NRMERA

Northern Rocky Mountain Educational Research Association

43rd Annual Conference

Centering Community

President: Amanda Obery

Program Chair: Suzanne Beasterfield

October 7-9, 2026

Hotel Interurban

Seattle, WA

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About NRMERA

Mission

NRMERA is an educational organization whose purpose is to encourage quality educational research and to promote the application of the results of such research in public schools. It provides a responsive forum that promotes a trusting atmosphere in which graduate students and public-school personnel have the opportunity to conduct and disseminate research. The organization facilitates an effective communication network among the regional member states relative to sharing educational research.

Historical Review

NRMERA was established in 1982 to serve as a vehicle for dissemination of research conducted by faculty and graduate students of colleges and universities in the northern Rocky Mountain geographic area. Faculty of the University of Wyoming conceived the idea of an organization that would provide this type of dissemination in a supportive and collegial environment. After contacting individuals from institutions in the constituent states, Wyoming hosted the first organizational conference in Jackson, Wyoming.

From this early beginning, the organization has grown to over 150 members from the constituent states as well as across the United States. In 1986, NRMERA became an area SIG (Special Interest Group) of AERA (American Educational Research Association). In October 1994, the Constitution and Bylaws were approved by the constituent states. Every fall, NRMERA holds its annual conference. The conference rotates between the constituent states.

Objectives

The objectives of this association shall be:

- To establish a responsive forum for conducting educational research in the northern Rocky Mountain region of the United States as well as other regions with similar rural and/or remote challenges to conducting educational research.
- To promote a trusting atmosphere where graduate students have the opportunity to conduct and disseminate educational research
- To promote a trusting atmosphere where public school personnel have the opportunity to conduct and disseminate educational research.
- To provide for the equal and collegial interaction of educational researchers among themselves and other interested professionals without regard to formal educational recognition, or attained, rank, title, or any accomplishment.
- To establish an effective communication system for the dissemination of educational research activity and opportunity in the northern Rocky Mountain region.
- To facilitate effective communication among the Rocky Mountain region.

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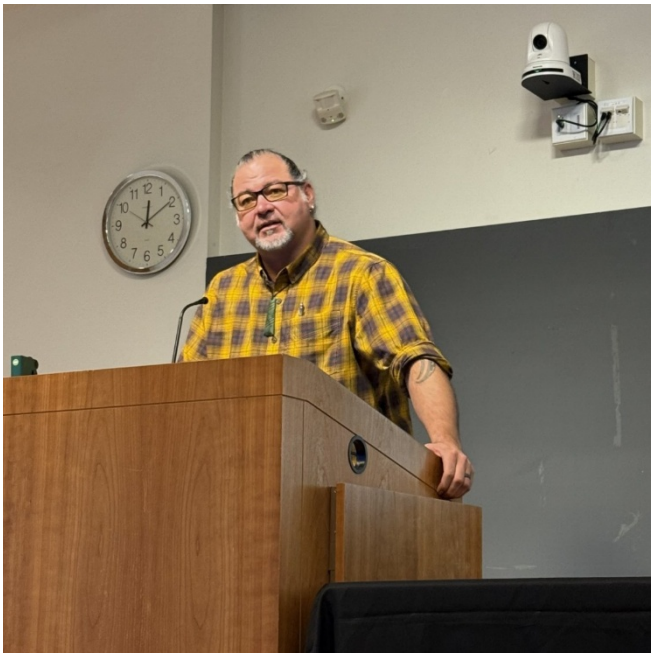
NRMERA 2026 Conference Overview

Wednesday, October 7, 2026		
Registration	5:00 – 7:00 PM	Rainier Ballroom
Executive Committee Board Meeting	3:00 – 5:00 PM	Olympic
President's Reception	6:00 – 8:00 PM	Rainier Ballroom
Poster Presentations	6:00 – 7:00 PM	

Thursday, October 8, 2026		
Registration	7:30 AM – 4:30 PM	Rainier Ballroom
Breakfast	8:00 – 9:30	
President's Welcome & Land introduction	8:15 AM	
Keynote Speaker: Dr. Sweeney Windchief	8:30 – 9:30 AM	
Breakout sessions	9:45 AM – 12:00 PM	Olympic, Baker, Mt. Si 1 & II
Lunch and Roundtables	12:00 – 1:00 PM	Rainier Ballroom
Breakout sessions	1:10 – 3:20 PM	Olympic, Baker, Mt. Si 1 & II
Symposia	3:30-4:30PM	
Awards Banquet	6:00 – 8:00 PM	Rainier Ballroom
Student Social	8:00 – 10:00 PM	Location TBA

Friday, October 9, 2026		
Registration	7:30 AM – 11:00 AM	Rainier Ballroom
Breakfast	8:00 AM – 9:30 AM	Rainier Ballroom
General Session Business Meeting	8:30 – 9:30 AM	
Breakout Sessions	9:45 – 10:45 PM	Olympic, Baker, Mt. Si 1 & II
Symposia	11:00 – 12:00 PM	
Conference concludes	12:00 PM	
Board Meeting	12:30 – 2:00 PM	Olympic

Keynote Address



Sweeney Windchief (Nakóna) is a member of the Fort Peck Tribes in northern Montana and serves as a professor in Adult and Higher Education at Montana State University. His research interests fall under the umbrella of Indigenous intellectualism to include Indigenous methodologies in research and Indigenous student persistence in higher education. His teaching privileges include critical race theory, Indigenous methodologies in research, and college student development. As a Co-PI of the Sloan Indigenous Graduate Partnership, his service is toward the overall goal of strengthened and expanded university initiatives to recruit, retain, and graduate American Indian and Alaska Native students in STEM. He and his wife Sara have two sons who help keep things in perspective.

The intention of this keynote is to advance a framework for reimagining research, mentoring, and education as relational, reciprocal, and accountable practices. Centering community requires a fundamental shift in purpose—from prioritizing individual academic achievement to advancing collective well-being and shared benefit. Within this framework, community is not an afterthought but the primary stakeholder, shaping both the creation and application of knowledge. We will explore how knowledge originates within communities and must be engaged with care, consent, and cultural responsibility. This perspective challenges dominant academic norms, calling for institutions to adapt to community values, protocols, and ways of knowing rather than expecting communities to conform to academic systems. Emphasized will be the importance of relationships, networks, and collective learning as core to meaningful educational practice. By moving away from hierarchical and individual models, we re-envision a new paradigm as a communal, interdependent process rooted in shared responsibility and mutual support. Ultimately, this keynote invites participants to critically reconsider their roles as educators, researchers, and leaders, offering pathways to authentically center community in ways that are ethical, sustainable, and transformative.

NRMERA 2026 Detailed Schedule

Wednesday, October 7, 2026		
Executive Committee Board Meeting	3:00-5:00 PM	Olympic

Conference Kickoff: President's Reception & Poster Session		
President's Reception	6:00 – 8:00 PM	Rainier Ballroom
Poster Presentations	6:00 – 7:00 PM	

Wednesday, October 7, 2026: Poster Presentations – 6:00-7:00PM	
Poster Display 1	**P1. Athletics, Jobs, and Living Arrangements: Perceived Cognitive Workload and Affective States in Undergraduate Students** **Kristin McCombs ● Villa Maria College** The Workload Profile and Positive and Negative Affect Schedule were used to examine differences among student-athletes and non-athletes, residential and commuter students, and those with and without employment at a small DII university. Independent samples t-tests showed no significant group differences. Correlational analyses indicated perceived workload was positively associated with negative affect across subgroups. *Keywords:* undergraduates, stressors, affect
Poster Display 2	**P2. My Choice, My Focus: Pre-Service Teachers' Reflections on Voluntary Smartphone Restriction** **Brian Ernest ● Salem State University** This poster reports a basic qualitative study of undergraduate pre-service teachers' experiences with voluntary, choice-based smartphone restriction during class. Using reflections collected across a semester and descriptive participation data, the study examines perceived effects on engagement, participation, sustained focus, and future classroom practice. *Keywords:* engagement, teacher education, self-regulation
Poster Display 3	**P3. Working Toward 2050: Building a cross-context conversation on U.S. public education** **William T. "Toby" Holmes ● Kansas State University** **Jentre Olsen ● Oklahoma State University** **Kellen Adams ● Kansas State University** This poster invites NRMERA attendees into a cross-context conversation on 2050-readiness in U.S. public education. Drawing on six emergent themes from 126 rural Western/Midwestern superintendent voices and field-tested at NZEALS Wellington 2026, three provocative questions structure the dialogue: What does 2050 look like? What does today's kindergartener need? Is your school closer to 2000 or 2050? "Partially prepared. Not certain how to prepare." *Keywords:* 2050-readiness, rural superintendents, cross-context conversation
Poster Display 4	**P4. Navigating AI and Academic Confidence: An Autoethnographic Study of International Graduate Students** **Maria Zaman ● University of North Dakota** **Afroja Alam ● University of Oklahoma** **Pinki Rani Das ● North Dakota State University** This study examines how AI use shapes international graduate students' self-efficacy, writing practices, and identity. Using autoethnography and thematic analysis, findings show that AI supports academic access while creating ethical tension, fluctuating confidence, and emotional burden. Results highlight the need for clear guidance and equitable AI practices in higher education. *Keywords:* artificial intelligence (AI), academic confidence, higher education

