

TASSP Making Middle School Matter Symposium

MARCH 1 & 2, 2021 | VIRTUAL

Watch your e-mail for a message from SCHED for your login information and be sure to login early to build your schedule and ensure you will be set up for Monday morning!

Monday, March 1, 2021

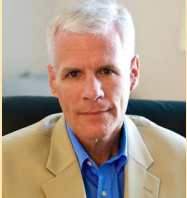
9:00 AM - 10:45 AM | OPENING SESSION (ALL ON ZOOM)

9:00 AM- 9:30 AM | MEET AND GREET

9:30 AM – 9:45 AM | WELCOME/OPENING VIDEO/PLEDGES

9:45 AM – 10:45 AM | KEYNOTE SESSION: RICK WORMELI

MAKING
Middle School
Matter!



• The Successful Middle School (This We Believe 2021) and Teaching Young Adolescents

Whoa, hold on tight! Working with rapidly morphing humans at this formative age is among the most intellectual and compassionate of professions, requiring expertise, humor, mental dexterity, and dedication. Join us for a provocative address in which we identify components of highly effective middle level practice, focusing on what is developmentally appropriate and what is not appropriate according to the latest research and frontline common sense, and summoning the courage of conviction to do right by the next generation of amazing leaders, our students. New and potentially challenging elements from AMLE's newly released, *The Successful Middle School: This We Believe*, will be presented as well specific considerations for how middle schools can be different on the other side of the pandemic. Seatbelts fastened, but raise your hands high into the air as we pass through these tight turns, steep slopes, and do the occasional loop. We're all in!

10:45 AM – 11:00 AM | BREAK

11:00 AM – NOON | BREAKOUT SESSIONS - SET 1



• RICK WORMELI: The Successful Middle School (This We Believe 2021) and Teaching Young Adolescents: Taking a Closer Look at What Works

Let's engage in conversation about topics raised during the keynote address, and let's identify practical elements that really work for teaching young adolescents. We'll be sure to look at motivation, executive function, meaning-making, descriptive feedback techniques, humor, responding to anxiety, student agency, differentiation, cognitive science principles, student-teacher relationships, among others as time allows. Come with or without questions/commentary from the keynote, and add to your instructional versatility with a deeper dive into middle level instruction!



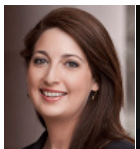
• JC POHL: Building Campus Relationships From the Inside Out

When it comes to building a strong school culture, campus relationships can make or break the efforts of even the best administrators, teachers, and student leaders. Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, JC Pohl, has spent nearly 20 years helping schools build campus cultures where relationships can thrive. In this program he lays out a powerful "needs based system" that provides the exact blueprint your school can use to build stronger relationships. If you want to decrease staff conflict and improve campus relationships, make sure to attend this session. It will provide you with the perfect stepping-stones to build an amazingly connected and vibrant school culture.



• CELENA AVILA HOGLUND: Using Various Types of Feedback to Promote Growth for All Learners

A global pandemic necessitates educators' ability to connect more with students and keep them engaged in learning. Whether in a virtual learning environment or during in-person instruction, educators can use various feedback types to ensure students know their path toward success. Studies have shown that providing more information during feedback can increase skill development and student progress. In this session, participants will learn and experience different types of feedback that promote growth for all learners.



• CHRISTY MURRAY & LIZ STEVENS: Middle School Matters! Boosting Schoolwide Reading Comprehension

It's more important than ever to use evidence-based reading practices across content areas in the middle grades so that learning can be accelerated. Learn how Middle School Matters implemented ongoing, distributed professional development (PD) in ELA/R, social studies, and science classrooms to ensure reading comprehension practices were used consistently, schoolwide, by all teachers. Presenters will describe the study, lessons learned, effective reading practices, and how to access free resources.



• JUSTIN RICHARDSON, LEAD4WARD: Monitoring Student Progress

How do we "grade" beyond the numbers? Evaluating student learning is critical for ensuring rigor and measuring student progress. In this session, leaders will learn new tools to support teachers in both their competence and confidence in collecting evidence of learning.

