NRMERA

Northern Rocky Mountain Educational Research Association

42nd Annual Conference

Education = Hope

President: Suzanne Beasterfield

Program Chair: Amanda Eller

October 1-3, 2025

Doubletree Suites Salt Lake City Downtown

Salt Lake City, Utah

www.nrmera.org

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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.

NRMERA Board 2024-2025	
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2025 Program Proposal Reviewers			
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Jacob Earnest	Courtney McKim	Allison Roxburgh	Sara Westerlin
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Wendy Hickman	Gus Nollmeyer		

Conference Committee Volunteers	
Corey Bartle	Kaywin Cottle

Message from the President

Dear NRMERA Colleagues,

On behalf of the Executive Board of the Northern Rocky Mountain Educational Research Association, welcome to Salt Lake City, UT. We hope you will have the chance to see a few of the beautiful sites in the area while you are here. I began my career 30 years ago as a middle school teacher in Provo, Utah, which is just a few dozen miles south of SLC. The first faculty professional development meeting I attended was in our school's computer lab. They told us there was a thing called the "internet," and we probably needed to know about it because it might be big in the future. My, how the world has changed, eh?

Now, in 2025, I've been a teacher educator for over 20 years and have been attending NRMERA most years for the last decade and have served as the Idaho representative, program chair, conference mentor, and now as president. The last time NRMERA was in Salt Lake it was 2018, and so much has happened in the world even just since then. We've weathered a pandemic, a seesawing political landscape in the U.S., and what feels (to me, at least) like an exponential rise in divisiveness among the human family. I wanted our conference theme this year to reflect a more positive note amidst some of these stresses and uncertainties. We invited you to submit proposals that could help show how educational research is a hopeful act: one that seeks to understand education and ultimately, we *hope*, improve things for students and educators. You have risen to the occasion and we have a full roster of interesting and exciting work to share with each other. Our keynote speakers, Dr. Suzanne Jones and Dr. LeAnn Putney, have been working on hope in education for years, exploring questions of motivation and efficacy. They'll be talking to us about "hope as a transformative action" on Thursday. Be sure to attend the Thursday keynote luncheon.

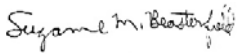
NRMERA is always a pleasure for me. Amanda Eller introduced me to NRMERA in 2016, and although I've been to many different conferences for many different organizations over the years, I say no one beats NRMERA for the friendliness and welcome. I encourage everyone to reach out to your fellow attendees; many of them will tell you they've made lasting connections through NRMERA.

During the pandemic and into 2021 I served as program chair under Dr. Eller. This year, she is my program chair for this conference as well as continuing her service as Communications Manager. Dr. Eller and I have worked together for over a decade at Idaho State University, and she is an incredibly hard-working colleague and close personal friend. I am so grateful for her willingness to step up to extra responsibilities in NRMERA this year, even in the midst of increasing responsibilities as a department chair and clinical professor at Idaho State University. I'd also like to thank Gus Nollmeyer and Amy Ratto-Parks for their work and support in getting this conference organized on a shortened timeline, and also president-elect Amanda Obery, who has been a surprise cheerleader to me when I really needed it. Thanks also go to conference committee members Kaywin Cottle and Corey Bartle, who've been willing to tackle various tasks I've thrown at them. Thanks also to the entire NRMERA Board for their support and efforts. If anyone has a passion for the mission of NRMERA, I encourage you to consider joining the board this year, as a state representative or other office. We will be electing new board members at the Friday morning breakfast and session.

We recognize and appreciate our sponsors for their generosity: Idaho State University College of Education, University of Colorado Colorado Springs College of Education, Brigham Young University, Auburn University at Montgomery, and Aaron Moore, State Farm Agent.

I hope you enjoy the conference and your fellow NRMERA members, and that it will energize you to continue your work in education throughout the next year, until we meet again.

Best,



Suzanne Beasterfield, 2025 NRMERA President

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- Deaf Education (M.Ed)
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NRMERA 2025 Conference
Schedule-at-a-Glance

Wednesday, October 1, 2025		
Executive Committee Board Meeting	4:30-6:00 PM	Boardroom
President's Reception	7:00-9:00 PM	Ballroom
Poster Presentations	*7:00-8:00 PM*	

Thursday, October 2, 2025		
Breakfast Opening Session	8:00-9:00 AM	Ballroom
Breakout sessions	9:30-10:45 AM	Various
Symposia & Workshops	11:00-12:00 PM	Various
Keynote Luncheon	12:30-1:30 PM	Ballroom
Breakout sessions	2:00-3:15 PM	Various
Invited & Breakout sessions	3:30-4:45 PM	Various
Awards Banquet	6:00-8:00 PM	Ballroom
Graduate Student Social	8:15-10:00 PM	Gracie's

Friday, October 3, 2025		
Breakfast General Session & Business Meeting	8:00-9:00 AM	Ballroom
Breakout Sessions	9:30-10:45 AM	Various
Symposia & Workshops	11:00 AM -12:00 PM	Various
Learn-at-Lunch Roundtables President's Conference Conclusion	12:30-1:30 PM	Ballroom
Board Meeting	2:30-4:00 PM	Boardroom

Did you know?

"The Greatest Snow on Earth" — The proximity of the Wasatch Mountains to the Great Salt Lake creates a unique weather pattern that results in an exceptionally large amount of snowfall, earning it the nickname "The Greatest Snow on Earth". The city is recognized as one of the most accessible ski destinations in the world, with multiple mountain resorts nearby.

Keynote Address

The Pathways of Hope in Education: Navigating Challenges, Sustaining Vision, and Empowering Teachers and Learners

Suzanne H. Jones & LeAnn G. Putney

Suzanne H. Jones, Ph.D.
Professor
School of Teacher Education and Leadership
Utah State University

LeAnn G. Putney, Ph.D.
Professor Emerita
College of Education
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

What exactly is hope? An emotion? A feeling of optimism? Or is it something more? Drawing on the works of social psychologists Rick Snyder and Shane Lopez, and social activist Paulo Freire, coupled with socio-culturalist Lev Vygotsky, we unfold the concept of hope as transformative action and a motivational element of learning. Together, Dr. Suzanne H. Jones and Dr. LeAnn G. Putney have examined the construct of hope in a myriad of contexts: Hope among classroom teachers individually and in their PLCs; Hope and Collective Classroom Efficacy in elementary, middle school, and undergraduate classrooms; and most recently, the *perezhivanie* or lived experience of hope among elementary school and graduate students.

Suzanne H. Jones is a Professor in the School of Teacher Education and Leadership at Utah State University. Her research interests include hope as a motivational element of learning, collective classroom efficacy, teacher efficacy, conceptual change, and emotions in learning. She is a member of AERA and NRMERA. She has received the McGraw-Hill Distinguished Scholar Award, Conference of Academic Research in Education, as well as the Graduate Mentor of the Year Award.

LeAnn G. Putney is Professor Emerita in Educational Psychology from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. She specializes in ethnographic and action research in K-12 schools. She has examined teacher and collective classroom efficacy from a Vygotskian perspective to illustrate efficacy development and enhancement. She also co-authored *A Vision of Vygotsky*, a book on Vygotskian theories for classroom teachers. She is a member of AERA and NRMERA and continues to mentor graduate students. She co-founded Innovations International K-12 Charter School of NV and serves as its President and Director of Research.

NRMERA 2025 Detailed Schedule

Wednesday, October 1, 2025		
Executive Committee Board Meeting	4:30-6:00 PM	Boardroom

Conference Kickoff: President's Reception & Poster Session		
President's Reception	7:00-9:00 PM	Ballroom
Poster Presentations	*7:00-8:00 PM*	

Wednesday, October 1, 2025: Poster Presentations – 7:00-8:00PM

Poster Display 1

D1. Understanding Teacher Motivations and Barriers: Designing Master's Programs to Meet Educators' Needs

Justin J. Wageman ● North Dakota State University

This study explores the motivations, barriers, and preferences of North Dakota teachers without graduate degrees. Using a stratified random survey design, it aims to inform the redesign of a master's in education program that meets the needs of working educators, especially those in rural and underserved communities.

Keywords: graduate education, teacher motivation, program design

Poster Display 2

D2. Navigating Novelty: Preservice Teachers' Perspectives on AI Chatbots in Education

Joseph E. Schroer ● University of Wyoming

Advances in Artificial Intelligence technologies have sparked debate in all educational spheres. This survey research will help teacher preparation programs to understand what skills and knowledge preservice teachers have a-priori so they may embed relevant and impactful information and skills related to AI. Three years of data collection will be presented.