Wednesday, October 7, 2026: Poster Presentations – 6:00-7:00PM

Poster Display 5	**P5. Building Undergraduate Career Communication Strategies Through Cross-Institution Collaboration** **Taylor Crooks ● Muskingum University** **Kristin McCombs ● Villa Maria College** This project explores how higher education institutions can strengthen undergraduate career communication through cross-institution collaboration. Using exploratory research, the project examines Gen Z communication expectations, career readiness practices, and institutional challenges. Preliminary findings suggest that integrated, multi-platform communication and faculty engagement may improve student awareness, workforce preparation, and engagement with career readiness resources. *Keywords:* career readiness, Gen Z communication, higher ed collaboration
Poster Display 6	**P6. Perceptions of AI-Generated Practice Questions Over Time in Medical Education** **Jack Paradis ● University of Nebraska Medical Center** **Currey Zalman ● University of Nebraska Medical Center** **Geoffrey Talmon ● University of Nebraska Medical Center** **Kari L. Nelson ● University of Nebraska Medical Center** **Jacob Rademacher ● University of Nebraska Medical Center** **Yijun Lu ● University of Nebraska Medical Center** This study evaluated perceptions of ChatGPT-generated, faculty-reviewed practice questions among two cohorts of first-year medical students at the same university. Questions were rewritten between cohorts using updated models. Survey responses demonstrated favorable perceptions overall, with the class receiving updated questions reporting significantly greater belief that AI is beneficial in medical education. Findings support continued exploration of AI-assisted educational resources. *Keywords:* artificial intelligence, practice questions, medical education
Poster Display 7	**P7. Motivation Across Levels: Linking Theory, Neural Mechanisms, and Classroom Practice** **Joseph E. Schroer ● University of Wyoming** Motivation is central to learning yet often examined in fragmented ways across multiple areas of practice. This poster integrates these perspectives to offer a multi-level account of motivation relevant to teaching and learning. Insights are translated into educational practice, emphasizing how instructional design can support motivation.. *Keywords:* motivation, educational neuroscience
Poster Display 8	**P8. Is it more difficult to model melting or exploding?** **Amanda Obery ● Central Washington University** **Matt Queen ● Montana State University Billings** **Martha Cabell ● Yellowstone Evaluation Services** **Shelly Hogan ● Yellowstone Evaluation Services** Developing conceptual understanding of the particle nature of matter (PNM) is challenging, especially in elementary school. This work asks how can drawings show understanding of the PNM in 5th grade and is it more difficult for students to express atomic level understanding for chemical or physical change? *Keywords:* science education, modeling, drawing
Poster Display 9	**P9. Planning Professional Learning in Response to Research and Teacher Needs** **Josie Melton ● Western Washington University** **Debi Hanuscin ● Western Washington University** **Sarah Voss ● Western Washington University** Research shows that curriculum-based professional learning programs (CBPLs) are sustained, collaborative, and relevant to teachers' work in the classroom. We describe a PL program and how it aligns with characteristics of CBPL identified by Alicea and colleagues (2025). We found that specific features of our program allowed teachers to engage in additional features of CBPL, suggesting that PL can be intentionally designed to strengthen characteristics of a CBPL. *Keywords:* teacher professional learning, elementary science instruction
Poster Display 10	**P10. Pre-Service Teachers' Perceptions of AI Application to Learning and Teaching** **Jiawen Wang ● Eastern Washington University** AI in education remains contested. Guided by the Technology Acceptance Model, this study examines preservice teachers' perceptions and behaviors before and after an AI-focused module in elementary and secondary methods courses. Findings aim to inform policy, curriculum, and teacher educator discussions. *Keywords:* AI, PST, acceptance

Wednesday, October 7, 2026: Poster Presentations – 6:00-7:00PM	
Poster Display 11	**P11. Mindfulness, Spelling Achievement, and Metacognitive Accuracy Among Fifth-Grade Students.** **Justin J. Wageman ● North Dakota State University** **Stacy Duffield ● North Dakota State University** **Jenna Akers ● Central Cass School District** **Lisa Narum ● Central Cass School District** This action research study examined the effects of classroom mindfulness practice on fifth-grade students' spelling performance, confidence, anxiety, and metacognitive accuracy. Fourteen students participated in brief mindfulness activities before weekly spelling assessments. Results showed significantly higher spelling scores and more accurate score predictions during the intervention. Findings suggest mindfulness may support academic performance and self-awareness in elementary classrooms. *Keywords:* mindfulness, elementary education, academic achievement
Poster Display 12	**P12. The Study Strategies of Physical Therapy Students** **Brendon Stewart ● Rockhurst University, Missouri** **Michael Hauber ● Rockhurst University, Missouri** **Emily Tomlinson ● Rockhurst University, Missouri** The PT classes of 2026 and 2027 completed surveys about their study methods and ability to control nerves during exams. Both classes share study habits upon beginning their first semester of PT school; both cohorts ranked passive learning styles over more active learning styles as preferred study strategies. Suggestions for future research include expanding survey items to observe how a second-year physical therapy student changes their study strategies compared to their first-year responses. *Keywords:* healthcare education, higher education, study strategies
Poster Display 13	**P13. Listening Deeply: Exploring Student Voices Through Community STEM Walks** **Jose Rios ●University of Washington, Tacoma** Community STEM Walks position students as investigators of their own communities, elevating student voice while connecting STEM learning to lived experiences. This roundtable explores how students identify local STEM phenomena, engage community members, and generate questions related to equity, health, environment, and neighborhood change. Participants will discuss how community-based inquiry fosters engagement, STEM identity, and meaningful learning *Keywords:* student voice, community-based STEM education, equity-centered pedagogy

Note. Image generated using Google Gemini.

Thursday, October 8, 2026		
Breakfast	8:00-9:30 AM	Rainier Ballroom
Presidents' Welcome & Land Introduction	8:15 AM	
Keynote: Dr. Sweeney Windchief	8:30-9:30 AM	
Breakout sessions	9:45 AM-12:00 PM	Olympic, Baker, Mt. Si I, Mt. Si II
Lunch and Learns	12:00-1:00 PM	Rainier Ballroom
Breakout sessions	1:10-3:20 PM	Olympic, Baker, Mt. Si I, Mt. Si II
Workshops	3:30-4:30 PM	
Awards Banquet	6:00-8:00 PM	Rainier Ballroom
Graduate Student Social	8:15-10:00 PM	TBD

Call for Manuscripts

Conference Proceedings for the 2026 NRMERA Annual Conference

The Northern Rocky Mountain Education Research Association (NRMERA) is seeking manuscripts for an upcoming special edition of *Educational Research: Theory and Practice*. The purpose of the conference proceedings issue is to highlight presentations from our conference and allow dissemination of research and materials from NRMERA members to a larger audience.

We ask that the text of these manuscripts be limited to about six (6) double-spaced pages, excluding abstracts, tables, figures, appendices, and references. These are meant only to be conference proceedings, not full manuscripts. For full manuscripts, refer to the manuscript guidelines at http://www.nrmera.org/educational-research-theory-practice/author-submission-guidelines/ for regular submissions to *Educational Research: Theory and Practice*.

All papers should be written in APA 7th edition format and style, and should include an abstract and up to five keywords. For each submission, please include one manuscript file in Microsoft Word with all information about authors removed (blinded), and one separate Word file containing only a cover sheet with author identification and contact information.

Please submit papers by November 15, 2026, for publication in the Spring 2027 conference proceedings issue.

