

**Keynote 8:30-10:20****Dr. Kate Kinsella. Proven Practices to Engage Academic English Learners in Productive Lesson Interactions. Audience: ALL. Auditorium**

Orchestrating classroom interactions that significantly improve an academic English learner's language and literacy skills is both a science and an art. Simply providing curriculum-aligned questions and opportunities to "turn and talk" with peers never yields impressive results. Academic English learners at every age and English proficiency level serve to gain from informed guidance in targeted language to achieve a range of communicative goals within lesson interactions, from justifying points of view to comparing and building upon others' ideas. Drawing on extensive experience supporting striving readers and English learners in elementary and secondary classrooms, Dr. Kinsella details the language demands posed by K-12 scholarly interactions, and provides evidence-based principles, classroom-tested guidance, hands-on modeling, guided video viewing, and practical resources to help all students become more agile and confident communicators, prepared for college and the professional workplace.

**Kate Kinsella**, Ed.D. is an emeritus teacher educator at San Francisco State University and a highly sought-after speaker and consultant to school districts throughout the U.S. Her 30-year career focus has been equipping youths from diverse backgrounds with the academic communication, reading, and writing skills to be truly college ready. A K-12 "teacher's teacher". Dr. Kinsella maintains active classroom involvement by writing curriculum, conducting research, teaching demonstration lessons, and coaching teachers and administrators. She is the author of widely-used instructional programs to support English learners and striving readers, including READ 180, English 3D, Language Launch, the Academic Vocabulary Toolkit, and Oxford Content Area Picture Dictionary. Dr. Kinsella has served as the lead scholar and pedagogy guide on three recent successful U.S. Department of Education funded research initiatives to improve academic speaking and writing skills for K-12 multilingual learners.

**Sectional 1 10:30 – 11:25****Kate Kinsella. Tools for Bolstering K-5 Academic English Learners' Vocabulary Knowledge and Skills. Audience: K-5. Rm 161/163 (Flex Rms)**

The 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Vocabulary Report highlighted the dire need for K-12 schools to provide English learners and youths from under-resourced families with informed, consistent vocabulary instruction aligned with academic competencies such as describing and arguing. Productive word knowledge, the ability to effectively use a word in spoken and written communication, is pivotal to reading comprehension, academic interaction, and standards-aligned writing. Drawing on recent research projects and classroom experience, Dr. Kinsella introduces principles and practices to prepare academic English learners for the vocabulary demands of text reading and competent response. She provides a schema for prioritizing cross-disciplinary, widely-used academic words (e.g., compare, comparison) for planned, robust teaching, and demonstrates an explicit and interactive instructional routine. Participants observe lesson footage, review sample lessons, note-taking guides, and competency-aligned word lists to support implementation.

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**Laurie Barron Academic Belonging & Its Impact on Classroom Management & Improved Student Outcomes. Audience: All Room 100/106.**

While there are many elements of effective classroom management, few are as impactful as quality, engaging instruction, particularly when this instruction is provided in a safe and supportive environment that offers and supports opportunities for pre-teaching, re-teaching, and redos when appropriate. When we give students one singular chance to get it right (teach it; assess it; and move on), we're often missing so many students who have the potential and capacity to learn but who just need more time or different opportunities to do so. By reflecting on what we can control (our own behavior and the opportunities we provide students), we can help ensure students have the chance to learn content and not simply be exposed to it. Belonging and feeling safe in a classroom empower students to learn and grow!