Monday, Mar. 1, 2021 (continued)

NOON – 12:30 | BROWN BAG LUNCH (BYOL & VISIT) Come join some of the TASSP staff and let's talk about the conference and how everyone is doing out there in the world of educating and caring for the Middle School children of our schools!

12:30 PM – 1:00 PM | VENDOR/EXHIBIT ZOOM SESSIONS

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM | KEYNOTE SESSION: DR. RUBY PAYNE



• **Emotional Poverty 1**

The brain development of adolescents is focused on pruning, specialization, and development of new neural pathways. The adolescent brain has four main tasks and they all involve peer interaction: social dominance (who is going to be the alpha?), social cognition, risk/reward analysis, and developing a moral code. These tasks may be ignored or downplayed at school but are essential to the development of the adolescent brain. Interestingly, to truly be an "alpha" (a true leader) you have to develop compassion and caring. Basic understandings of this development as well as strategies to enhance the development of the brain will be provided.

2:15 PM – 3:15 PM | BREAKOUT SESSIONS - SET 2



• **DR. RUBY PAYNE: Emotional Poverty 1**

This session will look at parenting through a different lens. Parenting is probably the most emotional activity of a lifetime, yet we tend to approach it as if it were a cognitive/behavioral matter. This session looks at the implicit bias between the educator and parent and vice versa, how the stress of the parent impacts the child's school performance (scientific research that the child often carries the stress from the parent), a process for building rapport with parents, and the use of invitational language.



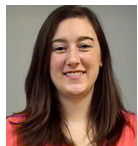
• **RICK WORMELI: Assessing Students' Learning (Fundamentals and Myth-Busting)**

Teaching is not a "gotcha" enterprise, yet many assessment approaches fall into that category. How do we move from mere documentation and judgment to using assessment to inform instruction design and build student self-efficacy? Join us for a provocative and practical session in which we explore fundamental elements of formative, summative, common, pre-, alternative, and re-assessments, busting myths along the way. Critical to students' success, descriptive feedback techniques from formative assessments will be emphasized as well. We'll focus clear and consistent evidence over time, offer do's and don'ts of rubric design, and give plenty of samples of great assessment techniques. Truly, these elements of effective assessment can dramatically change teacher-student interactions and the cultivate an ascending trajectory of student achievement within days!



• **JC POHL: Building Resilient Students From the Inside Out**

COVID is affecting school culture every day. Teen suicide is on the rise. Mental health continues to be a concern. And students are feeling more and more disconnected from their peers. In the face of such overwhelming stress, how can we help our students work through the adversity they regularly face? Award-winning producer and nationally certified counselor, JC Pohl, offers a direct pathway to one singular solution: resiliency. In this interactive session, JC offers five proven and immediately applicable ways to help students build self-efficacy and resilience. These keys to building resilient students might save the next suicidal student, help ignite campus culture, or remind every struggling child that brighter days lie ahead.



• **KATHERINE SARGENT: Adapting Evidence-Based Practices for Social Studies for Remote Learning**

This breakout session will provide teachers with research-based methods to improve vocabulary, text comprehension and social studies content knowledge. Examples of how the methods have been adapted for remote instruction will be shared



• **JUSTIN RICHARDSON: Review for Leaders: The Final Frontier**

Whether we have STAAR or are responsible for collecting local data to show evidence of learning, we know that the need to have engaging review doesn't change. But, one thing we have learned from 2020 is that everything else can! We will explore ways to prioritize, organize, and energize learning to make review meaningful, empower students to take ownership of their learning, and use lead4ward resources for effective review.



• **ALAN LOWMAN: How to Hack 8th Grade Social Studies**

There is an overwhelming amount of content in 8th grade social studies. How do we teach it all well and ensure our students perform well on STAAR? Join Alan Lowman, whose campus has earned TEA Distinctions the last six years in a row, as he shares with you the resources and strategies that helped his students master the STAAR test!