Submit questions and manuscripts to: nrmeraeditor@gmail.com

Thursday AM Sessions Overview

	Olympic	Baker	Mt. Si I	Mt. Si. II
9:45 AM – 10:45 AM	[Multiple Paper Session] 1. Emotional Mapping through Transitions: An Arts-based Autoethnographic Cartographic Endeavor ***Melanie Reaves*** 2. The Role of Accelerated Coursework in the Student Success Framework ***Brett Campbell*** 3. The Second "R": Honoring What Students Bring to the Classroom ***Ann Ellsworth Fox***	[Multiple Paper Session] 4. The Challenges of Novice Instructional Coaches ***Jadelyn Abbott, Angie Degraw, Hannah Carter, Eun Hye Son, Daibao Guo, Lin Gou, & Hsing Jung Chen*** 5. Exploring an Emergent Model of Transformative (Agentic) Professional Learning ***Stephanie Thomas*** 6. Fifth-Grade Teacher and Principal Perspectives on Enacting Hope Through Professional Learning Communities: A Telling Case ***Suzanne Jones, LeAnn Putney, & Matthew Huffaker***	[Multiple Paper Session] 7. Orthographic-Motoric Encoding (OME) As the Missing Mechanism in Reading Models ***Jerome Mayoral*** 8. More than Meets the Eye: A Content Analysis of Visuals and Visual Literacy in Children's Magazines ***Georgia Bunnell, Kara DeCoursey, & Marla Robertson*** 9. From Reading to Literacy: A Content Analysis of Washington State's Reading/Literacy Endorsement Standards and Implications for Teacher Preparation ***Jason Profit, Jane Kelley, Tara Haskins, & Ann Van Wig***	[Multiple Paper Session] 10. Beyond the Classroom ***Dia Gary*** 11. Braiding Sweetgrass Method Across Native American Homelands Through Cross-Cultural and Place-Conscious Learning ***Elaine Westbrook, Kari Dahle-Huff, Burt Medicine Bull, & Sam Chestnut*** 12. Centering Indigenous Knowledge and Community Through an Indigenous Knowledge Exchange Course ***Twila Yellow Horse***
10:55 AM – 11:55 AM	[Multiple Paper Session] 13. Overt and Covert Instructional Moves That Shape Teacher Candidates' Dispositions Toward Multilingual Learners ***Kate Mastruserio Reynolds*** 14. Operationalizing Transcendent Stewardship in Shared Governance: A behavioral architecture framework for adaptive public universities ***Teresa Walker***	[Multiple Paper Session] 17. Teaching Project-Based Learning as Design Practice in Teacher Preparation ***Amparo Dinagsao & Antonio Estudillo*** 18. Centering Students' Lived Experiences in the Classroom ***Christi Mackey***	[Multiple Paper Session] 19. A Community of Women in STEMM Educational Leadership: Intersectional Factors in Ireland and the United States ***Elizabeth C. Reilly & Mary Cunneen*** 20. Relational Coherence: Community as a Mechanism for Translating Vision into Practice ***Brenda L. Bennett, Max L. Longhurst, Suzie H. Jones, & LeAnn Putney*** 21. Clinical Practice Across Programs: Implementing Collaborative BSW-MSW Practice Clinical Assignments ***Hannah Knipp, Logan Cook, Deanna Cooper, & Yusi Chen***	[Multiple Paper Session] 22. Generative AI and Design Fiction Pedagogy in LDT: A Narrative Review ***Carly Pearson-Hartley & William Cain*** *23.* Exploring Faculty Perceptions of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Higher Education ***Sara K. Moon-Seo & Shaundel Garrett*** *24.* Beyond the Hype: What Research Reveals About Generative AI in Programming Education ***Chanté J. Wilson & Heather Leary***

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Thursday AM Session Details

9:45 AM – 10:45 AM [Paper Sessions]

Olympic

1. Emotional Mapping through Transitions: An Arts-based Autoethnographic Cartographic Endeavor

Melanie Reaves ● Montana State University Billings

In this arts-based autoethnographic study, I examine my emotional landscape transitioning from faculty to dean and back using visual cartography and reflective journaling, guided by Schlossberg's (1981) transition theory. There are three themes frame the work: liminal disruption of academic identity, gendered emotional toll of administrative work, and visual cartography for mapping affective terrain. Findings written as social fiction invite readers to find resonance with their career crossings.

Keywords: autoethnography, arts-based research, transitions

2. The Role of Accelerated Coursework in the Student Success Framework

Brett Campbell ● Utah System of Higher Education

Most studies on as accelerated courses, focus narrowly on the high school classroom or on the transition to postsecondary enrollment. Perna and Thomas (2008) provided a lens that encompasses the impact of different communities on outcomes. Using state-level data, this study tests this framework. Not only does this study support this student success framework, but it also identifies the need for researchers to adopt a broader lens in their research.

Keywords: dual enrollment, AP, postsecondary

3. The Second "R": Honoring What Students Bring to the Classroom

Ann Ellsworth Fox ● Montana **State University**

This presentation shares research findings about changes in teacher candidates' attitudes and beliefs about language study and writing instruction that occurred over a semester. How these new understandings informed future teachers' own writing skills will also be discussed.

Keywords: teacher candidates, language, writing

Baker

4. The Challenges of Novice Instructional Coaches

Jadelyn Abbott ● Central Washington University **Angie Degraw ● Boise State University**
Hannah Carter ● Boise State University **Eun Hye Son ● Boise State University**
Daibao Guo ● Boise State University **Lin Gou ● Boise State University**
Hsing Jung Chen ● Boise State University

Coaching is vital to educators' professional growth. However, novice coaches face challenges when entering coaching roles. This study investigates the obstacles novice coaches encountered during their coaching cycles with PSTs. Qualitative analysis revealed coaches had difficulties with meeting preparation, relationship building, facilitating sessions, and providing guiding questions and feedback. Findings underscore the importance of providing novice coaches targeted support and PD.

Keywords: novice coaching, instructional coaching, coaching challenges

5. Exploring an Emergent Model of Transformative (Agentic) Professional Learning

Stephanie Thomas ● Seattle Pacific University

Improving student outcomes while sustaining the teacher workforce is a pressing challenge in education. Collective teacher efficacy (CTE) offers a promising avenue for addressing both aims due to its positive influence on both student and teacher outcomes. This session introduces an emergent model for transformative (agentic) professional learning developed from educators' lived experiences and examines how intentional professional learning design may foster CTE.

Keywords: collective teacher efficacy, professional learning, agency

6. Fifth-Grade Teacher and Principal Perspectives on Enacting Hope Through Professional Learning Communities: A Telling Case

Suzanne H Jones ● Utah State University **LeAnn G. Putney ● University of Nevada, Las Vegas**
Matthew Huffaker ● Utah State University

This qualitative study explored how fifth-grade teachers fostered collective hope in weekly PLCs and how principals facilitated hope enactment. Using interviews, focus groups, and observations, we examined how teachers enacted hope in classrooms. Findings highlight how PLCs members built collective hope through willpower (motivation), waypower (shared goal pathways), and agency (choice) while maintaining a unified curriculum. Concrete practices for building hopeful school cultures

Mt. Si I	**7. Orthographic-Motoric Encoding (OME) As the Missing Mechanism in Reading Models** **Jerome Mayoral ● University of Central Arkansas** This conceptual analysis compares the frameworks of Wolf, Dehaene, and Seidenberg to identify a shared gap in explaining automaticity. It proposes orthographic motoric encoding as the mechanism that stabilizes orthographic units, integrating developmental, neural, and computational evidence with implications for assessment, instruction, and equity. *Keywords:* automaticity, orthographic motoric encoding, literacy **8. More than Meets the Eye: A Content Analysis of Visuals and Visual Literacy in Children's Magazines** **Georgia Bunnell ● Central Washington University** **Kara DeCoursey ● Davis School District, Utah** **Marla Robertson ● Utah State University** Nonfiction children's magazines often include a variety of visuals/graphics to support and extend the information on a topic of interest. This session will highlight research on the visuals in SuperSTEM and the pedagogical guidance provided in the accompanying teacher resources. *Keywords:* visuals, visual literacy instruction, elementary school magazines **9. From Reading to Literacy: A Content Analysis of Washington State's Reading/Literacy Endorsement Standards and Implications for Teacher Preparation** **Jason Profit ● Professional Educator Standards Board** **Jane Kelley ● Washington State University** **Tara Haskins ● Eastern Washington University** **Ann Van Wig, Eastern Washington University** This study presents a systematic content analysis comparing Washington State's 2013 Reading Endorsement and 2025 Literacy Endorsement. Using a five-category coding classification, the analysis identifies ten thematic shifts, including the elevation of writing to co-equal status, explicit evidence-based instructional alignment, and equity commitments for multilingual learners and students with disabilities. Implications for community-centered educator preparation programs are discussed. *Keywords:* literacy, reading, endorsements
Mt. Si II	**10. Beyond the Classroom** **Dia Gary ● Central Washington University** Nature-based and environmental field experiences are emerging as compelling alternatives to traditional preschool classrooms. The study presents the perspectives of both the preschool entrepreneur and the preservice teacher, offering practical insights into the "how to" of implementing outdoor education. It underscores the viability of outdoor environments for early learning and examines the distinctive challenges and benefits they present. *Keywords:* outdoor school, preservice teachers **11. Braiding Sweetgrass Method Across Native American Homelands Through Cross-Cultural and Place-Conscious Learning** **Elaine Westbrook ● Montana State University Billings** **Kari Dahle-Huff ● Montana State University Billings** **Burt Medicine Bull ● Chief Dull Knife College** **Sam Chestnut ● The Lodge Approach** This paper presents findings from a cross-cultural exchange between two Indigenous communities in the Rocky Mountain West and Southwest. Using the Sweetgrass Method (Baez et al., 2022; Bruno, 2024), students engaged in place-conscious learning through language, storytelling, traditional arts, and ecological knowledge. Journal reflections revealed themes of cultural identity, Indigenous knowledge, relationship building, and shifts in perspective. *Keywords: s*weetgrass method, Indigenous research methodologies, place-conscious education **12. Centering Indigenous Knowledge and Community Through an Indigenous Knowledge Exchange Course** **Twila Yellow Horse ● Montana State University** This study examines a two-week Indigenous knowledge exchange in Aotearoa (New Zealand) involving students from a predominantly white institution. Grounded in Indigenous worldviews and relationships, the course centered identity, relational learning, and well-being. Findings show Indigenous pedagogies strengthened cultural identity, connection, and accountability, highlighting the importance of relational, community-centered approaches in higher education. *Keywords:* Indigenous, short-term study abroad, Indigenous student well-being
	Morning Snack Break 10:35-11:05a, Lobby

Thursday AM Session Details

10:55 AM – 11:55 PM [Paper Sessions]

Olympic

13. Overt and Covert Instructional Moves That Shape Teacher Candidates' Dispositions Toward Multilingual Learners

Kate Mastruserio Reynolds ● Central Washington University

This study examines the overt and covert instructional moves that teacher educators take to shape general educators' dispositions toward multilingual learners. Using a mixed methods pre and post design, results indicate significant gains in equity-oriented beliefs and academic language awareness. Findings identify mechanisms of change and specify instructional practices that support measurable dispositional shifts.