**Dr. Laurie Barron** is in her 28<sup>th</sup> year as an educator, serving as a high school English teacher, a middle school assistant principal, and nine years as a middle school principal. Since 2013 she has served as the superintendent of the Evergreen School District in Kalispell. Dr. Barron is a National Board-Certified Teacher and is a National Certified Superintendent through AASA. She has earned many honors throughout her career including Teacher of the Year, STAR Teacher, 2013 National Middle School Principal of the Year, 2018 School Administrators of Montana G.V. Erickson Award recipient for the greatest contributions to the betterment of education in Montana, 2019 Empowered Superintendent of the Year (Montana Educational Technologists Association), and 2021 Montana Superintendent of the Year. Barron co-authored *We Belong: 50 Strategies to Create Community and Revolutionize Classroom Management* (ASCD, 2021), *Middle School: A Place to Belong and Become* (AMLE, 2018) and *What Parents Need to Know about Common Core and Other College- and Career-Ready Standards* (World Book, 2015) as well as numerous education articles. Barron is also a national speaker, consultant, and leadership coach who provides motivation and professional learning to teachers and administrators through promoting strategic planning and school improvement, positive school culture, inclusive teaching and learning environments, student engagement and voice, shared leadership, data-driven decision making, and standards-based assessment. Barron believes that building relationships with staff and students while celebrating what staff and students do right is the key to success in any school.

**Kerrie More. DreamWakers: Connecting Classrooms to Careers. Audience: 4-12 Room 112**

Are you ready to connect your classroom to the real world? DreamWakers partners with 4th- to 12th-grade classrooms at rural and under-resourced schools to provide career role models from diverse industries and backgrounds. Come find out how to bring your classroom lessons to life by helping students SEE what they can BE!

**Kerrie More** is a National Board-Certified Librarian at Glacier High School and previously served at Kalispell Middle School. Prior to being a librarian, she taught high school and middle school English. She was the recipient of a coveted National Endowment for the Humanities fellowship during this past summer.

**Sectional 1 (continued) 10:30-11:35**

**Megan Koppes. Podcasting in the classroom: How to use Podcasts for listening and creating with students. Audience: 6-12. Room 114**

Podcasts can be used for so many purposes and contents! I will provide lists of Podcasts to use for listening and learning about a variety of topics, notetaking guides you can take for student use, and step-by-step lessons and tools for students to create their own Podcasts. All Podcasts and activities have been used and approved by my own middle-school-age children, students from FVCC kids college, and my high school classes.

**Megan Koppes** is the Reading Specialist at Flathead High School. She has taught a wide variety of English classes at FHS for the past 16 years. She also works on the district ELL committee and provides English instruction to multilingual students. Megan also works on district committees for new teachers and teaches summer kids college classes at FVCC. Megan is a Nationally Board-Certified teacher, a former school board chair at Fairmont Egan School, and is treasurer of the Northwest Montana Reading Council.

**Leslie DiMaio. Trauma Informed Strategies for the Classroom: Post Covid. Audience: Grades 3-12. Room 116**

Covid traumatized us all. This session will cover strategies to help teachers assist students in regulating and connecting in today's post-covid classroom. Ideas will also be shared to help teachers manage their own stresses.

**Leslie DiMaio** landed her southern self in the fabulous Flathead Valley in 1998. She came to ski; she stayed to teach. She enjoys diverse books, watching writers grow, and laughing with 7th graders. Leslie holds a few degrees you probably don't care about, but you should know she spent a month of her summer in Italy. Well, you don't need to know that, but she couldn't resist the flex.

**Romy Loran. Poetry Stations. Audience: 5-12. Room 118**

Do your students groan when you mention poetry? Do you need a way to enliven the lesson? Why not try poetry stations? In this fun activity, plan on being a poet, as you choose a poetic form to try. You will leave with knowledge and "how-tos" on these poetic forms: paint chip poetry, black out poetry, and poetry collage, and you will have everything you need to teach these forms yourself, except for the paint chips!

Romy Loran is a writer and educator with over twenty-five years of teaching experience, as well as an MA in education and an MFA in poetry. Lucky enough to teach a semester-long poetry class at Glacier High School, she enjoys sharing her students' favorite activities with other educators.

**Rebecca Johnson. Play Space Success: Lessons from a Library. Audience: K-2. Room 127**

Set up your classroom for playful success! Learn how to foster literacy and learning by setting up an environment that encourages children to play, explore and create. Gain knowledge of practical processes and materials that have been tested in a public library setting with all ages. Get ready to embrace dramatic play, manipulatives and sensory tubs with confidence.