Keywords: AI, preservice teachers

Poster Display 3

D3. Cases of Teacher Induction after Participating in a Rural Student Teaching Experience

Maria Zaman ● University of North Dakota
Lisa Vojacek [NP] ● University of North Dakota
Sarah Zacher [NP] ● University of North Dakota
Ryan Summers [NP] ● University of North Dakota

This study follows five early career STEM teachers who completed internships while participating in the Rural Student Teaching Experience (RSTE). Findings highlight how mentorship, financial support, and community foster teacher identity, retention, and confidence, offering a promising model to address persistent STEM teacher shortages in rural schools.

Keywords: rural teacher preparation, STEM education, induction and mentoring

Poster Display 4

D4. Expanding on Emotional Design: Beyond Colors and Shapes

Brittany N. Parker ● Idaho State University
David A. Coffland ● Idaho State University

Mayer and Fiorella (2022) defined the emotional design principle increases learning when the materials induce a positive emotional state without significantly increasing extraneous processing. This study examines the existing literature, collects data on two new types of emotional design techniques, and suggests other avenues for research.

Keywords: emotional design, multimedia instruction

Did you know?

The world's first Kentucky Fried Chicken was opened in Salt Lake City, not Kentucky. "Colonel" Sanders franchised his chicken recipe to a Utah-based friend, who named his restaurant Kentucky Fried Chicken after massive interest in the menu item. The original location is still there, too!

NP = Not Presenting

Poster Display 5	**D5. The Lasting Impact: A Mixed Methods Study Connecting Past Science Experiences to Current Trust and Relevance Perceptions in Education** A'lura N. Hamilton ● Utah State University This research explores public perspectives of American education, focusing on trust, science curriculum relevance, and past educational experiences. Results indicate a strong link between trust and perceived relevance. Qualitative data underscores the impact of teachers and learning experiences on public views, emphasizing the need for relevant and individual consideration. *Keywords: science education, trust in education, relevance of curriculum*
Poster Display 6	**D6. Cross-Disciplinary Collaboration in Elementary School Settings: A Literature Synthesis on Professional Development and Learning Communities** Tina RaLinn McCulloch ● Brigham Young University Heather Leary [NP] ● Brigham Young University [NP] This literature synthesis examines how professional learning structures support collaboration between classroom and arts educators. Findings from 23 studies highlight how professional learning communities and collaborative partnerships enhance teacher arts integration capacity. Challenges include limited time and administrative support. However, communities of educators maintain a hopeful arts-integrative vision of the future. *Keywords: arts integration, professional learning communities, cross-disciplinary collaboration*
Poster Display 7	**D7. Improving Speech-Language Pathology Graduate Student Confidence in Evidence-Based Practice** Courtney Olson ● Minot State University Carla Tierney-Hendricks [NP] ● Mass General Hospital Institute of Health Professionals This poster presents research on boosting evidence-based practice confidence in graduate-student clinicians through mini-lessons. Students taught by clinical instructors using mini-lessons showed greater confidence gains than those with traditional education, offering valuable guidance for clinical supervisors and contributing to best practices in supporting and enhancing graduate student learning experiences. *Keywords: evidence-based practice, supervision, clinical education*
Poster Display 8	**D8. Thoughts on Aging from a New Generation** Lori O'Malley ● Rogers State University Aging, as a topic, has been seen through a variety of lenses in society. It has been both revered and feared. Anti-aging campaigns and the use of filters in social media have increased negative perspectives of aging in recent years. This project uses the qualitative research method known as PhotoVoice to explore thoughts and feelings related to aging. Participants were self-described as being in generation Y or Z and enrolled in a junior level psychology course at a rural serving university in the mid-west. Three thematic codes were explored: Natural cycles of life, value of relationships, and resilience and adaptability. *Keywords: generations, aging, anti-aging*
Poster Display 9	**D9. Evidence-Based Grading: Exploring Secondary School Teachers' Beliefs and Practice** Justin Benna ● North Dakota State University This study examines secondary teachers' perceptions of Evidence-Based Grading (EBG), emphasizing its role in clarifying instruction, learning goals, and feedback. While teachers report instructional benefits, they identify persistent challenges with reporting tools and implementation support. Findings inform leadership strategies for advancing effective, transparent, and equitable grading reform in secondary education. *Keywords: Assessment*
Poster Display 10	**D10. D is for Dance: Pre-Service Dance Teachers Perceptions of a Dance Teaching Practicum in Elementary Schools** Karen Jensen ● Brigham Young University Jordan Halterman ● Brigham Young University Abbey Hunting ● Brigham Young University This presentation will share the experiences of preservice Dance Education majors of completing an elementary teaching practicum through participating in an outreach dance company and teaching and performing in 14 elementary schools. *Keywords: dance education, preservice teachers, narrative inquiry*

Did you know?

Zions Cooperative Mercantile Institution (ZCMI) was established in Salt Lake City in 1868 by Brigham Young, becoming the country's first department store. ZCMI was acquired by The May Department Stores Company in 1999 and later became Macy's.

Poster Display 11	**D11. Stronger Futures: A Small, Private Institution's Approach to Improve Career Readiness Through Intentional Student Support and Curricular Change** Kristin McCombs ● Villa Maria College This study examines the effectiveness of career readiness programming to improve student learning outcomes. Two baccalaureate programs piloted career readiness programming, and all programs used new career-focused core curriculum. Early outcomes explore retention, persistence, attendance, and GPA for student subgroups. *Keywords: undergraduate student success*
Poster Display 12	**D12. From Defeated to Driven by Data: Empowering K-3 Teachers Through Student-Focused Coaching** Kara DeCoursey ● Ogden School District This study addressed kindergarten- through 3rd-grade teachers' lack of hope around literacy data practices at a school with a largely underserved population. Consistent, student-focused data analysis meetings were implemented with 12 K-3 teachers for one year. Teachers shifted toward taking accountability for student outcomes, proactively setting goals, and celebrating their successes. *Keywords: data, student-focused coaching*
Poster Display 13	**D13. Exploring the Catawba Indian Nation's Resiliency Experience: A Qualitative Single Case Study** David Reynders ● Baylor University This presentation will share the findings of a qualitative case study that explores how members of the Catawba Indian Nation use communication, belief systems, and community support to build resilience against intergenerational trauma. Findings highlight culturally grounded strategies—such as family counseling and cultural traditions—that strengthen familial bonds and inform policies supporting Native American well-being and cultural preservation. *Keywords: resilience, intergenerational trauma, Catawba Indian Nation*
Poster Display 14	**D14. Advocate and Support: Highlighting the Voices of Parents of Children with Dyslexia** Jennifer Shorett ● University of Nevada, Reno Research highlighting the voices of parents of students with dyslexia brings awareness to the importance of collaboration between families and schools to lessen the burden placed on families and create a more cohesive special education team equipped to support the unique needs of students with dyslexia. *Keywords: literacy, dyslexia, advocacy*

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Did you know?

The Family History Library, which is run by the Mormon Church, is the largest genealogical library in the world! Learn more at www.familysearch.org/en/library/.

NP = Not Presenting

Thursday, October 2, 2025 Schedule

Breakfast *President's Welcome*	8:00-9:00 AM	Ballroom
Breakout sessions	9:30-10:45 AM	Various
Symposia & Workshops	11:00-12:00 PM	Various
Keynote Luncheon	12:30-1:30 PM	Ballroom
Breakout Sessions	2:00-3:15 PM	Various
Invited & Breakout Sessions	3:30-4:45 PM	Various
Awards Banquet	6:00-8:00 PM	Ballroom
Graduate Student Social	8:15-10:00 PM	Gracie's

Call for Manuscripts

Conference Proceedings for the 2025 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, 2025, for publication in the Spring 2026 conference proceedings issue.

