employability Skills Employers Expect: Gaining employment requires more than technical knowledge; students must master essential employability skills such as reliability, adaptability, teamwork, and communication. This practical session helps educators translate everyday school experiences into workplace competencies—framing assignment deadlines as reliability, group projects as teamwork, and managing personal responsibilities as time management. Participants will analyze realistic workplace scenarios to identify effective strategies for teaching and reinforcing professional habits within existing student services and classroom settings. Attendees will complete a Student Employability Skills Audit and build a customized 30-Day Employability Skills Action Plan to systematically integrate workforce readiness into their daily programs and better prepare students for long-term economic mobility.

Lakeview 1

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Lakeview 2

Dr. Cherie Goins

FROM PLAYBOOK TO PRACTICE: MOVE THE CHAINS: Turning Attendance Strategies Into Measurable Student Progress towards Graduation. An attendance strategy is only successful if it drives measurable student progress and keeps students on track for graduation. This action-focused dropout prevention session helps teams bridge the gap between planning and execution by emphasizing clear ownership, consistent follow-through, and timely adjustments. Participants will learn to distinguish high-volume adult activity from real impact, establishing clear criteria to decide whether to continue, adjust, intensify, or replace a dropout intervention. Grounded in a straightforward execution cycle—Act, Monitor, Adjust, Advance—the session equips educators to define meaningful progress and evaluate intervention efficacy. Attendees will leave with concrete strategies for assigning accountability and a personalized 30-Day Attendance Action Plan ready for immediate implementation in their schools or districts.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 2

3:00 pm – 4:00 pm — Concurrent Breakout Sessions

Exhibit Hall

Dr. Robert Peters

Breaking Barriers and Improving Attendance: High-Impact Strategies for Our Most Vulnerable Learners

Effective educators understand that supporting ALL students requires intentional strategies and deep awareness of school culture. This interactive keynote explores research-based practices that build student resilience and empower learners at every level to succeed. Participants will discover specific classroom strategies that motivate students to take ownership of their learning journey while creating systems that truly care for ALL child's present and future success. Please join Robert as he provides practical tools for differentiated instruction, trauma-informed practices, and effective teaching methods that ensure no student falls through the cracks. Educators will engage in collaborative planning to design inclusive learning environments that meet ALL student needs while maintaining high expectations for ALL.

Garden Room

Dr. Doran Gresham

Somebody Should Know Their Names: Mentoring, Belonging, and the Programs That Help Students to Stick Around:

Student disconnection is rarely abrupt; it unfolds gradually through missed days, academic frustration, weak relationships, and the quiet belief that one's presence does not matter. Drawing on Dr. Doran Gresham's 20-plus years of community mentoring and work with affinity initiatives such as BROTHERS (Brothers Reaching Out To Help Each Reach Success) through the Successful Practices Network, this interactive session examines how mentoring, adult advocacy, and relationship-centered programming interrupt disengagement before it leads to departure. Participants will analyze real-world disengagement scenarios and craft targeted connection plans grounded in belonging, identity, accountability, and academic support. The session highlights how mentoring programs, affinity groups, restorative practices, and structured reentry supports work together to foster resilience after setbacks. Educators will leave with actionable strategies to identify at-risk students and establish sustainable programs that ensure every student feels seen, valued, and expected.

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Presenters



Dr. Bill Daggett

Dr. Daggett's ability to move education systems towards more rigorous and relevant skills and knowledge for ALL students has led to collaborations with state-level and local district initiatives in all 50 states, as well as in Europe and Asia.

While an avid supporter of public schools, he also challenges educators to focus more on the children's future than on maintaining the classrooms of our youth. His insights and leadership have led nearly every major education association in the U.S., hundreds of school districts and colleges, numerous political and business leaders, publishers, and others to seek his insight and guidance.

Dr. Daggett began his career as a teacher, became a local administrator, and then the Director of the New York State Education Department. Today, he provides leadership and guidance to the National Dropout Prevention Center and the Career and Technical Education Technical Assistance Center, both part of the Successful Practices Network.