**Becca Johnson** has been playing with young children for 25 years in many settings. However, her favorite space to engage with young children is in the library. She loves to surprise kids and families with the unexpected by creating hands-on, often messy, engaging experiences. Becca has a degree in early childhood education from Montana State University. She is grateful for the opportunity to combine her passion for play and love of reading in her role as Children's Librarian for ImagineIF Libraries. Outside the library, Becca stays busy hiking or watching her husband and daughters bring stories to life on stage, and she always makes time for a good book.

**Matt Allison. Personalized, Competency-based Education: Flathead High's Vision. Audience: ALL. Room 125**

This session will focus on the current shift in education across SD5, as well as the U.S, from "traditional" to a competency-based system that instills some personalization for students. The session will begin with the rationale as to why/need for change, and then it will focus on the work that Flathead High School has done within the past year.

**Matt Allison** is one of the assistant principals at Flathead High School. He is a 5th year administrator and really enjoys making connections with students and families. Guiding his approach to administration is his passion for a safe and supportive school climate, supporting teachers and staff members, and maintaining a safe school and brings an upbeat, positive attitude to the building. He bases decisions on what is best for students and is supported by data. Matt was previously a high school science teacher who also coached football and baseball for multiple years. Matt was Teacher of the Year (2015-2016) at Lakeland High School, Rathdrum, ID, and was a *Daily Inter Lake* Best of the Flathead Nominee (2022) as Flathead High School Administrator.

**Kelli Higgins. Social, Emotional & Ethical Learning in the Music Classroom Audience: 9-12. Room: FHS Choir Room**

Social, Emotional & Ethical Learning strategies can provide a framework for all learning. Join Kelli and the high schools' music staff to see how this framework can work in any discipline and in any classroom. Kelli has just returned from an international conference in Toronto where she presented the SEE learning strategies to educators from around the world!

**Kelli Higgins** is in her 23<sup>rd</sup> year of teaching at Flathead High School. She is the coordinator of the IB program at FHS, a member of the Imagine If Library Foundation Board, a member of the Northwest IB Association Board of Directors, and through Emory University is currently involved in international research on the impact of social, emotional and ethical learning on student achievement; she is working toward certification as a SEE learning facilitator. Oh, and in her spare time Kelli is president of the NW Reading Council! Kelli holds a Bachelor's degree in literature and speech communication theory from Carroll College and a Master's degree in Literature from Middlebury College's Breadloaf School of English.

**Sectional 2 11:30 – 12:25**

**Kate Kinsella. Tools for Bolstering 6-12 Academic English Learners' Vocabulary Knowledge and Skills. Audience: 6-12 Rm 161/163 (Flex Rms)**

The 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Vocabulary Report highlighted the dire need for K-12 schools to provide English learners and youths from under-resourced families with informed, consistent vocabulary instruction aligned with academic competencies such as describing and arguing. Productive word knowledge, the ability to effectively use a word in spoken and written communication, is pivotal to reading comprehension, academic interaction, and standards-aligned writing. Drawing on recent research projects and classroom experience, Dr. Kinsella introduces principles and practices to prepare academic English learners for the vocabulary demands of text reading and competent response. She provides a schema for prioritizing cross-disciplinary, widely-used academic words (e.g., compare, comparison) for planned, robust teaching, and demonstrates an explicit and interactive instructional routine. Participants observe lesson footage, review sample lessons, note-taking guides, and competency-aligned word lists to support implementation.

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**Sherri Nissen, Mary Burns, Josh Preiss, Suzanne Andrews. Mind-Blowing Middle Grade Fiction. Audience: 3-8 Room 100-106**

Participants in this session will hear book talks about 20 new middle grade books – from novels to graphic novels to novels-in-verse to biography. Participants will leave with titles to hook some of their most reluctant readers!