Submit questions and manuscripts to: editor@nrmera.org

Thursday Sessions Overview

	Ballroom A	Ballroom B	Ambassador A	Ambassador B	Boardroom
9:30 AM – 10:45 AM	[Multiple Paper Session] P1. Walking Through Transitions: An Arts-Based Autoethnographic Walkography *Melanie Reaves* P2. "I was in the story": The Relationship of Oral Storytelling and Narrative Transportation *Jacob B. Earnest, Suzanne H. Jones, LeAnn G. Putney* P3. Examining the Development of Collective Classroom Efficacy *Bradley Dutson, Suzanne Jones, LeAnn Putney*	[Multiple Paper Session] P4. How Technology Mediated Lesson Study Enhances Rural Science Teachers' Capacity to Teach Three-Dimensional Science: A Case Study *Michelle Hudson, Heather Leary [NP], Max Longhurst [NP], Clara Smith [NP], Rebecca Sansom [NP], Joshua Stowers [NP], Austin Moore [NP]* P5. The 5Es or MBI: Instructional Models that Develop Science Content Knowledge *Gustave E. Nollmeyer, Kathryn A. Baldwin [NP]* P6. Can a Circus Teach Chemistry? *Amanda Obery, Matt Queen [NP], Martha Cabell [NP], Shelly Hogan [NP]*	[Multiple Paper Session] P7. Preservice Teachers Experiences with Practicum in Virtual Reality *John Rodari Meisner* P8. An Action Research Case Study on Co-Creating Effective and Meaningful Professional Development for Mathematics Instruction *Nicole Parker [NP], Cindy Jones* P9. Elementary Preservice Teachers Integration of Technology in Mathematics Lesson Plans *Allison Roxburgh*	[Multiple Paper Session] P10. Utah Teachers' Perceptions of the Mandarin Matrix Curriculum for Chinese Dual Language Immersion Programs *Hsiaomei Tsai* P11. Why Not Prepare All Teachers for Multilingual Learners? Findings from Redesigned Preservice Teacher Education *Leslie Grant, Monica Yoo [NP]* P12. Critical Service-Learning: Developing Critical Consciousness in Learners *Christi Mackey*	
11:00 – 12:00	[Symposium] S1. Mapping DEI Retrenchment *Kimberly Feig, Desiree Taylor*	[Workshop] W1. Go Team!: Equitable and Effective Approaches to Collaborative Grant Writing *Chelsea Ward, Tara L. Romes Beziat*	[Workshop] W2. Productive AI Use in K-20 Classrooms *Maria Hays*	[Symposium] S2. Searching for Hope in Justice-Oriented STEM Education *Elizabeth Metts, Tessaly Jen, Laura Parks*	[Workshop] W3. Self-Authorship as Scholarly Practitioners: Case Writing in Graduate Education *Justin V. Benna*

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2:00 PM – 3:15 PM	[Multiple Paper Session] P13. Decolonizing and Indigenizing Short-Term Education Abroad: A Scoping Review *Sky Wernik, Grace Epperson* P14. Amplifying Native Voices in the K-12 Classroom *Stephanie West, Chanté J. Wilson, Owen Lambert [NP], Heather Leary[NP], Erin Feinauer Whiting* P15. Character Education: An Indigenous Knowledge Exchange *Sweeney Windchief*	[Multiple Paper Session] P16. Leveraging Local Resources with Place-Based Learning to Build Preservice Teacher Self-Efficacy *Christine McGrail* P17. STEM Designation as a Pathway to School Improvement *Wendy Ruchti, Cory Bennett [NP], Elizabeth Metts* P18. Impact of Leadership Style on Student Achievement of K-12 Students *Iqra Shahbaz*	[Multiple Paper Session] P19. How Students with Disabilities Perceive Diverse, Equitable, and Inclusive Teaching Practices *Aaron S. Richmond, Madison E. Barber [NP]* P20. First-Generation College Students' Transition Experiences after a Bridge Program *Alison McMurry, Heather Leary [NP]* P21. The Language of Equality: Transgender Student Rights and the Discourses of the Adams Decision *Douglas Larson, Alyson Lavigne [NP], Kessa Roberts [NP]*	[Multiple Paper Session] P22. Nurturing Collective Hope among Teachers during Professional Learning Communities *Matthew Huffaker, Suzanne H. Jones, LeAnn G. Putney, Donald Mendenhall* P23. Preparing K-12 Teacher Candidates to Teach Reading Comprehension: A Systematic Review of Quantitative Studies *Anna McFadden, Kyrsten Lund, Alycia Cole [NP], Cherish Sarmiento [NP], Jake Downs* P24. Clarity and Communication in Professional Learning Communities: How Experiences of Preservice Teachers in Online Methods Courses Provides Hope for the Future of Education *Fay Quiroz, Trina Kilty [NP], Mary Todd, Jennifer Mellizo [NP], Stella Nowell [NP], Tia Frahm [NP]*	
3:30 PM – 4:45 PM	[Invited Session] I1. Navigating the Waters of the Graduate Student Experience Session organizers and moderators: *Suzanne H. Jones, Utah State University* *LeAnn G. Putney, University of Nevada, Las Vegas* List of Presenters, all current or former students at Utah State University: *Bradley Dutson, Jacob B. Earnest, Matthew Huffaker, Donald Mendenhall, Lorissa Nelson*	[Multiple Paper Session] P25. Toward a Renewed Perspective: Developing Students' STEM Attitudes and Self-Efficacy through Robotics and Game Design *Sultan Mubarak Almughyirah* P26. Nurturing Entrepreneurial Mindsets among Indigenous STEM Students *Emmanuel Teye, Bryce Hughes [NP]* P27. Creating Short Forms of Existing Scales: Illustrated Using the City Birth Trauma Scale *Daniel Wright, Susan Ayers [NP]*	[Invited Panel Discussion] I2. The Future of NRMERA and the Benefits of Small Research Conferences *William Young, Tara Romes Beziat, Aaron Richmond, Lindsay Diamond*	[Multiple Paper Session] P28. Informal Caregivers: Subjective Well-Being, Perceived Social Support, and Resilience *Sophia Rodgers, Sonya E. Munsell* P29. The Hat Trick: Mental Strength, Physical Fitness, and Social Support in Ice Hockey *Zoe Page, Sara K. Moon-Seo* P30. "I don't think you can ever be well prepared to come into our job": A Qualitative Study of Employers and Graduate Programs for Family and Human Services Graduates *Jessica Marshall*	

NP = Not Presenting

Thursday Session Details

9:30 AM – 10:45 AM [Paper Sessions]

Ballroom A

P1. Walking Through Transitions: An Arts-Based Autoethnographic Walkography

Melanie Reaves ● Montana State University Billings

Transitions are a part of life. No one escapes them. In this presentation, the author shares the results of an autoethnographic arts-based exploration of two transitions of identity she experienced across her professional and personal worlds. Attendees may find resonance and insights for consideration within their life transitions.

Keywords: autoethnography, arts-based research, identity

P2. "I was in the story": The Relationship of Oral Storytelling and Narrative Transportation

Jacob B. Earnest ● Utah State University
Suzanne H. Jones ● Utah State University
LeAnn G. Putney ● University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Oral storytelling involves conveying narratives to an audience for instruction or entertainment. Narrative transportation occurs when an audience is immersed into the story. Participants were secondary literature course students responding to oral storytelling. Results suggest a strong relationship between oral storytelling and narrative transportation, through emotional connections and teller performance.

Keywords: storytelling, narrative transportation, mixed methods

P3. Examining the Development of Collective Classroom Efficacy at the Secondary Level

Bradley Dutson ● Utah State University
Suzanne H. Jones ● Utah State University
LeAnn G. Putney ● University of Nevada, Las Vegas

This case study replicated collective classroom efficacy development in secondary AP mathematics class. Data consisted of teacher interviews, classroom observations and a student focus group. Findings revealed social and academic practices contributed to the development of CCE. This study extended CCE to include teacher awareness and passion as new elements.

Keywords: collective efficacy, community

State Farm®

Aaron Moore, Agent

Did you know?

Utah is home to approximately 60,000 Native Americans, representing more than 50 Tribal Nations, with eight being federally-recognized. These Tribes are Northwestern Band of Shoshone Nation, Confederated Tribes of Goshute, Skull Valley Band of Goshute, Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe, Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah and Navajo Nation.

(Source: https://www.visitutah.com/things-to-do/history-culture/tribal-cultures)

NP = Not Presenting

Ballroom B

P4. How Technology Mediated Lesson Study Enhances Rural Science Teachers' Capacity to Teach Three-Dimensional Science: A Case Study

Michelle Hudson ● Brigham Young University
Heather Leary [NP] ● Brigham Young University
Max Longhurst [NP] ● Utah State University
Clara Smith [NP] ● Brigham Young University
Rebecca Sansom [NP] ● Texas A&M University
Joshua Stowers [NP] ● Brigham Young University
Austin Moore [NP] ● Utah State University

This case study explores how Technology-Mediated Lesson Study (TMLS) enhances rural science teachers' understanding and implementation of three-dimensional (3D) science instruction. Findings indicate that TMLS promotes teacher collaboration, enriches pedagogical content knowledge, and encourages student-centered learning. TMLS provides an effective professional development model for isolated educators across disciplines.

Keywords: professional development, three-dimensional science, lesson study

P5. The 5Es or MBI: Instructional Models that Develop Science Content Knowledge

Gustave E. Nollmeyer ● Eastern Washington University
Kathryn A. Baldwin [NP] ● Eastern Washington University

We tested two instructional models, the 5Es and Model-Based Inquiry (MBI) to develop elementary preservice teachers' content knowledge. After seven quarters of implementation, statistical analysis confirmed that both models were successful in developing preservice teachers' content knowledge. In addition, analysis showed that the greater growth seen through MBI was statistically significant.

Keywords: elementary science methods, 5E instructional model, model-based inquiry

P6. Can a Circus Teach Chemistry?