Keywords: pre-service teachers; multilingual learners; dispositions

14. Operationalizing Transcendent Stewardship in Shared Governance: A behavioral architecture framework for adaptive public universities

Teresa Walker ● Central Washington University

Urgency strains shared governance in public universities. This study tracks role interactions during adaptive initiatives to define Transcendent Stewardship—a framework preserving academic integrity and authority across leadership transitions. The resulting Behavioral Architecture Framework operationalizes authority via role-consistent sequencing and cross-domain consultation, offering a practical model to sustain institutional trust and governance as universities adapt.

Keywords: shared governance, differentiated authority, stewardship theory

Baker

17. Teaching Project-Based Learning as Design Practice in Teacher Preparation

Amparo Dinagsao ● Heritage University

Antonio Estudillo ● Heritage University

This study examines a redesigned teacher preparation course that positions Project-Based Learning (PBL) as a structured design practice. Using a pedagogical design case, the study analyzes course artifacts to explore how cycles of rehearsal, critique, and revision support preservice teachers in developing coherent and classroom-ready PBL units. Findings highlight how scaffolded design and visible revision strengthen instructional reasoning and project coherence.

*Keywords: t*eacher education, project-based learning, culturally responsive pedagogy

18. Centering Students' Lived Experiences in the Classroom

Christi Mackey ● Rogers State University

The study explores how critical service-learning can improve students' critical consciousness and foster classroom community. The educator uses practitioner inquiry to reflect on teaching, student empowerment, and transformative learning outcomes. The presentation will provide effective strategies for centering lived experiences and enhancing student learning.

Keywords: critical service-learning

Seattle School History

- 1854: Dorcas Phillips becomes Seattle's first teacher.
- 1861: The University of Washington opens decades before the city's first public high school.
- 1870: The first public schoolhouse is completed but immediately faces a sheriff foreclosure crisis over budget issues.
- 1891: B.F. Day Elementary opens, remaining the oldest continuously operating school building in the city today.

Mt. Si. I

19. A Community of Women in STEMM Educational Leadership: Intersectional Factors in Ireland and the United States

Elizabeth C. Reilly ● North Dakota State University
Mary Cunneen ● University College Dublin

Limited literature addressing women in PK-20 STEMM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, Medicine) leadership invites addressing the variety of intersections that affect them. This qualitative investigation examined the progress, successes, and challenges of women in Ireland and the US. Aligning with NRMERA's theme of "Centering Community," we consider the moral imperative to recognize factors affecting women in STEMM leadership and seek to pave the way for an equitable future.

Keywords: educational leadership, STEMM, women in leadership

20. Relational Coherence: Community as a Mechanism for Translating Vision into Practice

Brenda L. Bennett ● Utah State University **Max L. Longhurst ● Utah State University**
Suzie H. Jones ● Utah State University **LeAnn G. Putney ● University of Nevada, Las Vegas**

This study examines how coherence between institutional expectations and classroom practice is sustained within a high-performing elementary charter school with sustained science achievement. Participants included charter administrators and instructional faculty across K–6 grade bands. Data sources included institutional documents, focus groups, and semi-structured interviews. Results indicate that coherence emerges through relational conditions bridging unity of purpose and professional agency.

Keywords: relational coherence; professional agency; classroom practice

21. Clinical Practice Across Programs: Implementing Collaborative BSW-MSW Practice Clinical Assignments

Hannah Knipp ● University of Montana **Logan Cook ● University of Montana**
Deanna Cooper ● University of Montana **Yusi Chen ● University of Montana**

Peer-based clinical practice opportunities can enhance student skill development; however, facilitating authentic practice opportunities within a social work classroom can be challenging due to dual relationships. This presentation examines how two cross-educational (BSW-MSW) clinical practice assignments impacted learning and clinical skill development, as self-reported by students. Implications for educators interested in incorporating skill-based, cross-educational activities are discussed.

*Keywords: c*linical skill development, cross-educational, peer-based learning

Mt. Si II

22. Generative AI and Design Fiction Pedagogy in LDT: A Narrative Review

Carly Pearson-Hartley ● University of Wyoming
William Cain ● University of Wyoming

This narrative review examines how generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) is reshaping design fiction pedagogy within learning, design, and technology (LDT). Findings suggest that GenAI expands participation in futures-oriented inquiry by lowering traditional production barriers through rapid speculative worldbuilding and iterative prompting.

Keywords: generative AI; design fiction; learning, design, and technology

23. Exploring Faculty Perceptions of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Higher Education

Sara K. Moon-Seo ● Rogers State University
Shaundel Garrett ● Rogers State University

There is increasing awareness and use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) among faculty members in higher education. This study explored faculty perceptions of AI in higher education. The researchers interviewed faculty members at a university to better understand their views on the use of AI in academia, including its benefits, limitations, and ethical concerns.

Keywords: AI (Artificial Intelligence), ethical concern, faculty perception

24. Beyond the Hype: What Research Reveals About Generative AI in Programming Education

Chanté J. Wilson ● Brigham Young University
Heather Leary ● Brigham Young University

Generative AI (Gen AI) is increasingly used in higher education programming courses, yet its effectiveness varies across contexts and learners. This presentation reports findings from a recent literature review. Results suggest that successful implementation requires intentional instructional design and active instructor oversight. While many studies report positive outcomes, studies suggest advanced learners generally experience greater gains than novice or less-motivated students.

*Keywords: g*enerative AI, programming education, higher education

Thursday, October 8, 2026: "Learn-at-Lunch" Roundtables

12:00-1:00 PM Rainier Ballroom

Table 1	**T1. Centering Community to Reduce Educator Burnout. Can it work?** **Suzie Henning ● Eastern Washington University** **Donita Falk-Cotterill ● Eastern Washington University** This roundtable session will discuss the second phase of a longitudinal study that seeks to address educator burnout by evaluating the effectiveness of targeted social-emotional learning (SEL) strategies. Researchers will share the findings and evaluation from the first phase of the study. This phase led to a question, "Do educator-scholars fundamentally believe that building resilience and well-being is an individual rather than a community process?" *Keywords:* SEL, educator Burnout, Scholar Dispositions
Table 2	**T2. Two years later: Burnout profiles over time as a measure of teacher sustainability** **Christina Pfister ● Siena University** **Sophia Paljevic ● Independent scholar** We report results of a study using the Maslach Burnout Inventory to determine burnout profiles of a group of teachers twice over a two-year period. We measured the sustainability of this group of teachers by calculating the percentage of teachers in each burnout profile and examining how this changes over time. This problematizes teacher burnout as something the whole profession must address rather than each individual teacher. We discuss implications for teacher educators and school leaders. *Keywords:* burnout, sustainability, attrition
Table 3	**T3. How the Islamic Republic Misrepresents Zoroastrians in Iranian Textbooks** **Khodadad (Khodi) Kaviani ● Central Washington University** Iranian identity is tied to its Zoroastrian roots. This research examined the nature and accuracy of the Zoroastrian-related concepts in the current 1-12 Farsi and social studies textbooks used in Iranian schools. A variety of historical documents, including personal experiences of Zoroastrians and travel diaries contradict the inaccurate and misleading claims made by these textbooks. *Keywords:* Zoroastrianism, Ahura Mazda, Shi'i Islam
Table 5	**T5. Teacher Candidate Assessment – Maximizing Effectiveness while Maintaining Balance** **Mel Sullivan-Walker● Montana State University Billings** Teacher evaluation is a high-profile, high-stakes issue. Current assessment practices of teacher candidates are imperfect at best and loathsome at worst. Faculty members and teacher candidates often experience undue stress and heavy workloads, and faculty may struggle to use or evaluate data effectively. At this Roundtable, participants will explore alternative and creative assessment practices for a more holistic and comprehensive evaluation of those who will shape the future of education. *Keywords:* teacher preparation, assessment
Table 6	**T6. Just say NO to tests! How informal assessment builds community and fosters deeper understanding within mathematics** **Corey Bartle ● Idaho State University** **Julie Bartle ● Idaho Falls School District 91** For a century, "this will be on the test" has been used to signal focus. Yet, contemporary theory suggests this high-stakes signaling hinders deep learning (Ginsberg, 2015) and fuels anxiety that compromises performance (Berninger & Richards, 2002). We propose a paradigm shift in math education: replacing isolating tests with a social, collaborative environment that mirrors the real world. In this setting, informal observational assessments prove more valid and reliable than traditional exams. *Keywords:* mathematics, assessment, community
Table 7	**T7. The Idaho Higher Education Literacy Partnership: Collaborating Across Campuses** **Amanda Eller ● Idaho State University-Twin Falls** The presenter will share the 12-year blueprint of the Idaho Higher Education Literacy Partnership (IHELP) and how this collaborative model may be replicated in other states. They will explore how this unique consortium of public and private university faculty collaborated with state agencies to develop evidence-based literacy preparation standards, and how IHELP developed standards-based assessments and worked to improve literacy teacher preparation, earning Idaho national recognition. *Keywords:* teacher preparation, literacy, statewide institutional collaboration
Table 8	**T8. Reading Gains in First Grade: Partnering with Families** **Ann Ellsworth Fox● Montana State University** When parents are taught simple ways to motivate and help their children learn first-grade sight words, students' words per minute (WPM) levels increase. Parents identified that having choice in making decisions about how and when these activities occurred was what made the at-home program successful. *Keywords:* reading, parents, partnerships