**Sherri Nissen** is currently educating fourth graders at Ruder Elementary in Columbia Falls. She previously spent many years (too many to count!) teaching in 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> grades. Sherri holds a master’s degree in reading and literacy and also had the pleasure of doing a teacher exchange in Melbourne, Australia, in 2001.

**Mary Burns** is a 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at Ruder Elementary in Columbia Falls. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education from the University of Montana and is working towards a Master’s degree in Instructional Design.

**Josh Preiss** is a 20-year educator. He has taught 4<sup>th</sup> grade for 15 years in Corvallis, MT, and Columbia Falls as well as leading as a principal for 5 years. He currently teaches 4<sup>th</sup> grade at Ruder Elementary in Columbia Falls with an awesome 4<sup>th</sup> grade team.

**Suzanne Andrews** has been teaching elementary students for 18 years. She’s had the pleasure of teaching kindergarten, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and now 5<sup>th</sup> grades at Ruder Elementary in Columbia Falls. She has been a National Board-Certified Teacher in Literacy since 2015.

**Kimberly Wakefield. Phonemic Awareness. Audience: K-2. Room 112**

Phonemic Awareness has received a lot of attention in the last few years as one of the pillars of Literacy Skill development. But, how much instructional time do we need to dedicate each day or even in a year and in which phonemic awareness skills are most impactful for instruction? Join this conversation to explore and unpack the current research from experts in the field: Dr. Louisa Moats, the National Reading Panel and IDA Publications. There will be extensive reading and discussion during this session.

**Kim Wakefield** believes in creating success stories for all kids by partnering with educators and communities to build systems of support designed with learners in mind! Through observation, collaborative conversations including data and problem solving, she partners with district teams to build common understanding and a cohesive district vision. As a professional developer, she works tirelessly to help educators understand the what, why and how to deliver sound instruction using scientifically based reading research that moves the dial for students. Over the last 24 years, Kim has taught various grades, was a literacy coach of a K-5 Title 1 Blue Ribbon School, and holds a masters degree in School Counseling. Currently, she is a member of the Side-by-Side Educational Consulting team partnering with districts in Montana and Idaho, supporting the MCLSDP grant, and beyond. Kim enjoys paddleboarding, cooking, hiking, traveling, and playing games where she lives in Northwest Montana with her husband, Ryan and three zestful boys: Braden, Bryson and Bosley.

**Leslie DiMaio, Michele Paine, Megan Koppes. Roundtable: Considerations for Challenges to School Material. Audience: 6-12 Room 114**

Join this roundtable discussion with veteran teachers & administrators to examine best practices to consider when school materials are challenged. With book censorship a national topic, what do we need to consider as educators? How can we carefully select materials while still ensuring diversity & inclusivity? What should the process be for handling materials challenges? Hear and participate in Q & A on how to support each other in these challenging times.

**Leslie DiMaio** is a veteran conference presenter and teacher of English Language Arts at Columbia Falls Junior High School; **Michele Paine** is currently principal of Flathead High Schools, has been an English & reading teacher as well as Language Arts coordinator for Kalispell Public Schools, and is a past president of the Montana Reading Council; **Megan Koppes** is a Nationally Board Certified veteran teacher of reading & English at Flathead High School.

**Sectional 2 (continued) 11:30-12:25**

**Jenna Brown. Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians. Audience: All. Room 116.**

Implementing strategies learned from the Bright Trail Education presenters, this session will provide an overview of the Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians, strategies to remember them, and ideas for implementation in almost any classroom. We will create booklets each attendee can take with them.

**Jenna Brown** has been teaching English/ELA in SD5 for over ten years. She splits her time between Glacier High School and the HE Robinson Agricultural Education Center. Her passions in teaching are nonfiction and Native American literature, the latter being where she has focused much of her professional development. She's repeatedly attended OPI's Best Practices conference, SKC's Tribal Ed. PIR day, and, in 2019, the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian's NK360° Summer Teacher Institute.