Amanda Obery ● Central Washington University
Matt Queen [NP] ● Montana State University Billings
Martha Cabell [NP] ● Yellowstone Evaluation Services
Shelly Hogan [NP] ● Yellowstone Evaluation Services

Chemistry demonstration shows capture audiences' attention, emotion, and behavior have expanded from higher education classes to support students of all ages understand chemistry. We share a theoretical basis for chemistry theatre as a way to teach conceptual understanding of matter through the stage for 5th grade students.

Keywords: conceptual understanding, chemistry, theatre

Ambassador A

P7. Preservice Teachers Experiences with Practicum in Virtual Reality

John Rodari Meisner ● Southern Utah University

A pilot program was implemented in the spring 2024 semester with 11 preservice teachers. They completed an augmented reality (AR) practicum experience in addition to their typical practicum experiences. The AR experience included a 30-minute video from a local classroom. Participants were required to observe the classroom and respond to prompts related to classroom management and teaching practices.

Keywords: augmented reality, virtual reality, preservice teachers, practicum

P8. An Action Research Case Study on Co-Creating Effective and Meaningful Professional Development for Mathematics Instruction

Nicole Parker [NP] ● Utah Valley University
Cindy Jones ● Utah State University

In this session, we share from a collaborative action research case study that involved teachers, instructional coaches, and district mathematics specialists, designed to provide professional development and learning specific to mathematics instruction for sixth grade.

Keywords: mathematics, professional development

P9. Elementary Preservice Teachers Integration of Technology in Mathematics Lesson Plans

Allison Roxburgh ● Idaho State University

This paper presentation examined how preservice teachers' lesson plans aligned with effective technology integration. Nineteen elementary preservice teachers planned two mathematics lessons that integrated technology. Data analysis included coding categories for technology integration and problem solving. Results indicated preservice teachers passively integrated technology and problem solving into their mathematics lessons.

Keywords: preservice teachers, elementary mathematics, technology integration

NP = Not Presenting

Ambassador B	**P10. Utah Teachers' Perceptions of the Mandarin Matrix Curriculum for Chinese Dual Language Immersion Programs** Hsiaomei Tsai ● Cache County School District This presentation will share teachers' perceptions of Grades K-6 Utah Chinese DLI teachers Mandarin Matrix (MMX) textbooks used in Utah Chinese DLI programs. Teachers valued the curriculum's structured approach to literacy but noted areas for growth in fostering authentic reading and intercultural understanding. *Keywords: authenticity, Mandarin matrix, dual language immersion* **P11. Why Not Prepare All Teachers for Multilingual Learners? Findings from Redesigned Preservice Teacher Education** Leslie Grant ● University of Colorado Colorado Springs Monica Yoo [NP] ● University of Colorado Colorado Springs Presenters discuss changes in a teacher preparation program that included courses and experiences that focused specifically on language acquisition and working with multilingual learners of English. Findings from a quantitative study demonstrated a significant positive shift in pre-service teachers' perceptions and beliefs about multilingual learners of English and how to support them. *Keywords: teacher preparation, multilingual learners of English, culturally responsive pedagogy* **P12. Critical Service-Learning: Developing Critical Consciousness in Learners** Christi Mackey ● Rogers State University The research was conducted to determine how an undergraduate faculty member at a rural-serving, regional university integrates critical service-learning components to best support students' development of critical consciousness. The findings will help faculty members better understand students' learning and gain strategies for enhanced pedagogical practice. *Keywords: critical service-learning, critical consciousness*
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM [Symposia & Workshops]	
Ballroom A	**S1. Mapping DEI Retrenchment** Kim Feig ● Montana State University Desiree Taylor ● Montana State University This study examines how R1 universities are responding to government DEI retrenchment policies from 2023 - 2025. We categorize types of institutional change enacted and analyze their relationship to institutional characteristics, offering insights into the vulnerabilities and limitations of DEI as a project of structural transformation in higher education. *Keywords: DEI retrenchment, institutional change, higher education*
Ballroom B	**W1. Go Team!: Equitable and Effective Approaches to Collaborative Grant Writing** Chelsea Ward ● Auburn University at Montgomery Tara L. Romes Beziat ● Auburn University at Montgomery Collaborative grant writing has become a critical skill in educational research because funders now often prioritize interdisciplinary and cross-sector partnerships. This interactive workshop will provide participants with examples of collaborative funded grant projects, along with strategies, tools, and shared experiences to engage in co-authoring grants "across campus." *Keywords: grant writing, collaboration, STEM*
Ambassador A	**W2. Productive AI Use in K-20 Classrooms** Maria Hays ● Central Washington University This workshop explores the productive use of AI in K–20 education by teachers, students, and other stakeholders. Presenters will share current research and real-world examples, followed by an interactive session where participants experiment with AI tools and discuss their potential to enhance teaching, learning, and educational collaboration. *Keywords: artificial Intelligence*

NP = Not Presenting

Ambassador B

S2. Searching for Hope in Justice-Oriented STEM Education

Elizabeth Metts ● Vanderbilt University
Tessaly Jen ● Vanderbilt University
Laura Parks ● Fort Lewis College

This symposium explores how justice-oriented STEM education can support youth in naming injustice and developing critical and anti-colonial hope. Through three studies, we examine how youth and educators navigate tensions between traditional STEM practices and expansive visions of justice, voice, and collective possibility in mathematics and science learning.

Keywords: justice-oriented STEM; youth voice; critical hope

Boardroom

W3. Self-Authorship as Scholarly Practitioners: Case Writing in Graduate Education

Justin V. Benna ● North Dakota State University

This workshop explores student-written cases as a high-impact pedagogical tool for fostering self-authorship (Baxter Magolda, 2007) and cultivating scholarly practitioners (CPED, 2022). The session addresses how writing cases, rather than simply analyzing them, can advance graduate students' critical reflection, identity formation, and capacity to bridge theory with practice.

Keywords: case-based pedagogy, scholarly practitioners

2:00 PM – 3:15 PM [Paper Sessions]

Ballroom A

P13. Decolonizing the Indigenizing Short-Term Education Abroad: A Scoping Review

Sky Wernik ● Montana State University
Grace Epperson ● Montana State University

Although research on social justice-oriented approaches to education abroad has increased in recent years, there is minimal research on international programs that are culturally grounded in an Indigenous paradigm. To this end, our scoping review maps out the current landscape of literature on decolonizing and Indigenizing short-term education abroad programs.

Keywords: short-term education abroad, decolonization, scoping review

P14. Amplifying Native Voices in the K-12 Classroom

Stephanie West ● Brigham Young University
Heather Leary [NP] ● Brigham Young University
Chanté J. Wilson ● Brigham Young University
Erin Feinauer Whiting ● Brigham Young University
Owen Lambert [NP] ● Brigham Young University

Native perspectives offer valuable insights for increasingly diverse students navigating westernized school systems in the U.S. This study examines how non-Native K–12 teachers incorporate Native values, perspectives, and pedagogies, revealing challenges, supports, and practices that foster culturally sustaining education and promote greater inclusion, understanding, and relevance in the classroom.

Keywords: educational equity, educational diversity, cultural competence

P15. Character Education: An Indigenous Knowledge Exchange

Sweeney Windchief ● Montana State University

This paper explores the systemic exclusion and misrepresentation of Indigenous peoples in academia, emphasizing the need for bicultural accountability and theoretical sensitivity. It highlights character education and intercultural exchange programs, such as IKE–Aotearoa, as transformative approaches that honor Indigenous knowledge systems, relational ethics, and community-engaged scholarship.

Keywords: indigenous, study-abroad, character

Did you know?

Fry Sauce — Utah's signature condiment — was invented by Arctic Circle founder Don Carlos Edwards. He originally made the ketchup and mayonnaise mixture (which he called "pink sauce") for his hamburgers back in the 1940s, but it became a huge hit as a dip for French fries. While fry sauce has gained popularity throughout the Mountain West, it is a cultural staple in Utah and Idaho!

NP = Not Presenting

Ballroom B

P16. Leveraging Local Resources with Place-Based Learning to Build Preservice Teacher Self-Efficacy

Christine McGrall ● University of North Dakota

This exploratory study examined the impacts of place-based science learning on pre-service elementary teachers' science teaching self-efficacy and perceptions of science. Place-based pedagogy was used to leverage experiential, community-based, and ecological learning for preservice elementary teachers. Findings reveal a significant increase in preservice teachers' Personal Science Teaching Efficacy Belief (PSTE).

Keywords: place-based science, preservice teachers, self-efficacy

P17. STEM Designation as a Pathway to School Improvement

Wendy Ruchti ● Idaho State University
Elizabeth Metts ● Idaho State University
Cory Bennett [NP] ● Idaho State University

This study explores key factors that support schools in achieving STEM Designation, a process to becoming a STEM Focused School. Survey data from school leaders highlight the importance of early planning, vision, leadership, collaboration, and instructional alignment to guide implementation and support success in school improvement.