Table 9	**T9. A Science of Reading Classroom Observation Checklist for Supporting Tier 1 Literacy Instruction in Second Grade** **Mary Mitchell ● Utah State University** While research has clarified how reading develops, many classrooms struggle to reflect research-aligned literacy instruction. This proposal introduces a practitioner-focused checklist for 2nd grade Tier 1observation and reflection. Grounded in Scarborough's Reading Rope, the tool helps educators identify instructional gaps and make intentional decisions to ensure balanced, evidence-based practice. *Keywords: s*cience of reading, observation and reflection tool, 2nd grade
Table 10	**T10. Building Preservice Teacher Self-Efficacy: The Role of Simulations, Peer Mentoring, and Reflection** **Kristen Nugent ● Peru State College** **Darolyn Seay ● Peru State College** Teacher self-efficacy—the belief in one's ability to positively impact students—is a critical tool for navigating the modern classroom. Join us for a conversation about instructional practices designed to improve preservice teachers' self-efficacy and confidence as they move toward clinical practice and their first teaching position. Faculty can empower teacher candidates to develop the professional skills and behaviors that build their confidence and effectiveness in the classroom. *Keywords:* teacher self-efficacy
Table 11	**T11. From AI Lesson Plans to Community Practice: Pre-Service Teachers' Confidence and Readiness to Teach** **Ann Van Wig ● Eastern Washington University** **Tara Haskins ● Eastern Washington University** This learn-at-lunch explores how generative AI–supported lesson planning in a literacy methods course influences preservice teachers' confidence and perceived readiness to teach through planning. Participants will examine opportunities, risks, and design ideas for integrating AI in community responsive ways that honor local contexts, equity, and relationships with students and families. *Keywords:* AI, lesson planning, teacher preparation
Table 12	**T12. Graduate Student Perceptions of Faculty AI Use in Higher Education** **Maria Hays ● Central Washington University** Current research exploring the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in educational contexts focuses primarily on student use. As student use has grown, institutions have begun developing policies outlining appropriate and inappropriate student use of AI. In contrast, faculty use of AI has received far less scholarly attention, and few institutional policies currently address how faculty should use these tools. This study examines faculty AI use and how students perceive the relevance of that use. *Keywords: a*rtificial intelligence, higher education
Table 13	**T13. Relationship Building and Trauma Informed Care in Higher Education Teaching and Mentoring** **Jessica Marshall ● University of Oregon** Stronger student relationships, and trauma-informed practices in these relationships, lead to better student outcomes. This begs the question: Can a relationship with a student foster a sense of accountability as opposed to one of dependence? When are we not doing enough for our students, and when are we doing too much? This session will offer space to discuss the importance of these relationships, particularly in the context of unethical AI use and student entitlement. *Keywords:* relationships, higher education, trauma-informed care
Table 14	**T14. Revisiting Connection in Adolescent Girls through Their Use of Social Media** **Donna Sharp ● Rogers State University** This research revisits the topic of adolescent girls' use of social media for connection. The topic was the focus of the author's dissertation, completed in 2019. The author interviewed 10 of the original participants, now between the ages of 20 and 26, for this "revisiting" study. What has changed in the social media use of these young women? Educators benefit from knowing. Analysis of the data is ongoing. *Keywords:* adolescents, social media, young women

The words "cyberspace," "hard drive," "barista," "snail mail," and "Valley girl" all appeared in print for the very first time in 1982.

Also appearing for the first time that year: NRMERA!

Thursday PM Sessions Overview

	Olympic	Baker	Mt. Si I	Mt. Si. II
1:10 PM – 2:10 PM		[Multiple Paper Session] 26. Trauma-Informed Education: Structural Displacement and the Recuperation of Care ***Alex Winninghoff*** 27. The Activation of Long-Term Memory and the Academic Achievement of Undergraduates ***Christopher Was, Michael McHale, Daniel Byrnes, Karin Coifman, & John Gunstad*** 28. A Comparison of Neurodivergent and Neurotypical Responses to a Thematic Apperception Test ***Lori O'Malley***	[Multiple Paper Session] 29. Making Community Visible: Using CARMA to Examine Alignment Across Institutional Levels ***Brenda L. Bennett, LeAnn Putney, Max L. Longhurst, & Suzie Jones*** 30. Conducting Peer-Led Video-stimulated Recall Interviews in the Elementary Science Classroom: a Proof of Concept Study ***Christine McGrail***	[Multiple Paper Session] 31. From Measurement to Action: An AI-assisted diagnostic-to-PD system for MLT-focused leadership communication ***William T. "Toby" Holmes, Liz Hollingworth, & Paul Erickson*** 32. Instructional Leadership in Career and Technical Education: Perspectives of CTE Center Directors ***Justin V. Benna & Brook Thiel*** 33. Building AI Capacities in Career and Technical Education: A Multi-Platform Design Approach ***William Cain, Rob Hill, & Lucas Dow***
2:20 PM – 3:20 PM		[Multiple Paper Session] 34. Stewardship Under Pressure: Tending shared governance amid change and across time ***Wendie Castillo*** 36. Developing and Sustaining a Shared Network Vision in a STEM-Networked Improvement Community ***Allyson Rogan-Klyve, Emilie Hancock, Brent Hancock, & Megan Rivard***	[Multiple Paper Session] 37. The Wicked Problem of Teacher Wellbeing ***Joel Judd*** 38. Different Means to the Same End: Teacher Candidates' Perceptions of Standardized Tests and Alternative Certification Pathways ***Xiaoyan Gu, Amparo Dinagsao, & Megan McCormick*** 39. From Entry to Longevity: Reimagining Teacher Preparation to Prevent Burnout and Promote Retention ***Lois Paretti***	[Multiple Paper Session] 40. Reciprocal Teaching with Emergent Bilingual Students: Promoting Academic Reading Strategies and Fostering Hope ***Lorissa Kathleen Nelson, LeAnn Putney, & Suzie Jones*** 41. Latina Bilingual Paraeducators Enacting Translation & Interpretation Practices ***Elizabeth Castro*** 42. Translanguaging-Related Strategies in Two Utah Mandarin-English Dual Language Immersion Science Classrooms—A Case Study ***Hsiaomei Tsai***
3:30 PM–4:30 PM		[Symposium] S1. Rest Stops, Not Stop Outs: Using Interim Credentials to Support Degree Attainment in Small, Private Institutions ***Ann Rivera, Kristin McCombs***	[Symposium] S2. Teachers Prefer Fast-Acting Classroom Behavior Strategies ***Hannah Lesnick, Sierra Baca Zeff, Andrew Harmon, & Emma Wood***	[Symposium] S3. Centering Well-Being: SEL Strategies for Reducing Burnout in Teacher Preparation Faculty ***Donita Falk-Cotterill & Suzie Henning***

Thursday PM Session Details

1:10 PM – 2:10 PM [Paper Sessions]

Baker

26. Trauma-Informed Education: Structural Displacement and the Recuperation of Care

Alex Winninghoff ● Central Washington University

Trauma-informed education has become the dominant framework through which student struggle is rendered intelligible in U.S. schools — biologizing suffering, displacing structural conditions, and rendering care contingent on pathology. Drawing on Foucauldian discourse analysis and biopolitics, this study examines how ACEs frameworks function discursively in the Northwestern U.S. and argues for recuperating a humanizing ethics of care that challenges pathology as a precondition for response.

Keywords: trauma-informed education, ethics of care, biopolitics

27. The Activation of Long-Term Memory and the Academic Achievement of Undergraduates

Christopher Was ● Kent State University ***Michael McHale*** **● Kent State University**
Daniel Byrnes **● Kent State University** ***Karin Coifman*** **● Kent State University**
John Gunstad **● Kent State University**

Although working memory (WM) and intelligence are well-established predictors of academic success, less is known about the role of activated long-term memory (ALTM). The present study examined whether individual differences in ALTM predict undergraduate 2nd year GPA after controlling for WM and intelligence. The results suggest that ALTM accounted for unique variance in GPA. The efficiency with which individuals activate task-relevant information uniquely contributes to academic success.

Keywords: undergraduate academic success, working memory, intelligence

28. A Comparison of Neurodivergent and Neurotypical Responses to a Thematic Apperception Test

Lori O'Malley ● Rogers State University

Research shows there is a mental health crisis among college students. It also reports that student mental health has deteriorated since the COVID pandemic. What it does not look at is the differences between those with what may be called "mental health" issues and those living with neurodivergence, particularly ADHD, Autism, and Tourette's. This study was designed to contrast results of a thematic apperception test completed by neurotypical and neurodivergent college students.