**Jasna Stafford. Executive Function: Strategies to increase independence in the classroom. Audience K-2+. Room 118.**

Attendees will be able to clearly provide an operational definition of executive function, understand why executive function skills matter for reading/writing development, and walk away with strategies that can easily be implemented to facilitate student success in the classroom (i.e. improved independence and decreased teacher prompting).

**Jasna Stafford**, an ASHA (American Speech-Language and Hearing Association) Certified Speech-Language Pathologist, has been practicing for 21 years since completing her master's degree in communication Disorders and Sciences at Wichita State University in 2002. Her previous experience includes serving clients across the lifespan in hospital acute care and rehabilitation settings, outpatient clinics, home-based services, and private practice. She also worked as the Head Counselor for Camp Alsing, a specialized social executive functioning camp for "tweens" and teens in Maine. For the last 12 years Jasna has worked for the Columbia Falls School District providing communication services for students from preschool through high school. The most rewarding part of her job is collaborating with educators and families to facilitate the development of transferable skills across academic and extracurricular settings.

**Mark McCord. Literacy Hot Topics. Audience: All. Room 127**

In this sectional, participants will engage in a Microlabs protocol that focuses on a wide range of hot topics such as artificial intelligence educational impacts and media literacy. Join us as we celebrate the expertise of teachers.

**Mark McCord** is Curriculum Director of Columbia Falls School District Six. Mark has 36 years of experience as an educator and has served as teacher, coach, department chair, assistant principal, principal, and curriculum director! Added to this depth of experience, Mark has presented at national, regional, state and district conferences and has been honored numerous times throughout his career including Lamar University Outstanding Student Teacher, Teacher of the Year at Cook Middle School, and Principal of the Year at Katy Independent School District.

**Kari Elliott. Personalized Competency Based Education & Reading Programs. Audience: 3-5. Room 125**

This presentation will demonstrate how Personalized Competency Based Education (PCBE) can be used with any reading program like the McGraw Hill Wonders Curriculum, giving students pathways to complete their reading practice. Kari will demonstrate how to integrate 6 Minute Solution, Readworks, and brief writes in reading instruction to enhance all reading skills. Kari utilizes phonics, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension strategies to give students multiple opportunities to practice and enhance their reading skills.

In her 28 years of teaching, **Kari Elliott** has taught every elementary grade level and has even taught music and PE! She is involved in the mentoring and induction program with Kalispell Public Schools. She currently teaches 5<sup>th</sup> grade at Rankin Elementary. In addition to earning many community and education honors and awards, Kari has served for nearly 20 years on the Board of the Montana Teacher's Retirement System which she currently chairs.

**Sectional 3 1:35 – 2:30**

**Eliza Thomas What's Hot in Elementary Children's Literature Audience: K-5 Flex Room 161/163 Session Repeats Session 4.**

Eliza Thomas has a new pile of great children's lit to share with teachers! Keeping up with what is current in children's literature is a challenge for busy teachers. Eliza will share the latest in picture books, including "best of" book lists, online resources to discover new books, and ideas on how to integrate quality literature into your instruction. Share in the joy that Eliza has for children's literature and watching students fall in love with reading!

**Dr. Eliza Thomas** is no stranger to any educator in NW MT and beyond. A favorite conference keynoter and workshop presenter, Eliza has 28 years of experience as an educator and has worn every hat in education that you can imagine spanning PreK through higher education. From teacher to administrator to educational consultant to college professor, Eliza has a deep understanding of education from all angles. She is currently an associate professor of education and the Director of Early Childhood Education at FVCC.

**Sherri Nissen & Mary Burns. Forget Formulaic! Innovative Nonfiction Authors & Mentor Texts Ignite Student Writing Audience: 3-8 Rm 100/106.**

This session will feature the innovative nonfiction writing style of three authors. Each mentor text will be highlighted and participants will learn tangible ways to implement each book into the classroom, connecting students with a new way to write nonfiction. Fourth-grade student writing samples will be shared to show what students were able to do with these books when used as mentor texts.