Keyword: STEM

P18. Impact of Leadership Style on Student Achievement of K-12 Students

Iqra Shahbaz ● University of Colorado Colorado Springs

This mixed-methods study examines teachers' perceptions of principal leadership styles and their influence on student achievement in southern Colorado Springs' K-12 schools. Using the Full Range Leadership Theory and a phenomenological lens, it integrates interviews, surveys, and document analysis to explore how leadership impacts teaching practices and educational outcomes.

Keywords: leadership styles, teachers' perceptions, student achievement

Ambassador A

P19. How Students with Disabilities Perceive Diverse, Equitable, and Inclusive Teaching Practices

Aaron S. Richmond ● Metropolitan State University of Denver
Madison E. Barber [NP] ● City University of New York: John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Students with disabilities are often marginalized, feel isolated, and believe they do not belong in higher education. In this National study, we examined how students with disabilities viewed 20 diverse, equitable, and inclusive teaching practices suggested by Moreu and Brauer (2022). Results will be discussed within the context of increasing student learning via effective and desired teaching practices.

Keywords: DEI, teaching practices

P20. First-Generation College Students' Transition Experiences after a Bridge Program

Alison McMurry ● Brigham Young University
Heather Leary [NP] ● Brigham Young University

This study examines the transition experiences of seven FGCS who participated in a bridge program before matriculating. Thematic narrative analysis suggested students' transition needs were not met by the bridge experience. Findings suggest replacing bridge programs with a stronger, integrated transition support system emphasizing orientation, first-year seminars, and advising.

Keywords: first-generation students, student transitions, strengths-based practice

P21. The Language of Equality: Transgender Student Rights and the Discourses of the Adams Decision

Doug Larson ● Utah State University
Kessa Roberts [NP] ● Utah State University
Alison Lavigne [NP] ● Utah State University

To help educators better understand the means of policy creation by and enforcement through the courts, I analyzed conflicting public policy streams related to the rights and protections of transgender students in the Adams v. School Board of St. Johns County case.

Keywords: transgender students, education law

NP = Not Presenting

Ambassador B

P22. Nurturing Collective Hope Among Teachers During Professional Learning Communities

Matthew Huffaker ● Utah State University
Suzanne H. Jones ● Utah State University
LeAnn G. Putney ● University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Donald Mendenhall ● Ogden School District

This qualitative case study explored how hope was fostered among elementary teachers during their PLC meetings. Data consisted of focus group and individual interviews and PLC observations. Results indicated that PLCs nurtured collective hope through shared values among teachers as they supported each other, remaining highly focused on student learning.

Keywords: collective hope, PLCs, elementary

P23. Preparing K-12 Teacher Candidates to Teach Reading Comprehension: A Systematic Review of Quantitative Studies

Anna McFadden ● Utah State University
Kyrsten Lund ● Utah State University
Alycia Cole [NP] ● Utah State University
Cherish Sarmiento [NP] ● Utah State University
Jake Downs [NP] ● Utah State University

This systematic review analyzes 18 quantitative studies (2001–2025) on how K–12 teacher preparation programs equip pre-service teachers to provide hope through teaching reading comprehension. Findings emphasize the importance of explicit strategy instruction, reflective practice, and embedded field experiences to improve comprehension teaching while balancing technical and pedagogical knowledge.

Keywords: reading comprehension instruction

P24. Clarity and Communication in Professional Learning Communities: How Experiences of Preservice Teachers in Online Methods Courses Provides Hope for the Future of Education

Fay Quiroz ● University of Wyoming; Right on Q, Inc.
Trina Kilty [NP] ● University of Wyoming
Mary Todd ● University of Wyoming
Jennifer Mellizo [NP] ● University of Wyoming
Stella Nowell [NP] ● University of Wyoming
Tia Frahm [NP] ● USD261 Haysville School District; University of Wyoming

This study investigates how preservice teachers experience online, asynchronous methods courses, and find that clear communication plays a role in building a sense of community and support that inspires hope in creating impactful learning environments for their future classrooms.

Keywords: professional learning communities, pre-service elementary teachers, online learning

3:30 PM – 4:45 PM [Invited Sessions & Paper Sessions]

Ballroom A

I1. Navigating the Waters of the Graduate Student Experience [Invited Session]

Session Organizers and Moderators
Suzanne H. Jones ● Utah State University
LeAnn G. Putney ● University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Graduate Student Participants
Bradley Dutson ● Utah State University
Jacob Earnest ● Utah State University
Matthew Huffaker ● Utah State University
Donald Mendenhall ● Ogden School District
Lorissa Nelson ● Utah State University

In this interactive graduate student session, doctoral and post-doctoral students will share their experiences and insights into various aspects of the doctoral journey. The purpose of the session will be to inform doctoral students, candidates, and committee members of effective ways to approach the ins and outs of the doctoral process. The interactive presentation will be inclusive of: coursework and selecting your dissertation committee; preparing for and completing your comprehensive exams; preparing and defending your dissertation proposal; preparing and submitting your IRB application; collecting and analyzing your data, writing and defending your dissertation; publishing; and life beyond your dissertation.

We look forward to those in attendance joining with us to share insights and experiences as well.

Keywords: graduate student experience

NP = Not Presenting

Ballroom B

P25. Toward a Renewed Perspective: Developing Students' STEM Attitudes and Self-Efficacy through Robotics and Game Design

Sultan Mubarak Almughyirah ● King Faisal University; University of Wyoming

This paper describes the findings of a study that used robotics and game design to develop middle school students' STEM attitudes and Self-Efficacy. One hundred and twenty-four students engaged in LEGOÒ EV3 robotics and created games using Scalable Game Design software. The results revealed students' pre– post self-efficacy scores on the construct of computer use declined significantly, while the constructs of videogaming and computer gaming remained unchanged. When these constructs were analyzed by type of learning environment, self-efficacy on videogaming increased significantly in the combined robotics/gaming environment compared with the gaming-only context.

Keywords: robotics, self-efficacy, stem attitudes

P26. Nurturing Entrepreneurial Mindsets among Indigenous STEM Students

Emmanual Teye ● Montana State University
Bryce Hughes [NP] ● Montana State University

This study explores how AIBL and AISES develop Indigenous entrepreneurial competencies in STEM. Using Sen's capability approach and IEFA's fifth understanding, inductive document analysis reveals these organizations expand student capabilities, integrate Indigenous knowledge, and promote collective leadership, innovation, adaptive problem-solving, and emotional-intelligence.in students. Together, AIBL and AISES serve as transformative educational spaces where indigenous students blend STEM and entrepreneurial skills for collective value creation.

Keywords: indigenous entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial mindset, AIBL, AISES

P27. Creating Short Forms of Existing Scales: Illustrated Using the City Birth Trauma Scale

Daniel Wright ● University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Susan Ayers [NP] ● City St. George's University of London

Psychological scales are used to measure many constructs, including those in education. Sometimes those administering scales want shorter versions. Some issues creating short forms are considered and some of the methods used to create them are discussed. Creating a short form to measure maternal birth trauma is used to illustrate these considerations.

Keywords: scales, short forms

Ambassador A

I2. The Future of NRMERA and the Benefits of Small Research Conferences [Invited Panel Discussion]

William Young ● Oglala Lakota College
Aaron Richmond ● Metropolitan State University of Denver
Tara Romes Beziat ● Auburn University at Montgomery
Lindsay Diamond ● University of Nevada, Reno

The panel envisions a lively discussion designed to tease out NRMERA attendees' perspectives on the future of NRMERA as well as the benefits of participating in small research conferences. This invited panel consists of NRMERA former presidents Dr. Beziat, Dr. Diamond, Dr. Richmond, and Dr. Young, also incorporating shared experiences from Dr. Faye Haggar and Dr. Chris Was who could not attend. Together they have more than 100 combined years of NRMERA experience.

Keywords: regional conferences, conference sustainability

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COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

NP = Not Presenting

Ambassador B

P28. Informal Caregivers: Subjective Well-Being, Perceived Social Support, and Resilience

Sophia Rodgers ● Rogers State University Sonya E. Munsell ● Rogers State University

The purpose of this study is to explore the experiences of informal, unpaid caregivers of adults over the age of 65. The following research question will be examined "Which construct contributes more to subjective well-being (SWB) in informal caregivers of older adults: perceived social support (PSS) or resilience?".

Keywords: caregivers subjective well-being

P29. The Hat Trick: Mental Strength, Physical Fitness, and Social Support in Ice Hockey

Zoe Page ● Rogers State University Sara K. Moon-Seo ● Rogers State University

Ice hockey, a popular sport worldwide, can have positive benefits on players' mental and physical health. This study uses the Photovoice method to see through the eyes of the participants, and interviews to more deeply understand their experiences and motivations.