Keywords: neurodivergent; neurotypical; college student

Mt. Si. I

29. Making Community Visible: Using CARMA to Examine Alignment Across Institutional Levels

Brenda L. Bennett **● Utah State University** ***LeAnn Putney*** **● University of Nevada, Las Vegas**
Max L. Longhurst **● Utah State University** ***Suzie Jones*** **● Utah State University**

This paper presents the Complementary Analysis Research Matrix Application (CARMA) as a methodological approach for examining alignment across institutional levels. In a qualitative case study of a K-6 charter school, CARMA revealed how cross-level interactions shaped science instruction practices. Data sources included school documents, focus groups and interviews with administrators and faculty. The approach offers a replicable tool for making community visible as a system-level phenomenon.

Keywords: CARMA; institutional alignment; multi-level analysis

30. Conducting Peer-Led Video-stimulated Recall Interviews in the Elementary Science Classroom: a Proof of Concept Study

Christine McGrail ● University of North Dakota

Reflection is a crucial mechanism of meaning-making yet is often missing in elementary engineering learning. Video-Stimulated Recall (VSR) can support reflection yet typically requires facilitation by an adult. This study shares the process of implementing student-led VSR in one second-grade science classroom. Students successfully conducted peer-partner VSR interviews as an innovative practice of reflection, offering insight into supporting children's meaning-making in elementary engineering.

Keywords: video-stimulated recall, elementary engineering, community of practice

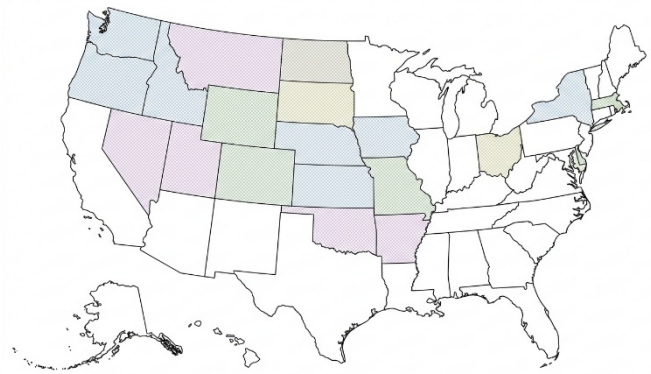
Despite its notorious reputation for gray skies, Seattle residents actually buy more sunglasses per capita than any other major city in the United States.

Note. Image generated using Google Gemini

Mt. Si II	**31. From Measurement to Action: An AI-assisted diagnostic-to-PD system for MLT-focused leadership communication** **William T. "Toby" Holmes ● Kansas State University** **Liz Hollingworth ● University of Iowa** **Paul Erickson ● Kansas State University** For four decades, Motivating Language Theory has produced robust measurement of leader communication but no operational mechanism to act on what the measurement reveals. A score does not tell a leader what to do next. This paper presents an AI-assisted diagnostic-to-PD system that converts MLT measurement into a complete operational chain: diagnose the leader, generate a developmental pathway, and design an individualized professional development plan, illustrated through one principal's case. *Keywords:* motivating language theory, leadership communication, AI-assisted professional development **32. Instructional Leadership in Career and Technical Education: Perspectives of CTE Center Directors** **Justin V. Benna ● North Dakota State University** **Brook Thiel ● North Dakota State University** This qualitative study explores how CTE Center Directors experience and approach instructional leadership and feedback for the teachers they support. Semi-structured interviews examine how directors' professional backgrounds and the specialized contexts of CTE shape their supervisory practices, with implications for how we understand instructional leadership across disciplines. *Keywords:* instructional feedback; supervision; career and technical education **33. Building AI Capacities in Career and Technical Education: A Multi-Platform Design Approach** ***William Cain*** ● University of Wyoming ***Rob Hill*** ● University of Wyoming ***Lucas Dow*** ● University of Wyoming This work-in-progress paper describes the early-stage design of a Wyoming CTE AI capacity-building initiative, with the AI Navigator as one emerging design artifact. Building from a ChatGPT prototype, the project compares ChatGPT, Gemini, and NotebookLM for CTE standards interpretation, pathway exploration, instructional planning, and source-grounded synthesis. The paper focuses on design rationale, benchmarking, and educator- and student-facing learning modules. *Keywords:* career and technical education; generative AI literacy; teacher preparation
	Afternoon Snack Break 2:00-2:30pm, Lobby

NRMERA 2026 presenter footprint, by state

- Washington: 22
- Montana: 14
- Utah: 12
- Nebraska: 9
- North Dakota: 9
- Idaho: 8
- Oklahoma: 7
- Ohio: 5
- Wyoming: 5
- Missouri: 4
- Nevada: 3
- Colorado: 3
- Kansas: 3
- New York: 3
- Arkansas: 1
- Iowa: 1
- Massachusetts: 1
- Oregon: 1
- South Dakota: 1
- Ireland: 1



Thursday PM Session Details

2:20 PM – 3:20 PM [Paper Sessions]

Baker

34. Stewardship Under Pressure: Tending shared governance amid change and across time

Wendie Castillo ● Central Washington University

How does stewardship operate as institutions act, change, and endure? Building from a study of shared-governance enactment under adaptive pressure, this presentation distinguishes transactional, transformational, and transcendent stewardship and introduces a reflective assessment tool for examining responsibility within present conditions, through change, and across time.

Keywords: shared governance, institutional stewardship, behavioral architecture

36. Developing and Sustaining a Shared Network Vision in a STEM- Networked Improvement Community

Allyson Rogan-Klyve ● Central Washington University **Emilie Hancock ● Central Washington University**
Brent Hancock ● Central Washington University **Megan Rivard ● Central Washington University**

NICs depend on a shared vision to coordinate improvement work, though little empirical guidance exists for how networks establish and sustain a shared vision. Findings from this qualitative study show that vision formation was an iterative, relational process shaped by intersecting K-12 and university governance norms, assumptions about authority, and political dimensions of STEM identity. Strategies for NICs and understandings of how leadership supports collective sensemaking are offered.

Keywords: research-practice partnerships, STEM education, organizational change

Mt. Si I

37. The Wicked Problem of Teacher Wellbeing

Joel Judd ● Southern Utah University

Teacher wellbeing is key to understanding educator burnout and retention, yet it remains poorly defined. Using "balancing challenges and resources at work" as our definition we surveyed and interviewed several hundred Utah and Nevada school teachers. We found only half of teachers maintain a healthy work balance most of the time, and that 71% of teachers cannot teach effectively more than 1-2 days a week due to student misbehavior and reduced autonomy.

Keywords: teacher wellbeing; autonomy; school ecology

38. Different Means to the Same End: Teacher Candidates' Perceptions of Standardized Tests and Alternative Certification Pathways

Xiaoyan Gu ● Heritage University **Amparo Dinagsao ● Heritage University**
Megan McCormick ● Heritage University

This study examines two questions: how teacher candidates perceive and compare the standardized testing route and the alternative pathway, and what power dynamics and language ideologies are embedded in and reproduced through those perceptions. Preliminary findings reveal candidates —regardless of testing outcome or linguistic background—reached remarkably similar perceptions and ideologies: the more "legitimate" standardized testing pathway and the internalized language ideologies.

Keywords: teacher certification; power; language ideologies

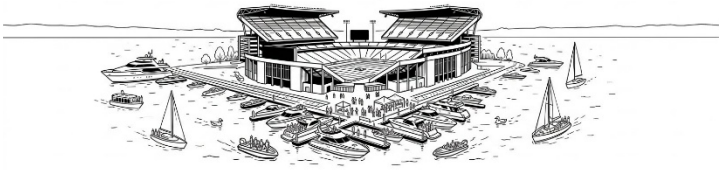
39. From Entry to Longevity: Reimagining Teacher Preparation to Prevent Burnout and Promote Retention

Lois Paretti ● University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Teacher burnout, characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced professional efficacy, continues to undermine teacher retention, instructional quality, and student outcomes. Increasing evidence suggests that burnout is not only a workplace issue but also a preparation problem. Therefore, teacher retention should begin during preparation, not after employment. Systemic changes in teacher education are essential to mitigating burnout and promoting longevity.

Keywords: burnout, teacher preparation, resilience

Seattle Trivia:
"Sailgating" to School!



The University of Washington's Husky Stadium sits right on Lake Washington.
It is one of only three stadiums in the US where fans travel to games entirely by boat.