Sherri Nissen is currently educating fourth graders at Ruder Elementary in Columbia Falls. She previously spent many years (too many to count!) teaching in 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> grades. Sherri holds a master's degree in reading and literacy and also had the pleasure of doing a teacher exchange in Melbourne, Australia, for the year of 2001.

Mary Burns is a 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at Ruder Elementary in Columbia Falls. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education from the University of Montana and is working towards a Master's degree in Instructional Design.

**Dani Burtsfield. Shake Up Shared Reading! Audience: PreK-3rd Room 112.**

Shared reading instruction offers a simple yet effective framework, transitioning from teacher-led read aloud to student-led exploration of literacy skills. By creating purposeful and enjoyable reading experiences, this familiar but underutilized strategy becomes a valuable tool. It promotes active involvement, aids multilingual learners, and playfully imparts foundational skills. Implementing shared reading enriches classroom learning with deep, engaging lessons, extending read aloud benefits to the fullest.

**Dani Burtsfield** teaches kindergarten at Hedges School. This will be her 17th year in education. Her passion for literacy has taken her into a recent discovery of the Science of Reading community. She loves to share ideas and teaching strategies with teachers in her own district as well as online through various social media outlets. Fully embracing her empty nest life, she and her husband love to ride their e-bikes and hike every chance they get with their 2 dogs, Reece & Dug.

**Drea Beale. Using Discussion Protocols to Increase Equitable Engagement & Text Comprehension in Adolescents. Audience: 5-12 Room 114.**

Join us to learn how structured discussion protocols support 100% of learners to participate and deepen their understanding of the text. You'll walk away with tools to use this school year!

**Drea Beale** is an equity-centered educator with over 25 years of experience in public schools. Drea's first thirteen years of service were as a 6-10th grade teacher in rural Maine and then a 9-12th grade Humanities teacher in Oakland, CA. Subsequently, she served as an instructional coach, a high school principal, an elementary and middle school principal, and the superintendent of a K-8 district in Montana. Currently, Drea is an educational consultant with a focus on literacy and transformational adult learning experiences. She has taken a deep dive into the Science of Reading and the role of early literacy in serving all students. When not supporting a school or organization, you will find Drea playing in the woods, waters, or mountains of the Flathead Valley with her husband, two daughters, and two dogs.

**Ivanna Fritz. A Teacher's view of CBE. Audience: 9-12. Room 116**

Competency Based Education? Transformational Learning? Come and hear a teacher's perspective on how this transition isn't as scary as it all sounds. We will also celebrate what we are doing well.

**Ivanna Fritz** is starting her 27th year as an English teacher. She is the Department Leader at Glacier High and teaches English 10H, Theatre as Lit, Debate, and Intro to Acting. Ivanna is the Director of Theatre at Glacier High School and is an award-winning speech coach.

**Sectional 3 (continued) 1:35 – 2:30**

**Kelli Higgins & Clayton Mauritzen. Growing and Learning in the AI Classroom. Audience 6-12. Room 118**

"Growing and Learning with AI" examines the complexities of teaching with the bot, both the challenges and the opportunities. We will present a positive and productive philosophy, defend the value of personal reflection and storytelling, and consider reframing the way we think about teaching writing. We have many resources and practical ideas to share about how to make the most of this changing landscape.

**Kelli Higgins** is in her 24th year of teaching at Flathead High School. She is the coordinator of the IB program at FHS, deputy director of the Northwest IB Association, a SEE learning facilitator with Emory University, and chair of the NW MT Literacy Council. Kelli holds a Bachelor's degree in literature and speech communication theory from Carroll College and a Master's degree in Literature from Middlebury College's Bread Loaf School of English.