He created the Rigor/Relevance Framework and the Rigor-Relevance-Resilience Learning Model, which has become a pillar of many of the nation's school reform efforts. Dr. Daggett has authored 26 books on student learning and instruction, as well as textbooks, research reports, and journal articles.

Dr. Daggett has been recognized as a distinguished alumnus by both Temple University and the State University at Albany.

Dr. Daggett has a special commitment to individuals with disabilities. He and his wife, Bonnie, volunteer their time and lend their support to Wildwood Programs in upstate New York. Wildwood serves the needs of people of all ages who, like their daughter Audrey, have neurological impairments/learning disabilities or autism, by enabling them to become the best that they can be.



Dr. Robert Peters

Dr. Robert Peters is the Senior Vice President at Successful Practices Network and the National Dropout Prevention Center. He works with hundreds of Superintendents to strategically plan comprehensive solutions that empower academic success. Robert strongly believes in a future-focused education for ALL students. He has effectively worked with Superintendents across the United States in rural, suburban, and some of the largest urban districts, including Miami-Dade County, Los Angeles Unified, and Atlanta Public Schools. He has co-authored multiple Future Focused articles with Dr. Bill Daggett and Ray McNulty and collaborated on the development of the Future Focused Success Framework. Robert brings a history of innovation and transformation in all aspects of leadership. Before joining the Successful Practices Network and the National Dropout Prevention Center, he was an Assistant Superintendent and principal at all school levels. He holds an Ed.D. from the University of Texas at Austin. Robert is dedicated to working with Superintendents, campus-based administrators, and teachers to create Future Focused solutions that empower academic success.

Presenters



Dr. Usamah Rodgers

Dr Usamah Rodgers is a visionary education leader, author, and speaker who recently retired after 32 years of dedicated service as an educator and school system leader. Most recently, she served as Superintendent of Schools for DeSoto Independent School District, a position she assumed in May 2022. Prior to becoming superintendent, she served as a deputy chief in one of the largest school districts in Texas. Dr. Rodgers is widely recognized as a thought leader, collaborator, innovator, designer, and disruptor in public education. She is particularly known for designing, launching, and leading one of the largest implementations of the Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH) program in the United States. Through this work, thousands of students have been provided the opportunity to graduate from high school with an associate degree and industry-recognized certifications, expanding access to college and career pathways.

Throughout her distinguished career, Dr. Rodgers has been recognized nationally for her impact and leadership. She was named Best K-12 Education Leader in both 2020 and 2022 by The Edvocate, a national organization devoted to advancing education equity, reform, and innovation. Her career journey includes being named Teacher of the Year (1998) and Principal of the Year (2009). Her leadership and service have earned numerous honors including recognition from the NAACP, the National Council of Negro Women, and the University of Texas at Austin. She was named a Holdsworth Center Champion of Hope (2024), received the Distinguished Alumni Award from Missouri State University, and was honored by the Texas Black Legislative Caucus as an Outstanding Texan for District III (2023).



Dr. David Moore

Dr. David K. Moore's tenure as Superintendent of Schools in Indian River County (SDIRC) has been marked by unprecedented academic improvements over the last three years. Under Dr. Moore's leadership, the District improved its state ranking by an impressive 29 positions during the 2023-2024 academic year, moving from 38th in 2018-2019 to 9th for the District Grade. This progress represents the highest rate of improvement of any district in the State of Florida since 2018-2019. Additionally, in 2023-2024, state assessment results showed SDIRC students outperformed state averages in all tested areas. The percentage of schools earning a school grade of "A" or "B" soared from 47% in 2018-2019 to an extraordinary 95% in 2023-2024. Furthermore, the District's most recent high school graduation rate (2022-2023) reached 96%, ranking 3rd in the State of Florida. These achievements are not only unparalleled in the District's history but also set a new standard for educational excellence in Florida..

Dr. Moore has also been the driving force behind transformative improvements in the District's financial stewardship. Upon his arrival, the District faced financial instability and declining student enrollment. Under Dr. Moore's guidance, the District implemented comprehensive organizational and budgetary accountability systems that prioritized data-driven resource allocation and responsible spending. These efforts resulted in a significant shift in financial ratings from negative to stable, as well as the creation of a healthy district fund balance. Since the 2019-2020 school year, district restructuring and reorganization efforts have generated cost savings of approximately \$4.5 million. Moreover, Dr. Moore successfully negotiated a multi-year teacher contract, securing salary raises and operating millage to provide the fiscal resources necessary for expanding district supports. His leadership also led to the establishment of the Indian River Education Fund, the District's first Direct Support Organization, which engages the private sector in intellectual and financial investment in the District.