Keywords: ice hockey, mental health, physical health

P30. "I don't think you can ever be well prepared to come into our job": A Qualitative Study of Employers and Graduate Programs for Family and Human Services Graduates

Jessica Marshall ● University of Oregon

In order to meet the needs of employers, educational programs preparing students for careers in the human services must first understand the challenges facing employers. In this qualitative study, ten employers and graduate programs for graduates of a family and human services program were interviewed to inform curriculum change.

Keywords: human services, higher education

Did you know?

The XIX Olympic Winter Games, were held in Salt Lake City, Utah, in 2002. The theme was "Light the Fire Within." Here are some interesting notes:

- The Games were the first Olympics held after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, resulting in unprecedented security measures and an emotional, patriotic atmosphere at the Opening Ceremony.
- The Opening Ceremony included a profoundly moving moment… Members of the New York City Fire Department and Police Department carried a tattered U.S. flag that had been recovered from the collapse of the World Trade Center
- The Olympic Cauldron was lit by the legendary 1980 "Miracle on Ice" U.S. Men's Hockey Team, marking the first time in Olympic history that an entire team, rather than an individual, was given the honor of lighting the flame.
- Germany led in total medals (36), while Norway led in gold medals (13). The United States had its most successful Winter Games to date, finishing with 34 total medals.
- The Pairs Figure Skating event was embroiled in a major judging controversy. The Russian pair, Elena Berezhnaya and Anton Sikharulidze, were awarded the gold, despite a noticeable error, over the popular Canadian pair, Jamie Salé and David Pelletier. After a French judge admitted that she was pressured to vote for the Russians, the IOC took the unprecedented step of awarding a second gold medal to Salé and Pelletier, sharing the top podium spot with the Russian team. The scandal was a major catalyst for a complete overhaul of the figure skating scoring system.
- The Games were a financial success, leaving a $40 million surplus to create the Utah Olympic Legacy Foundation. This foundation maintains and operates the world-class venues (like the Utah Olympic Park and Utah Olympic Oval), which are still heavily used today for training and competition, forming the foundation for Salt Lake City's successful bid to host the 2034 Winter Olympics.

NP = Not Presenting

Friday, October 3, 2025 Schedule		
Breakfast & General Session Business Meeting	8:00 AM – 9:00 AM	Ballroom
Breakout Sessions	9:30 AM – 10:45 AM	Various
Symposia & Workshops	11:00 AM – 12:00 PM	Various
Learn-at-Lunch Roundtables with President's Conference Closing Message	12:30 PM – 1:30 PM	Ballroom
Board Meeting	2:30 PM – 4:00 PM	Boardroom

Business Meeting Information

All NRMERA attendees are voting members and are invited to attend the Business Meeting! This is where any amendments to the Constitution and/or Bylaws are discussed and voted upon, as well as when elections are held.

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.

2025 Elections

- President-Elect (to host NRMERA 2027)
- Secretary
- State Representatives for Nevada, Nebraska, South Dakota, Washington, Wyoming, and At-Large
- Graduate Student Representative

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

Idaho State University

College of Education

Friday Sessions Overview

	Ballroom A	Ballroom B	Ambassador A	Ambassador B	Boardroom
9:30 AM – 10:45 AM	[Multiple Paper Session] P31. Examining the Perezhivanie of Graduate Student Researchers in a Hope-Based Elementary Classroom: A Telling Case *LeAnn G. Putney, Suzanne H. Jones, Brett Campbell, Matthew Huffaker* P32. A More Hopeful Future in Education Through Cross-Cultural Empathy *Stephanie West, Heather Francis, Ester Sampson [NP], Heather Leary [NP], Erin Feinauer Whiting* P33. Building Relationships that Contribute to Increased Collective Teacher Efficacy in High-Achieving Title I Schools *Donald Mendenhall, LeAnn G. Putney, Suzanne H. Jones*	[Multiple Paper Session] P34. Exploring College Students' Perceptions of the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) *Sara K. Moon-Seo, Shaundel S. Garrett [NP]* P35. Navigating AI and Academic Integrity: Insights from Jamaican Tertiary Students *Vanesa Tennant [NP], Taneisha Francis* P36. Ethical by Design: Aligning LDT Student Outcomes with Responsible AI Use *William Cain*	[Multiple Paper Session] P37. What Works in Gifted Education: Evidence-Based Practices for K–12 Settings *Julia Brochey, Joseph Taylor* P38. Does Word Complexity Matter in Multisyllabic Reading Interventions? *Jake Downs* P39. Parental Perceptions of Censorship in Utah *Rachel L. Wadham, Dallyn Edmunds [NP]*	[Multiple Paper Session] P40. Language Beliefs of a High School Art Teacher *Karen Washburn, Abigail Gatz [NP]* P41. The Apprenticeship of Observation at 50: A Systematic Review of Literature *William J. Davis* P42. Turbulence Resistant Schools: A Qualitative Phenomenological Study of Educational Leadership in Central and Eastern Europe *Sofia Reis*	
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM	[Symposium] S3. Bringing It Home: Authentic Reasons to Write *Ann Ellsworth*	[Symposium] S4. Relational Pedagogy and Community Wayfinding: An Indigenous Knowledge Exchange *Sky Wernik, Twila Yellow Horse, Desiree Taylor, Sweeney Windchief*	[Workshop] W4. Fostering Holistic Digital Literacy Skills *Nicole Hopkins*	[Symposium] S5. Rooted in Rurality: The Preservice Teacher TRAIL Experience *Suzanne M. Beasterfield, Amanda L. Eller, McKenzie Garcia, Mya Ariwite*	[Workshop] W5. Nurturing and Protecting Teacher Wellbeing *Jamie H. Hamblin, Joel Judd*

NP = Not Presenting

Friday Session Details

9:30 AM – 10:45 AM [Paper Sessions]

Ballroom A

P31. Examining the Perezhivanie of Graduate Student Researchers in a Hope-Based Elementary Classroom: A Telling Case

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

This study explored the lived experience (perezhivanie) of five university graduate students as participant observers of a hope-based classroom in a Title 1 public school. Results indicated that the graduate students realized through direct observation how hope-based instruction became a motivational tool scaffolding academic and social development among classroom members.

Keywords: perezhivanie, hope-based, motivation

P32. A More Hopeful Future in Education Through Cross-Cultural Empathy

Stephanie West ● Brigham Young University
Heather Leary [NP] ● Brigham Young University
Heather Francis ● Brigham Young University
Erin Feinauer Whiting ● Brigham Young University
Ester Sampson [NP] ● Brigham Young University

In today's diverse educational landscape, fostering cross-cultural empathy among K–12 educators is an important element for creating inclusive, equitable learning environments. In this presentation, we share how six educators in an online, asynchronous PD described or demonstrated cross-cultural empathy as they learned how to amplify Native voices in their classrooms.

Keywords: educational equity, educational diversity, cultural competence

P33. Building Relationships that Contribute to Increased Collective Teacher Efficacy in High-Achieving Title I Schools

Donald Mendenhall ● Utah State University
LeAnn G. Putney ● University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Suzanne H. Jones ● Utah State University

This cross-case study of two high-achieving Title I schools with high levels of collective teacher efficacy (CTE) identified relationship elements contributing to CTE. At both schools, relationships were described as being close or family-like, with trust, vulnerability, and open communication being central elements. Schools also reported having unified purpose.

Keywords: collective teacher efficacy, relationships, Title I schools

Did you know?

Kraft Foods announced that Salt Lake City has the highest JELL-O consumption (per capita) in the world. If you hear Utah's "Mormon Corridor" referred to as "the JELL-O Belt," now you know why!

Did you know?

The world-class ski slopes in Park City are built over more than 1,000 miles of abandoned silver mining tunnels! Park City began as a silver mining town in the 1860s, but was a ghost town by the mid-20th century. In 1963, United Park City Mines built the area's first ski resort, Treasure Mountain. Park City is located about 40 miles from Salt Lake, and is a popular skiing destination!

Did you know?

Salt Lake City is home to Loftus Novelty, the nation's leading manufacturer of rubber chickens! Founded in 1939, it sells a range of items, from magic kits, to pet rocks, to Davy Crockett coonskin caps!

Did you know?

In 2014, it was determined that Salt Lake City had more plastic surgeons per capita than any other city nationwide! Salt Lake has around 3.12 plastic surgeons per 100,000 residents, compared to Los Angeles at 2.98 and New York City at 2.61. Beauty standards must be high in the Beehive State!