Monday, March 1, 2021 (continued)

3:30 PM – 4:30 PM | BREAKOUT SESSIONS - SET 3



• **RICK WORMELL: Minimizing Cheating/Plagiarizing/Parent Over-Assistance Among Students**

With so much remote and hybrid instruction happening, teachers are more concerned than ever: How do we know students' work is their own work? Even back in the classroom with in-person learning, this can be a dicey topic in discussions among teachers, students, and their families. Join us for a candid and practical look at three elements here: 1) A full exploration as to why middle schoolers cheat, plagiarize, or receive over-assistance from parents, 2) Suggested, constructive responses schools can make when students cheat and plagiarize, and 3) Specific steps teachers can take to significantly decrease the likelihood of students cheating, plagiarizing, and receiving inappropriate assistance from parents. Our society is calling for integrity and ethics right now, so let's begin with thoughtful, developmentally appropriate responses to young adolescents who may stray from their ethical selves and community values while in pursuit of academic excellence. And no pressure, but what young adolescents learn about cheating and plagiarizing at this age has direct correlation to their successful navigation of such ethics later in life. Let's get this right!



• **SEAN CAIN: A NOTEable Solution**

As schools work to address the academic gaps caused by Covid-19 interruptions, the need to use better instructional practice has never been more pronounced. However, as schools emerge from a year of Covid-19 pedagogy suppression, changing teacher practice and student engagement at scale will be, at best, daunting. Unless you attend this presentation. Sean Cain and Mike Laird, authors of *The Fundamental 5*, *The Reboot*, and *The Reboot Classroom*, share a quick and practical process for creating a culture of critical writing and lesson closure on your campus guaranteed to make teachers more effective and students more successful.



• **MARTY BARBIERI: Partnering for Pro-Active Crisis Response**

This session will focus on campus leadership team meetings, including your counselors, with community crisis organizations. The information gathered will allow your team to develop a campus plan that meets legal guidelines, is pro-active in nature, and ensures that your unique campus plan works within your district guidelines.



• **SARAH POWELL: Teaching the Language of Math**

In this session, we focus on math-specific vocabulary that students need to know and understand in order to participate fully in the math classroom. First, we focus on the number of math terms students see in Grades 6, 7, and 8. Then, we discuss how to fuse informal and formal math vocabulary and provide specificity to the language of math. Finally, we review several practices to increase the math vocabulary knowledge of students. Come join us to learn about teaching the language of math.



• **JUSTIN RICHARDSON: Monitoring Student Progress**

How do we "grade" beyond the numbers? Evaluating student learning is critical for ensuring rigor and measuring student progress. In this session, leaders will learn new tools to support teachers in both their competence and confidence in collecting evidence of learning.

Tuesday, March 2, 2021

8:00 AM - 8:15 AM | SCHOOLS TO WATCH RECOGNITION - DESIGNATIONS FOR 2021

8:15 AM – 8:30 AM | MEET AND GREET

8:30 AM – 9:30 AM | BREAKOUT SESSIONS - SET 4



• **SEAN CAIN: Pandemic Pacing: Instructional Decisions In The Post Pandemic School**

The instructional issues facing campuses now are overwhelming. When it comes to curriculum, school leaders need to develop filters to prioritize content concepts and revise content delivery based on concept importance. Sean Cain and Mike Laird, nationally recognized school improvement experts, cut through opinions and outline a process for school leaders to organize instruction and delivery in a way that significantly reduces the academic gaps caused by Covid-19.



• **MARTY BARBIERI: Becoming Stronger**

There will be residual effects of the COVID Pandemic. Preparing your campus to help students re-cover academic, personal/social, and family "holes" left from this pandemic, so that 'stronger' will be a word used consistently to describe your school family. Developing Campus Care Teams is one tool a campus might choose to use. This session will focus on Academic strength building, Mental health, Family disruption and Care Team Tools.