Presenters



Dr. Brian Clarida

Dr. Brian Clarida brings a rare blend of boots-on-the-ground school leadership and research-driven expertise to every room he enters. Before stepping into higher education, he served as a Principal in both rural and large urban school districts, leading campuses through the same day-to-day realities — the tough calls, the turnover, the pressure to perform — that today's school and district leaders face every day. Dr. Clarida has served as a leadership coach for the Department of Public Instruction assigned to work in the lowest performing schools.

Now a Clinical Professor at UNC Greensboro, Dr. Clarida trains the next generation of principals and assistant principals, most notably through the Assistant Principal Leadership Academy, a program he leads in partnership with Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools and Wallace Foundation to prepare aspiring administrators for the demands of the principalship. His research digs into one of the most urgent challenges in K-12 leadership today: how school leaders can sharpen their problem-solving skills fast enough to keep pace with rapid school turnaround and rising principal turnover.

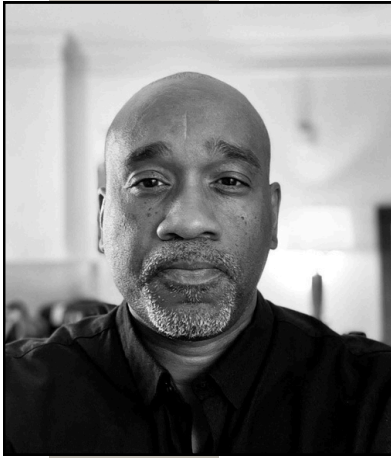
Dr. Clarida doesn't just study leadership — he's lived it, taught it, and helped shape it in districts across numerous different states. Participants can expect a session grounded in real school experience, practical strategy, and a genuine passion for developing leaders who are ready for what's next.



Dr. Felicia Turner

Dr. Felicia Turner has presented at numerous local, regional, and international conferences. Audiences enjoy her humor and wit as she pushes boundaries and inspires teaching and learning to elevate to new heights. Prior to her time at the Successful Practices Network, she began her journey in education teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) students. Ms. Turner's accomplishments include co-authoring a writing curriculum, called "Paper, Pencils, Let's Write!" Her proficiency in grant writing has yielded millions of dollars in grants for public and charter sectors; ultimately increasing learning opportunities for students through an array of technology initiatives, literacy, student attendance and dropout prevention, trauma, parent and family involvement, and extensive community collaborations. Additionally, Dr. Turner is skilled at creating and organizing district level teaching and learning institutes, devising professional learning for new teachers through academies, and strategic planning for districts and education foundations. Ms. Turner continues to build and support leaders by implementing instructional practices to promote literacy and college readiness. She has written and published several papers on the topic of crisis leadership and crisis management in K-12 educational settings, developed and written content for SPN and NDPC's Resilient District Series, Future Focused Success Series, Effective Strategies for Dropout Prevention, Trauma Skilled School Models (TSSM) and Attendance and Drop Out Prevention.

Presenters



Dr. Doran Gresham

Dr. Doran Gresham is an award-winning educator who hails from Richmond, Virginia. He is a subject matter expert in Emotional Disturbance and student mentoring with more than 25 years of experience in teacher preparation and special education. Currently, he is an Assistant Professor at The George Washington University and he has served as a consultant with the International Center for Leadership in Education (ICLE) which partners with school districts in the US Virgin Islands, Louisiana, Georgia, Pennsylvania, California, Indiana, Texas, and other regions. He has worked with a wide range of grassroots organizations that support the needs of students from impoverished communities (e.g.: 100 Black Men of Prince George's County, MD, Guerilla Arts Ink, and the Council for Exceptional Children). Doran is a founding member of Achievement Preparatory Academy, in Washington, DC and he also served as a Master Educator and Senior Master Educator for DC Public schools, where he observed and supported over 700 educators with observations, coaching, written reports, and post-observation conferences. He was named the 2004 Man of the Year for 100 Black Men of Greater Washington, DC, and the Mentor of the Year in 2018 for 100 Black Men of Prince George's County, Maryland. In 2016, this Holmes Scholar was given the Rita Ives Award for his dedication and work in special education. He is a father to two bright and engaging daughters, Madison and Nina, and he lives with his wife of 25 years, Colette, in Prince George's County, Maryland.