NP = Not Presenting

Ballroom B

P34. Exploring College Students' Perceptions of the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Sara K. Moon-Seo ● Rogers State University Shaundel S. Garrett [NP] ● Rogers State University

This study explored college students' perceptions of using Artificial Intelligence (AI) for academic purposes through semi-structured interviews. The researchers interviewed students from a college to understand their definitions of AI, their insights into its advantages and disadvantages, and their ethical concerns regarding its use in academia.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, ethical concerns, college students

P35. Navigating AI and Academic Integrity: Insights from Jamaican Tertiary Students

Vanesa Tennant [NP] ● Independent Researcher Taneisha Francis ● Brigham Young University

This study explores how Jamaican students perceive AI in academic work, focusing on academic integrity and professional contexts. Thematic analysis of 106 survey responses reveals that while AI can aid learning, it also poses threats to integrity. Students' views highlight the need for clearer policies and ethics-centered AI use in higher education.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, academic integrity, AI policies

P36. Ethical by Design: Aligning LDT Student Outcomes with Responsible AI Use

William Cain ● University of Wyoming

This paper examines the shared student learning outcomes (SLOs) of eight online graduate programs in Learning, Design, and Technology (LDT) and aligns them with generative AI-focused ethical principles derived from the Daniels Fund Ethics Initiative. This conceptual approach – aligning thematically related or shared SLOs with a set of universal ethical principles in the context of generative AI use - demonstrates how ethical considerations can be integrated into LDT educational programs, ensuring that graduates are equipped with to navigate the complexities of AI and emerging technologies responsibly. This paper is meant to demonstrate a research-based approach to developing ethical alignments for AU uses within LDT-program SLOs with the goal of fostering ethical, equitable, and sustainable professional practices in the field.

Keywords: ethical AI, student learning outcomes, learning, design, and technology (LDT)

Ambassador A

P37. What Works in Gifted Education: Evidence-Based Practices for K-12 Settings

Julia Brochey ● University of Colorado Colorado Springs Joseph Taylor ● University of Colorado Colorado Springs

This paper synthesizes findings from recent research to identify effective practices in K–12 gifted education. Focusing on instructional strategies, curricular models, and program structures, it highlights approaches that enhance academic achievement, critical thinking, and motivation. Results inform scalable program design aligned with gifted learners' advanced cognitive and developmental needs.

Keywords: gifted education, effectiveness, K-12

P38. Does Word Complexity Matter in Multisyllabic Reading Interventions?

Jake Downs ● Utah State University

This study investigated the impact of two instructional interventions on the reading outcomes of struggling third grade readers: Read Like Us (RLU), which focused on repeated reading of challenging texts and long word practice, and Corrective Reading B2, a popular decoding curriculum. The aim was to compare the effectiveness of these approaches, particularly concerning reading accuracy and fluency. Results indicating favorable outcomes on reading accuracy for the RLU condition, with similar growth in oral reading fluency among conditions.

Keywords: multisyllabic word reading, intervention, text complexity

P39. Parental Perceptions of Censorship in Utah

Rachel L. Wadham ● Brigham Young University Dallyn Edmunds [NP] ● Brigham Young University

A dramatic rise in censorship begs researchers to ask questions. The purpose of our qualitative research is to dive deeply into Utah parents' thoughts and experiences with the removal of books from school libraries. Our findings provide a dialogue that bring disparate voices together in the development of shared values.

Keywords: censorship, books, reading

NP = Not Presenting

Ambassador B	**P40. Language Beliefs of a High School Art Teacher** Karen Washburn ● Montana State University Billings Abigail Gatz [NP] ● Montana State University Billings To better understand the process of how a teacher's linguistic and literate self-reflection impacts the enactment of CLSP in a Montana high school classroom, we are conducting a qualitative single case study using the art-based methodology of collage. *Keywords: language ideologies, art-based methodologies, culturally and linguistically sustaining pedagogy* **P41. The Apprenticeship of Observation at 50: A Systematic Review of Literature** William J. Davis ● Southern Utah University This year marks the 50th anniversary of the publication of "Schoolteacher: A Sociology Study," which introduced the apprenticeship of observation, or teachers' 13,000 hours of experiences as K-12 students. This study consists of a systematic review of literature related to the apprenticeship of observation construct in sociology and teacher education. *Keywords: teacher learning, apprenticeship of observation, socialization* **P42. Turbulence Resistant Schools: A Qualitative Phenomenological Study of Educational Leadership in Central and Eastern Europe** Sofia Reis ● CIES | ISCTE The increasing complexity and disruptions of our world affect schools. This research explores how educational leaders navigate turbulence to continue supporting student learning and development. Using a qualitative approach, I explore the experiences of Central and Eastern European educational leaders to understand how leaders effectively respond to turbulence. *Keywords: educational leadership turbulence*
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM [Symposia & Workshops]	
Ballroom A	**S3. Bringing it Home: Authentic Reasons to Write** Ann Ellsworth ● Montana State University This study describes a successful home-school partnership project, which targeted first graders' sight word knowledge--the reading and writing of high-frequency words that young students typically find challenging. At-home practice that parents helped plan and implement was critical in sustaining the momentum of this collaborative venture. *Keywords: Parental involvement, early literacy, high-frequency words*
Ballroom B	**S4. Relational Pedagogy and Community Wayfinding: An Indigenous Knowledge Exchange** Sky Wernik ● Montana State University Desiree Taylor ● Montana State University Twila Yellow Horse ● Montana State University Sweeney Windchief ● Montana State University "Where do we want meaning to sit?" Four participants in an Indigenous Knowledge Exchange program in Aotearoa (New Zealand) address this question and more through an exploration of their collective experiences with relational pedagogy, immersion in land-based learning, and community wayfinding abroad. *Keywords: Indigenous Knowledge Exchange, relationality, study abroad*
Ambassador A	**W4. Fostering Holistic Digital Literacy Skills** Nicole Hopkins ● Montana State University This workshop combines the results of two related surveys - one administered to students in a range of grant-funded university courses, and one administered to students in a non-credit course on digital literacy and content creation skills - to explore the shortcomings and strengths of integrating technology into the college curriculum. *Keywords: digital literacy, instructional technology, curriculum integration*

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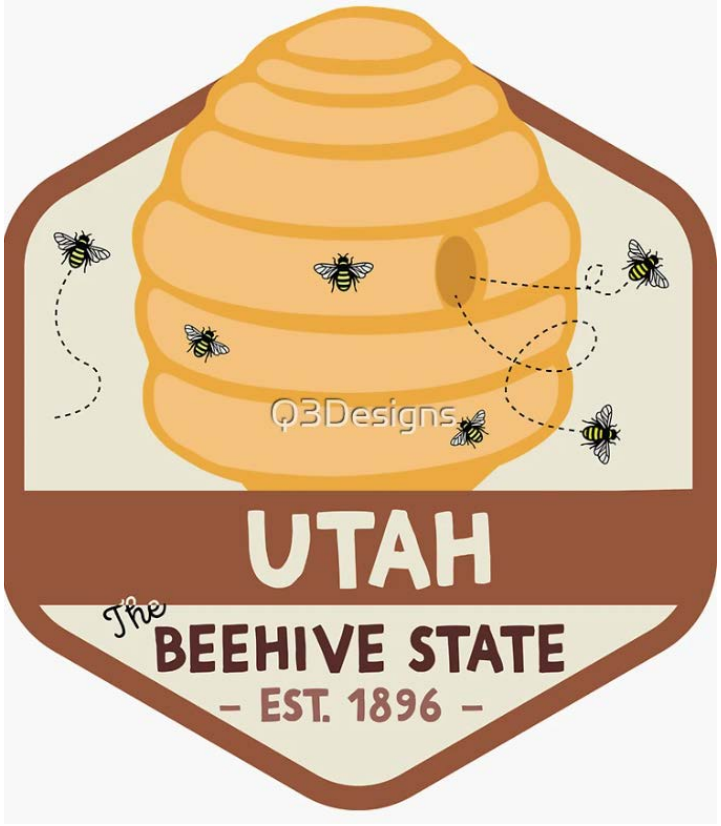
Ambassador B	**S5. Rooted in Rurality: The Preservice Teacher TRAIL Experience** Suzanne M. Beasterfield ● Idaho State University Amanda L. Eller ● Idaho State University McKenzie Garcia ● Idaho State University Mya Ariwite ● Idaho State University The purpose of this symposium is to share faculty and teacher candidates' experiences with the Teaching in Rural Areas Immersion Learning (TRAIL) Experience. Faculty will share successes and challenges of planning and executing the first three TRAIL Experiences, pilot data, and the future of the project. Candidates will share their viewpoints on their experiences, including their research posters based on topics that evolved while on TRAIL. *Keywords: rural and rural-remote teacher preparation, preservice field experiences*
Boardroom	**W5. Nurturing and Protecting Teacher Wellbeing** Jamie H. Hamblin ● Southern Utah University Joel Judd ● Southern Utah University This study explores factors influencing teacher wellbeing in Utah through surveys and interviews. Wellbeing is defined as balancing work challenges and resources, identifying key stressors like student behavior and lack of autonomy. The preliminary findings emphasize the need for meaningful support at various levels to improve teacher wellbeing. *Keywords: wellbeing, demoralization, burnout*



Did you know?