• **PHIL CAPIN: Improving Reading and Content-Area Learning Among English Learners**

Despite their significant potential, many English learners do not meet grade level expectations. The presenter will describe a few key content-area literacy practices that benefit all middle school students, but are particularly critical to English learners. Recommendations for teachers and school leaders looking to move the needle for English learners will be discussed.

Tuesday, March 2, 2021 (continued)



• **KATIE BRADEN: What I Wish My Administrator Knew About My Science Class**

This session invites you to investigate what makes science classes the best place in your school. When administrators are tasked with supervising diverse content areas, it can be difficult to have a working knowledge or deep understanding of it all. Science practices engage students cognitively and challenge them to be thinkers for the future. When done right, middle school science should be the most engaging class of the day! Here you'll find tips to evaluate and recognize science greatness, to support and coach for growth, and may find a few cross-curricular connections along the way!



• **BIANCA COKER: Trends in Math Education That Should Be Encouraged**

When a math teacher comes to me with a new approach or technology to use in their classroom, how do I know what to encourage and what not to? Learn about some of the trends in the past few years that can really make a difference in math instruction at your campus. Discuss productive ways to support teachers as they stretch out of their comfort zone to engage students. Understand how to ensure that critical learning is not lost in the process.

9:30 AM – 9:45 AM | BREAK

9:45 AM – 10:45 AM | BREAKOUT SESSIONS – “SCHOOLS TO WATCH” SCHOOLS



• **TRENT MIDDLE SCHOOL, FRISCO ISD** | Effort=Results. How to build a culture that does not fear failure! Join Dr. Shawn Perry, Principal of Trent Middle School in Frisco ISD. This campus has embraced the culture and ideas behind being a Texas School to Watch! This session should be very enlightening and engaging.



• **FREEPORT INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL, BRAZOSPORT ISD** | At Freeport Intermediate School we are teaching students to Be Safe, Be Smart, Be Kind, and Be Ready! Developing students to “be future ready” gives us a mission of provision to caringly meet the physical, intellectual, and emotional needs of our students. If the best schools are the ones who simply care more, then come explore how empathy just may be your secret sauce.



• **ROGERS MIDDLE SCHOOL, PEARLAND ISD** | At Rogers MS, our goal is to “Strive, Thrive, Advocate and Collaborate” with all students, parents, and our community. We proudly believe that we are “The Best Middle School in the Universe!” and we do not take that lightly. Our belief is an outward expression of our continued commitment to serve our students, parents, and community, in which we live. We have built a reputation for maintaining a positive learning environment where all students can soar to excellent levels of social and academic achievement. Let us share the culture and climate of our school that fuels social equality.



• **CHAPA MIDDLE SCHOOL, HAYS CISD**. Chapa MS is a Title 1 campus with 65% of students on free/reduced lunch. CMS has created a highly invested community of parents, teachers and students through a variety of family events. Discover ways to revitalize the life of your campus and community culture by hosting events such as Guy's and Girl's Night out, Coffee with the Counselors, #DADSQUAD, Coffee House, Talent Show and our Chapa 5k Challenge. CMS has also created positive behavior intervention and supports for our campus so that our students are successful. We have ideas such as Student of the Month, Rockstars, and Cougar Cash. Come hear our journey and learn some tools on how to implement these ideas.



• **FT. SETTLEMENT MIDDLE SCHOOL, FORT BEND ISD**. Come hear from an outstanding campus that exemplifies the “Pillars” of being designated as a School to Watch! You'll hear strategies and ideas on staffing, creative scheduling, and outstanding campus initiatives. Don't miss this session!!

10:45 AM – 11:00 AM | BREAK

11:00 AM – NOON | BREAKOUT SESSIONS – “SCHOOLS TO WATCH” SCHOOLS



• **ESTRADA MIDDLE SCHOOL, CLINT ISD** | Time to huddle up! What's your Instructional Playbook? We will share how our campus created an Instructional Playbook utilizing the Fundamental Five and how our Instructional “Plays” address language acquisition, behavioral supports, and college readiness skills. Our team will show you how to implement these strategies in the virtual classroom setting.