Note. Image generated using Google Gemini

Mt. Si II	**40. Reciprocal Teaching with Emergent Bilingual Students: Promoting Academic Reading Strategies and Fostering Hope** **Lorissa Kathleen Nelson ● Utah State University** **LeAnn Putney ● University of Nevada, Las Vegas** **Suzie Jones ● Utah State University** Students who struggle to read in their first language (L1) are less likely to complete university. However, students who believe they can achieve their academic goals are more likely to demonstrate hope and succeed academically. This study examined whether the metacognitive reading strategy Reciprocal Teaching, taught in Spanish, influenced emergent bilingual students' hope in their English reading ability and its impact on their hope for academic success. *Keywords:* bilingual, reading, adolescents **41. Latina Bilingual Paraeducators Enacting Translation & Interpretation Practices** ***Elizabeth Castro* ● Central Washington University** This ethnographic study examined how four Latina bilingual paraeducators utilize an array of language and literacy practices, aimed at supporting emergent bilingual youth. In particular, the interpretation/translation exchanges between paraeducators and youth are part of their everyday navigation of learning materials and youth socialization into school routines. I documented paraeducator-youth dialogue through extensive classroom observations and semi-structured interviews. *Keywords:* language, bilingual, paraeducators **42. Translanguaging-Related Strategies in Two Utah Mandarin-English Dual Language Immersion Science Classrooms—A Case Study** **Hsiaomei Tsai ● Cache County School District/Cedar Ridge Elementary** This presentation shares how two Utah Chinese dual language immersion (DLI) teachers adapted translanguaging pedagogies to support students in learning scientific concepts. Both teachers were concerned that the State's monolingual policy may hinder students' development in science competence and perceived that integrating English into the Chinese-dominant instruction could strengthen students' comprehension of scientific knowledge. *Keywords:* translanguaging, science learning, dual language immersion

Thursday PM Session Details

3:30 PM – 4:30 PM [Symposia]

Baker	**S1. Rest Stops, Not Stop Outs: Using Interim Credentials to Support Degree Attainment in Small, Private Institutions** **Ann Rivera ● Villa Maria College** **Kristin McCombs ● Villa Maria College** This presentation explores how small, private institutions can leverage institutional research data, credit mobility and student support to identify students who may benefit from associate degree completion opportunities. Using early signs of academic distress, paired with withdrawals and early registration data among academically recoverable students, the session examines interim credential pathways as a strategy to support credit mobility and degree attainment. *Keywords:* undergraduates, retention, persistence
Mt. Si I	**S2. Teachers Prefer Fast-Acting Classroom Behavior Strategies** **Hannah Lesnick ● Idaho State University** **Sierra Baca Zeff ● Idaho State University** **Andrew Harmon ● Idaho State University** **Emma Wood ● Idaho State University** The present study examined DD in teacher behavioral intervention decision making across (1) behavior severity and (2) educational settings (i.e., special education vs general education). Current and former teachers (N = 156) completed an online survey including a questionnaire assessing teachers' DD of child problem behavior. Results suggest that teacher decision-making about behavioral interventions is influenced by delay to treatment outcomes and teacher training context. *Keywords:* behavioral, interventions, teachers
Mt. Si II	**S3. Centering Well-Being: SEL Strategies for Reducing Burnout in Teacher Preparation Faculty** **Donita Falk-Cotterill ● Eastern Washington University** **Suzie Henning ● Eastern Washington University** Faculty burnout in higher education has reached critical levels, affecting teaching quality, well-being, and retention. This symposium explores Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) strategies—mindfulness, self-awareness, self-regulation, and community-building—as ways to reduce burnout among teacher preparation faculty. Drawing on an ongoing mixed-methods study, participants will engage in discussion about SEL-informed approaches to sustaining faculty well-being in teacher preparation contexts. *Keywords:* faculty burnout, social-emotional learning, higher education well-being

Friday, October 9,2026

Breakfast	8:00-9:30 AM	Rainier Ballroom
General Session Business Meeting	8:30-9:30 AM	Rainier Ballroom
Breakout sessions	9:45-10:45 AM	Olympic, Baker, Mt. Si I, Mt. Si II
Workshops	11:00- 12:00 PM	Olympic, Baker, Mt. Si I, Mt. Si II
Conference Concludes	12:00 PM	
Board Meeting	12:30 – 2:00 PM	Olympic

Business Meeting Information

All NRMERA attendees are voting members and are invited to attend the Business Meeting. This is where next year's NRMERA Board elections are held as well as any amendments to the Constitution and/or Bylaws are discussed and voted upon.

The offices of president-elect, secretary, and treasurer are voted upon each year. Each member state caucuses each year, with state representatives elected in either even or odd years, as per the bylaws.

2026 Elections

- President-Elect (to host NRMERA 2028)
- Secretary
- State Representatives for Colorado, Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, and Utah
- Graduate Student Representative

The nominating committee is chaired by the immediate past-president. This year, that is immediate Past Co-President Suzanne Beasterfield. The nominating committee will accept nominations from the members throughout the conference. If you are interested in running for an office, please talk to Suzanne.

Friday Sessions Overview

	Baker	Mt. Si I	Mt. Si. II
9:45 AM – 10:45 AM		[Multiple Paper Session] 44. Rethinking Teacher Preparation: Effective Classroom Practices for Addressing the Needs of Multilingual Learners ***Leslie Grant & Monica Yoo*** 45. Metacognition in an online course? Yes, it can be accomplished. Metacognition in an online course? Yes, it can be accomplished. ***Clay Rasmussen*** 46. Are Discussion Boards Still Worth It? Comparing the Effectiveness of Asynchronous Discussion for Traditional and Non-Traditional Online Students ***Sara Westerlin & Jon Westerlin***	[Multiple Paper Session] 47. Middle School Math Teachers' Self-Efficacy ***Heather Kennedy*** 48. Process Over Outcomes: Instructor Perspectives on Implementing Ungrading Approaches in Undergraduate Writing and Math Courses ***Madison Gerdes, Hannah Knipp, Yusi Chen, & Laura Guay*** 49. Dancing with Numbers: Exploring Math Through Movement in Elementary Schools in the Peruvian Amazon ***Karen Jensen***
11:00AM–12:00 PM	[Symposium] S4. Rooted in Rurality: Preservice Teachers' Experiences with a Rural Immersion Program ***Amanda Eller, Suzanne Beasterfield, Maya Smart, & Maria Silva***	[Symposium] S5. Indigenous Education for All: Stories and Lessons from Three States ***Amanda LeClair-Diaz***	[Symposium] S6. Navigating the Crucible: Mitigating Burnout and Imposter Syndrome in Graduate Education Programs ***Aaron S. Richmond, Lindsay Diamond, Faye L, Haggar, & William Young***

Friday Session Details

9:45 PM – 10:45 PM [Paper Sessions]

Mt Si I

44. Rethinking Teacher Preparation: Effective Classroom Practices for Addressing the Needs of Multilingual Learners

Leslie Grant ● University of Colorado Colorado Springs
Monica Yoo ● University of Colorado Colorado Springs

Presenters discuss a redesigned teacher preparation program that includes courses and instructional experiences highlighting practices that are effective for Multilingual Learners. Findings from pre- and post-teaching observations demonstrated a significant increase in pre-service teachers' use of instructional practices supporting Multilingual Learners. Courses and experiences will be shared, as well as the tool used for observations.

*Keywords: t*eacher preparation, multilingual learners

45. Metacognition in an online course? Yes, it can be accomplished.

***Clay Rasmussen* ● Weber State University**

This study examined whether embedded metacognitive prompts improve metacognitive regulation in an asynchronous online teacher education course. Using discussion analysis and Metacognitive Awareness Inventory (MAI) pre/post measures, results showed significant gains in metacognitive regulation, particularly in information management, comprehension monitoring, and debugging strategies. Findings suggest structured prompts can effectively support self-regulated learning in online environments.

Keywords: metacognition, online learning

46. Are Discussion Boards Still Worth It? Comparing the Effectiveness of Asynchronous Discussion for Traditional and Non-Traditional Online Students

Sara Westerlin ● Peru State College
Jon Westerlin ● Peru State College

Asynchronous discussion boards are the default for online interaction, but do they produce real learning or just compliance? This cross-disciplinary SoTL study compares discussion board engagement, depth, and perceived value across traditional and non-traditional online students in early childhood education and business courses. Using the Community of Inquiry framework and andragogy, the presenters identify when boards work, when they fail, and which practices improve them.

Keywords: discussion board, traditional, online

Mt. Si II

47. Middle School Math Teachers' Self-Efficacy

Heather Kennedy ● Southern Utah University

Self-efficacy in teaching mathematics has been linked to effective teaching practices and student achievement. This study measured the math teaching self-efficacy of middle school math teachers. Data analysis indicates that self-efficacy is moderately positive, with teachers feeling like good math teachers, but not able to impact student achievement. However, special education teachers, novice teachers, and teachers with limited math coursework in college had lower math teaching self-efficacy.

Keywords: mathematics, self-efficacy

48. Process Over Outcomes: Instructor Perspectives on Implementing Ungrading Approaches in Undergraduate Writing and Math Courses

Madison Gerdes ● University of Montana **Hannah Knipp ● University of Montana**
Yusi Chen ● University of Montana **Laura Guay ● University of Montana**

Research consistently links ungrading approaches with increased student learning, engagement, and effort. However, implementing ungrading requires considerable time and effort by the instructor. Through a qualitative analysis of ongoing instructor meetings, this presentation describes the experiences of instructors in transforming high-anxiety undergraduate courses (writing and social statistics) into an ungraded format. Implications for instructors interested in ungrading are highlighted.