- Utah's official state emblem is the beehive (or deseret), which appears on the state seal, flag, and even its highway markers.
- Utah's first official name, proposed by the early settlers, was the State of Deseret. This name comes from the Book of Mormon word for honeybee.
- The nickname "Beehive State" isn't just for show: Utah is the only state whose official symbol is an insect's home! It was adopted to represent the industry and cooperative spirit of its citizens.
- The symbol represents industry and the communal work ethic of the original Mormon pioneers who settled the territory.
- The Governor's official residence in Salt Lake City is called the Beehive House, and the Utah State Capitol features large beehive sculptures on its grand staircase, making the emblem a staple of state architecture.
- Utah has officially adopted the Honeybee as its state insect and the Beehive Cluster (an open star cluster) as its state astronomical symbol!

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"Learn-at-Lunch" Roundtables with President's Conference Closing 12:30-1:15PM

Table 1	**T1. A Regional Team's First Year Look at Racial Equity in STEM Education** Kathryn A. Baldwin [NP] ● Eastern Washington University Gustave E. Nollmeyer ● Eastern Washington University Esteban Rodriguez-Marek [NP] ● Eastern Washington University As part of a state-wide collaborative effort to examine racial equity in STEM education, one regional team surveyed preservice teachers about their supports and challenges on their teacher education journey. At this roundtable, we will summarize progress to date, including survey results and next steps. *Keywords: STEM education, teacher preparation, diversity*
Table 2	**T2. The Predictive Value of High School ACT Scores on the Academic Performance of First-Generation Engineering Undergraduate Students** Ning Fang ● Utah State University This presentation describes new research findings regarding whether high school ACT scores significantly predict the academic performance of first-generation engineering undergraduate (FGEU) students. The data was collected from 977 FGEU students across four class standings (freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior) in three academic years. *Keywords: High school ACT scores, college GPA, first-generation engineering undergraduate (FGEU) students*
Table 3	**T3. Creating Hope Through Artful Learning: A Design Case of Arts Integration and STEM in Elementary Professional Development** Tina RaLinn McCulloch ● Brigham Young University Heather Leary [NP] ● Brigham Young University [NP] This roundtable examines a design-based professional development series that evolved from a research-practice partnership to support arts integration in STEM. Findings highlight increased teacher confidence and student engagement, while revealing challenges in cross-disciplinary collaboration. Participants will discuss strategies for sustaining creative, inclusive, and hopeful learning communities. *Keywords: arts integration, transdisciplinary collaboration, professional development*
Table 4	**T4. A (Very) Exploratory Study of Practicum Interactions and Their Impact on Teaching Performance** William J. Davis ● Southern Utah University Jamie H. Hamblin ● Southern Utah University Abbey R. Judd ● Southern Utah University The purpose of this study is to statistically examine faculty and student interactions in a teaching practicum and their possible impact on teaching performance. We defined and noted three coaching interactions with students. Our analysis found positive but low/moderate associations between our interactions and student teaching evaluation scores. *Keywords: preservice teachers; clinical teacher education; coaching*
Table 5	**T5. SEL Skills & Strategies that Inspire Hope and Reduce Burnout** A. Suzie Henning ● Eastern Washington University Donita Torres ● Eastern Washington University Teaching is widely recognized as one of the most stressful professions, frequently resulting in chronic emotional strain and eventual burnout. Prolonged exposure to such stress is associated with increased physical illness, compromised mental health, fixed mindsets, and higher rates of absenteeism. This presentation discusses a longitudinal study that seeks to address educator burnout by evaluating the effectiveness of targeted social-emotional learning (SEL) strategies. *Keywords: social-emotional learning; hope; burnout*
Table 6	**T6. Pairing Picture Books and Primary Sources: Expanding Primary Student Perspectives on Culture** Rachel Turner ● Utah State University Amanda Deliman ● Utah State University Marla Robertson ● Utah State University This roundtable presentation reports on a project incorporating primary sources and children's literature in a professional development (PD) for elementary teachers. The PD was conducted in the summer of 2024. Data were collected from the PD and follow-up observations with some participants. The project is currently in the analysis phase. *Keywords: professional development; primary sources, children's literature*
Table 7	**T7. The Importance of Building Self-Efficacy Through the Teacher Education Admission and Retention Program** Darolyn Seay ● Peru State College This roundtable presentation will explore ways to increase the number of qualified teacher candidates by providing opportunities that will better communicate and model expectations for candidates, allow for remediation, and encourage teacher candidates to work with both faculty and peers using more of an individualized approach when identifying areas that need attention. *Keywords: peer modeling, peer observation, self-efficacy*

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Table 8	**T8. Supporting Remedial Mathematics Students using Online Assessment Scaffold-Feedback** Zoe Tassava ● Idaho State University Cory Bennett [NP] ● Idaho State University Online assessments often produce poor feedback, reinforcing misconceptions and undermining student metacognitive-regulation. We propose a framework for creating impactful, scaffolded feedback that targets common student errors and increases learner independence. Attendees will gain insights into immediate feedback for procedural tasks and a practical strategy for implementing feedback into online assessments. *Keywords: mathematics, online assessment, feedback*
Table 9	**T9. Rebuilding Hope Through Universal Design** Wendie Lappin Castillo ● Central Washington University This session will guide educators in how to map lessons focusing on Social Emotional Standards within the framework of Universal Design for Learning. With the need for support of social emotional outcomes for students, layering learning through the approach of Universal Design supports accessibility in the classroom. *Keywords: Universal Design for Learning, social-emotional learning, teacher preparation*
Table 10	**T10. An Induction Mentoring Project** Emma Wood ● Idaho State University The donor-funded Induction Mentoring Project is designed to supplement district mentoring initiatives and support novice teachers as they grow in skills and knowledge by having a trained mentor provide opportunities for self-reflection and critical thinking. *Keywords: induction, new teacher, mentoring*
Table 11	**T11. Woksape (Wisdom): Students Choice and Experiences at a Tribally Controlled University, Continuing the Work in Challenging Times** William Young ● Oglala Lakota College Native American students in the United States experience an undervalued education. This study examines the realities of education in Indian Country. The investigators use the lens of student reflections to interpret why students choose to attend, and thrive, at a Tribally Controlled University (TCU). *Keywords: Indigenous education, efficacy, student choice*
Table 12	**T12. Dual Roles, Dual Realities: Navigating a Doctoral Program as a University Employee** Jamie Peralta ● Colorado State University Pueblo This presentation explores the unique challenges and benefits of pursuing a doctoral degree while employed at the same institution, highlighting themes of role negotiation, program flexibility, and support systems. Insights from a university's inaugural Ed.D. cohort inform recommendations for improving graduate programs for working professionals. *Keywords: doctoral students, employee as student, work-life balance, program design, cohort model, institutional support, higher education, faculty-student dynamics*
Table 13	**T13. Impacts of Same-Subject Induction Experiences for Elementary Music Teachers** Wendy Tams Hickman ● Brigham Young University Erin Feinauer Whiting ● Brigham Young University This survey study seeks to explain the relationship between beginning elementary music teachers' experiences with same-subject induction supports and those teachers' beliefs of teacher efficacy, experiences of isolation, and job satisfaction. The study also controls for how teachers' background characteristics impact these outcomes. *Keywords: induction, music, isolation*
Table 14	**T14. Dealt a Bad Hand: College Students with Four ACEs Discuss Their Well-being** Donna Coplon Sharp ● Rogers State University This study will examine the effects of ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) on college students. ACEs are regretfully endemic in American society. Interviews with eight college students will inform this ethnographic study on the well-being of students with an ACE score of four or more. *Keywords: ACEs, higher education*
Table 15	**T15. Charters vs Private Schools: Teacher Burnout in Non-Public School Settings** Christina C. Pfister ● Siena University This session reports results of a study using the Maslach Burnout Inventory to compare teachers at private and charter schools. Results indicate teachers in charter schools are more "burned out" than those employed in private schools. Implications for teacher educators and school leaders are discussed. *Keywords: teachers, burnout, school types*

NP = Not Presenting

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Recognizing the 2024 NRMERA Award Winners	
Early Career Award	Justin Benna – North Dakota State University
Exemplary Service Award	Amanda L. Eller – Idaho State University
Distinguished Paper Award	*Not awarded*
Dr. Gregory Schraw Student Fellowship	Grace Leatham – Central Washington University Emily Romero – University of Northern Colorado

NRMERA Annual Awards

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;
- Have been visibly active in NRMERA for no fewer than 4 years; and
- 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.

Distinguished Paper Award

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.
- **$500 grant** to help offset travel expenses to attend AERA (must attend AERA to receive the grant)
- **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.

The Dr. Gregory Schraw Student Fellowship Award is managed by the founders of the fellowship —Aaron Richmond, Fred Kuch, and Antonio Gutierrez de Blume — and is **funded by the generous donations of NRMERA members. Scan this QR code to donate today.**

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