• **ATLANTA MIDDLE SCHOOL, ATLANTA ISD** | **Embracing the Schools to Watch Model**. In this session, participants will engage with the Atlanta MS team as they take you on tour of their award winning campus. Come learn about Choice Lab, STEM Lab, Miz Math, Blast and how the campuses embraces aspects of SEL for students across all grade levels.



• **AUSTIN MIDDLE SCHOOL, GALVESTON ISD** | **A+: Enlisting Community Partners to Promote Social Emotional Learning**. Beginning in 2019, Austin Middle School in Galveston ISD launched an innovative “A+” period to begin each school day. Created with express social-emotional goals based on campus survey data, the engaging program has increased parent and community involvement. Hear how a comprehensive focus on student growth has captivated stakeholders and driven partnerships to support student outcomes.



• **HALTOM MIDDLE SCHOOL, BIRDEVILLE ISD** | **No Excuses University: How Six Exceptional Systems Are Revolutionizing Our School**. The administration team of Haltom MS will provide an overview of their campus “Playbook”. This tool serves to help guide new staff members, veteran teachers and all stakeholders as they guide their campus through the six systems as described in the book, “No Excuses University: How Six Exceptional Systems Are Revolutionizing Our School.” If participants are not familiar with the NEU principles, this session would be a great way to learn more about how NEU can support any campus, K-12. It will also provide a glimpse on how campuses can create their own “Playbook” to help make their school's vision and mission a reality.

Tuesday, March 2, 2021 (continued)



• **MCMEANS JH – KATY ISD** | Our campus instructional framework, The Fundamental 5: The Formula for Quality Instruction, is infused in the classroom activities, across all disciplines, to provide students with a well-thought-out, child-centered educational experience. McMeans Junior High has developed well organized systems to provide opportunities for all teachers to grow, receive specific and timely feedback, and participate in on the job professional development to support intentional learning opportunities for every child.

NOON – 12:30 PM | BROWN BAG LUNCH (BYOL & VISIT)

12:30 PM – 1:00 PM | EXHIBITOR/VENDORS ZOOM SESSIONS

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM | BREAKOUT SESSIONS “SCHOOLS TO WATCH” SCHOOLS



• **COLLEYVILLE MIDDLE SCHOOL, GRAPEVINE ISD** | **Leveraging your district and campus mission, goals, and values for your school.** In this session, we will discuss how we leverage our district's mission and goals to maximize effectiveness on campus. We will highlight our CMS values of fostering a culture of growth, teamwork, utilizing our Gallup Strengths, and positivity. Additional focus will be on student voice, our data wall, and how we approach social and emotional wellness. We will also share our structures that support student engagement in the classroom and our daily Advisory period, which helps us support campus program needs and meet ALL student needs. We will also discuss the intentional partnership with our PTA and the impact it has on our overall school success



• **ROBERTS MIDDLE SCHOOL, PASADENA ISD** | What started with an unweaving purist of intentional growth and progress 6 years ago is today the leader among our district middle schools. What sets Roberts Middle School apart from other schools is our belief that we were chosen to be change agents in the lives of our students. We believe that we are story editors. When we are systematic in our thinking, it expands the range of choices available for solving a problem by broadening our thinking and helping us articulate a plan of action. We believe by tracking student by standards, catapults us to problem solve and create a menu of instructional strategies to help students reach mastery.