Dr. Lane Freeman

Dr. Lane Freeman is a thought leader in artificial intelligence (AI) integration, instructional innovation, and workforce development. With over a decade of experience as a Career and Technical Education (CTE) high school teacher and another decade in higher education leadership, Dr. Freeman brings a unique perspective on bridging K-12 and postsecondary education to create future-ready learning environments.

Dr. Freeman has worked extensively with colleges, universities, and state agencies across the U.S., advising on AI adoption, instructional innovation, and curriculum development. His expertise includes AI-driven course design, immersive learning strategies, and using technology to enhance student engagement and workforce alignment. A strong advocate for responsible AI use in education, Dr. Freeman has shared his insights through podcasts, national panels, and professional development events. He was a panelist for Inside Higher Ed's "Advocating for AI in Higher Education" and has contributed to discussions on the evolving role of AI in learning and workforce preparation. His approach is rooted in ethical and practical applications that empower educators and students to engage with AI as a tool for innovation.

Presenters



Dr. Cherie Goins

Meet Dr. Cherie Goins, a visionary in the field of education, renowned as a facilitator of transformative development and a true capacity-builder. With an impressive background in PreK-12+ education, Dr. Goins is widely recognized for her impactful work supporting and developing exceptional teachers, support staff, and school and district leaders. Throughout her career, Dr. Goins has pioneered groundbreaking initiatives, shaping educational processes that prioritize more personalized learning experiences. As a facilitator of transformative development, she has worked closely with schools and districts to implement progressive frameworks that elevate teaching and learning to unprecedented heights. Her compassionate approach to mentoring educators has inspired a new generation of passionate teacher leaders, all dedicated to nurturing students' potential to its fullest.

When she isn't actively shaping the future of education, you can find Dr. Goins passionately engaging in various community initiatives, advocating for equal access to the creative arts and to quality education. Her dedication to social justice and her unwavering belief in the transformative power of education have garnered her much respect and admiration.



Kelly Brinkman

Kelly Brinkman, a seasoned speaker with over two decades of experience, has become a guiding force for Gen Z and Millennials, offering inspiration and valuable insights on navigating life's journeys and challenges. As a proud Millennial herself, Kelly recently joined the dynamic BridgeWorks team, driven by her commitment to fostering connection, passion, and a deep belief in the power of generational inclusion in the workplace.

In her previous role, Kelly made a significant impact in the field of education. Through her captivating presentations, she motivated thousands to pursue their academic and career dreams. Her energy, positivity, and unwavering determination to excel in everything she does have roots in her secondary career as an elite marathon racer.

For nearly 15 years, Kelly trained and competed in events across the United States, including a marathon in Japan. Her accolades include earning a place in several U.S. National Championship races, securing the title of National Champion in the Masters Track 5000m, and narrowly missing a spot on the U.S. World Team in cross-country. Kelly's proudest achievements include qualifying for two trips to the U.S. Olympic Trials Marathon. Notably, Kelly's resilience was tested when she completed the Boston Marathon just 30 minutes before the terrorist attack in 2013. This experience has given her a unique perspective on the impact of history on a generation and how it shapes individuals.

Kelly not only seeks passion in her work but also dedicates her time to volunteering for causes close to her heart. As a self-proclaimed "crazy dog mom," she spends her spare time volunteering at a local dog rescue.

Kelly holds a bachelor's degree in journalism and mass communications from Iowa State and an MBA from Globe University, a testament to her commitment to continuous learning and growth. With a unique blend of professional expertise, athletic achievement, and a heart for service, Kelly Brinkman continues to inspire and empower audiences to embrace their potential and make a positive impact in their workplaces and communities.