Keywords: ungrading, high-anxiety subjects, process-oriented teaching

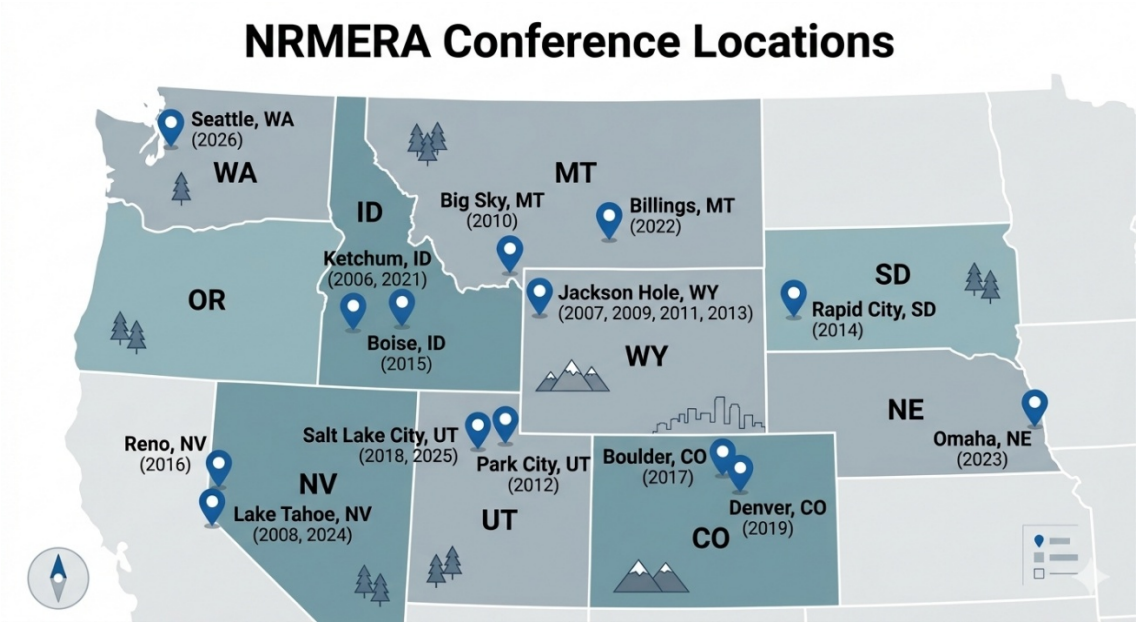
49. Dancing with Numbers: Exploring Math Through Movement in Elementary Schools in the Peruvian Amazon

Karen Jensen ● Brigham Young University

This qualitative study explores a mathematics-through-movement initiative in the Peruvian Amazon. Peruvian elementary teachers participated in professional development workshops integrating dance and movement into mathematics instruction for grades 3–6, while university dance education students helped design and teach lessons. The study examines teachers' and university students' perceptions of movement-based mathematics learning, arts integration, and cross-cultural collaboration.

Keywords: elementary math, dance, international education

Friday Session Details	
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM [Symposia]	
Baker	**S4. Rooted in Rurality: Preservice Teachers' Experiences with a Rural Immersion Program** **Amanda Eller ● Idaho State University-Twin Falls** **Suzanne Beasterfield ● Idaho State University** **Maria Silva ● Idaho State University-Twin Falls** **Maya Smart ● Idaho State University** We discuss the issue of attracting quality teachers for rural schools, and report on a 4-year rural schools immersion experience for preservice teacher candidates. Teaching in Rural Areas Immersion Learning (TRAIL) Experience candidates spend a week with cooperating teachers at a partnering school, learning about teaching and living in rural remote schools and communities. In the symposium, we will discuss the development of the TRAIL program and the experiences of faculty and candidates. *Keywords:* rural education, preservice teaching experiences, teacher recruitment and retention
Mt. Si I	**S5. Indigenous Education for All: Stories and Lessons from Three States** **Amanda LeClair-Diaz ● Central Washington University** **Christine Rogers Stanton ● Montana State University** **Sarah B. Shear ● University of Washington Bothell** Over the past two decades, several states have adopted policies to require teaching for Indigenous histories and worldviews. This scholars' symposium presents case studies of three state-level initiatives providing Indigenous Education for All. The dialogue between presenters highlights the importance of comprehensive implementation, committed leadership, and guidance from Indigenous communities. We conclude with actionable recommendations for both existing and developing initiatives. *Keywords:* Indigenous, anticolonial, state policies
Mt. Si II	**S6. Navigating the Crucible: Mitigating Burnout and Imposter Syndrome in Graduate Education Programs** **Aaron S. Richmond ● Metropolitan State University of Denver** **William Young ● Oglala Lakota College** **Faye Haggar ● University of Nebraska Medical School** **Lindsay Diamond ● University of Nevada, Reno** This symposium examines the structural roots of these challenges and presents specific strategies and interventions to combat burnout and imposter syndrome. These include mindfulness, peer support, boundary-setting, and belonging initiatives to sustain practitioner-scholars and diversify educational leadership pipelines. *Keywords:* early career, burnout, imposter syndrome



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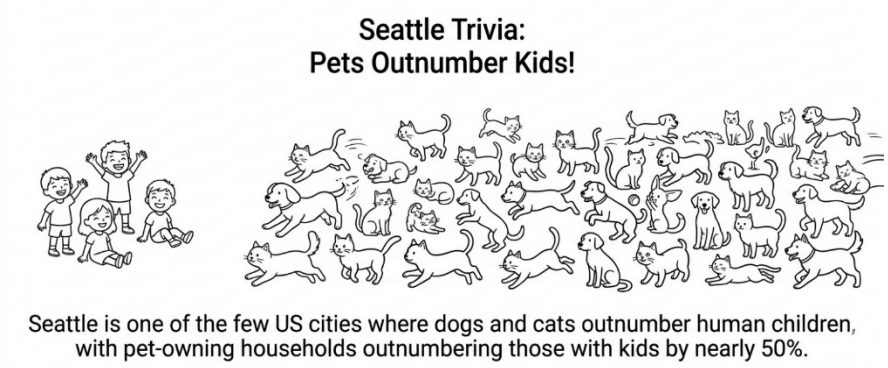

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Exemplary Service Award	Christopher Was (Kent State University)
Distinguished Paper Award	Kathleen Mohr (Utah State University) and Hsiaomei Tsai (Utah State University & Cache County School District)
Dr. Gregory Schraw Student Fellowship	Grace Epperson (Montana State University) and Maria Zaman (University of North Dakota)

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Four awards are bestowed annually at the NRMERA conference: Early Career Award, Exemplary Service Award, Distinguished Paper Award, and the Dr. Gregory Schraw Student Fellowship Award.

Early Career Award

NRMERA solicits nominations annually for the NRMERA Early Career Award. The award is presented each year at the NRMERA conference to recognize a member of NRMERA who is early in his or her career and has made significant contributions to NRMERA and to the field of education. A plaque is given to the recipient at the annual meeting to honor their award. Candidates for the award must meet the following criteria:

- Have earned a doctorate in an education-related field (e.g., curriculum and instruction, special education, educational psychology, school counseling, educational leadership, educational assessment, etc.);
- Have been granted said degree within the last 8 years;
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- Show promise of achieving national visibility.

Exemplary NRMERA Service Award

NRMERA solicits nominations annually for the Exemplary NRMERA Service Award. The award is presented each year at the NRMERA conference to recognize a member of NRMERA who is has consistently dedicated time, energy, and wisdom to the Association. A plaque is given to the recipient at the annual meeting to honor their award. Candidates for the award must meet the following criteria:

- Held an officer position and/or contributed significantly in other service to NRMERA; and
- Have been visibly active in NRMERA for no fewer than 10 years.

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Each year NRMERA presents the Distinguished Paper Award at the annual conference. Anyone whose proposal was accepted to be presented at that year's conference — and who will be attending to present the paper — may enter their related **full, complete research paper** for consideration. This is NRMERA's opportunity to acknowledge **excellence in research** in the region and to support the dissemination of research at a national level.

There are three incentives for submitting a paper for consideration. In addition to a certificate to honor their award, the author(s) of the winning paper receive(s):

- **Automatic acceptance to present the paper at the next annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association (AERA)** within the Consortium of State and Regional Educational Research Associations (SRERA) sessions.
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- **Priority consideration for publication** in the NRMERA journal, *Educational Research: Theory and Practice.*

Dr. Gregory Schraw Student Fellowship Award

Dr. Gregory Schraw earned a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology and M.S. in Applied Statistics from the University of Utah. He taught in the learning and measurement programs at the University of Nebraska for 11 years before joining the University of Nevada, Las Vegas faculty in 2000. He served on the editorial boards of the *Journal of Educational Psychology, Contemporary Educational Psychology, Educational Psychologist,* and *Educational Psychology Review*. Dr. Schraw published extensively in the areas of metacognition, situational interest, and beliefs and cognition. He authored three books and was the recipient of two distinguished teaching awards from the University of Nebraska.

The Schraw Student Fellowship Award was created in memoriam of his contributions and dedication to students. This award provides funds to undergraduate and graduate students who attend and present their research at the annual NRMERA conference. Recipients receive $250 and formal recognition at the annual conference.

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