• **HILLWOOD MIDDLE SCHOOL, KELLER ISD** | **How to engage your students the last week of school!** Has a student ever said to you, "I cannot wait until the last week of school?" We hear this regularly from our students. Come see how we engage the students the last week of school and embark on community service projects with 1300 7th and 8th grade students



• **WOODGATE INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL, MIDWAY ISD** | **Bringing it ALL Together.** Teaching face to face and virtually, engaging with a PLC, instituting RTI and implementing a Character Ed program does not have to be overwhelming. Explore the organizational focus, infrastructure and programs that make such high levels of success a reality! In this session, hear how a wonderfully diverse, Title 1 campus in the Waco suburbs ensures student growth, equity and academic excellence for all. Accolades such as a TEA "A" Rating, 5 Distinctions, being featured on Character Strong's Whole Child Virtual Summit and Recognition as an Honor Roll School, doesn't come easy, but with the right people on board and effective systems in place, it is possible!



• **HARWOOD JR HIGH SCHOOL, HEB ISD** | **The Soft Bigotry of Low Expectations: A Systems Approach for Closing Achievement Gaps.** In this session we will share the targeted strategies Harwood implements such as mandatory tutorials, late work lunch detention, preview STAAR intervention classes, grade notification emails and classroom procedures to set high expectations and close achievement gaps among all groups.

2:00 PM – 2:15 PM | BREAK

2:15 PM – 3:15 PM | BREAKOUT SESSIONS



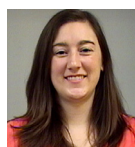
• **SEAN CAIN: This Changes Everything: The Need For Different**

As school emerge from a year of Covid suppression there will be a push to return to business as usual. Push back. Students will carry forward a significant Covid gap that will have a negative impact on their performance for years. Unless we do something different. Schools that do different will more rapidly close Covid gaps and provide their students with a lifelong competitive advantage over their peers that attend schools that are sprinting to return to "normal." Join Sean Cain and Mike Laird, nationally recognized school improvement experts, as they outline and address the things your school needs to implement in order to Do Different Better.



• **BILLY PRINGLE: The Schools to Watch Designation Process**

This session will focus on the process of gaining distinction and designation as a Texas School to Watch. The Schools to Watch State Director for Texas will share the story and process of the STW National Program. Tips on the application writing process will be shared with all attendees.



• **KATHERINE SARGENT: Adapting Evidence-Based Practices for Social Studies for Remote Learning**

This breakout session will provide teachers with research-based methods to improve vocabulary, text comprehension and social studies content knowledge. Examples of how the methods have been adapted for remote instruction will be shared.

Tuesday, March 2, 2021 (continued)

2:15 PM – 3:15 PM | BREAKOUT SESSIONS (CONTINUED)



• **BIANCA COKER: How Math Teachers Can Reach All Students With Culturally Relevant Instruction**

When we teach math in a traditional way, which students are we disenfranchising? Why do some student groups continue to fall to the bottom of performance reports? How can we help teachers meet students where they are and find the best approach to help them grow? We will discuss these questions and look in depth at strategies from Hammond's Culturally Responsive Teaching & The Brain as well as other resources.



• **CAMBRIDGE with Doug Petty and David Waldherr: Reducing the Test Score Ethnicity Gap by Ensuring Equal Access to Educational Resources**

Since before Brown vs. the Board of Education almost all districts report their minority populations scoring lower on state and federal examinations than their more affluent Caucasian counterparts. Covid has magnified commonly used terms like Summer Slide so that we can no longer ignore the academic and mental health disaster that is now affecting millions of students. Yet there is hope. Identifying those most in need and enrolling them in programs with research-proven strategies can dramatically reverse these effects in as little as two years.



• **STEPHANIE HARRIS: How to Partner with your Student Council**

In 2020-21 the connection, enthusiasm, and relationships that strong student councils provide are essential to a positive school climate -culture, SEL, as well as, positively promoting and supporting your campus' mission, vision, and core values. Hear from strong middle school leaders and take practical, adaptable, and awesome ideas back to your campus.

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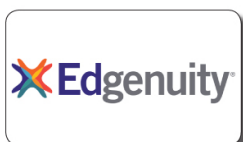
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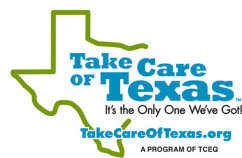
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TEXAS A&M TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE (TTI) Youth Transportation Safety Program

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