**Clayton Mauritzen** is an eleven-year veteran of the Flathead High School English Department where he has been actively involved in the International Baccalaureate Program initiative to bring IB opportunities to all students. He is the Mentor Program Director for the Kalispell Educator Excellence Program. Clayton holds a Master of Education in Curriculum & Instruction from MSU and a Master of Divinity from Princeton Theological Seminary.

**Jon Konen. 10 Management Strategies for all K-12 Classrooms. Audience: All. Room 127**

97% of behaviors can be addressed in the classroom with these 10 K-12 classroom management strategies. Creating a behavior toolbox that is expandable is a goal of every growth minded teacher. Get 10+ strategies as well as many from other colleagues in this interactive session that will build your personal toolbox.

**Jon Konen** is a high school principal and freelance writer in Columbia Falls, Montana. He has been a superintendent and has taught most all grade levels K-6, has been an instructional coach, and has been an elementary and middle principal. In addition, he owns an educational consultant business: PrincipalReads Consulting. As a 5th grade teacher, in 2010 Jon won the Presidential Award for Elementary Math and Science Teaching (PAEMST). As a principal, his school won the 2012 Blue Ribbon Award. In 2018, he won the National Distinguished Principal Award (NDP). In 2019 he won the National No Kid Hungry Breakfast Hero Award. Jon is the author of three guides published on teacher.org: "An Educator's Guide to Combat Bullying & Bully Prevention," "Teacher Evaluation: A Transition Guide to Exemplary Performance," and "You are the Wild Card: Infusing Fun Back into Curriculum." He has authored a children's picture book that was released January 2019 titled *Benjamin's Visit to Principal Reads Office...again!* (available at [www.archwaypublishing.com](http://www.archwaypublishing.com); Amazon, Barnes & Nobles)

**Steven Miller. Visual Literacy: Using Sequential Art to Communicate Your Story. Audience: 3-12 Room 130**

Attendees will learn how graphic novels and sequential art engage ELL, DLL, ESL, SPED, and struggling readers by empowering them to tell the stories with images over written text. Expect hands-on practice creating a storyboard, considering plot, framing, action, resolution, and editing a self-directed narrative.

**Steven Miller** is an art teacher at Flathead High School and a Senior Lecturer at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago. He has been a working artist and art educator for over 40 years. Steven holds a Master of Education in Curriculum & Instruction from MSU and a BFA from Art Center College of Design.

**Sectional 4 2:35 – 3:30**

**Eliza Thomas What's Hot in Elementary Children's Literature Audience: K-5 Flex Room 161/163 Session Repeated from Session 3.**

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**Megan Koppes. Reading to gain understanding: Book recommendations for students to learn about multicultural experiences and perspectives (Fiction & Memoirs). Audience: 4-10. Room 100/106.**

We have more multicultural and multilingual students in our schools each year. I will provide lists of books I have read and books I provide to my students to ensure that all students see themselves in classroom literature, all students learn about others through classroom literature, and I have informed myself on a variety of immigrant and refugee experiences. Focus will be particularly on Spanish-speaking, Ukranian, and Arabic-speaking authors.

**Megan Koppes** is the Reading Specialist at Flathead High School. She has taught a wide variety of English classes at FHS for the past 16 years. She also works on the district ELL committee and provides English instruction to multilingual students. Megan also works on district committees for new teachers and teaches summer kids college classes at FVCC. Megan is a Nationally Board-Certified teacher, a former school board chair at Fairmont Egan School, and is treasurer of the Northwest Montana Reading Council.

**Dani Burtsfield. Exploring Foundational Reading Skills in EK-2nd Audience: EK-2. Room 112.**

Join Dani as she delves into the research around early reading and the importance of teaching foundational skills. In her session she will share reliable, research-based routines for developing decoding skills based on the book *Reading Above the Fray* (Lindsey, 2022).

**Dani Burtsfield** teaches kindergarten at Hedges School. This will be her 17th year in education. Her passion for literacy has taken her into a recent discovery of the Science of Reading community. She loves to share ideas and teaching strategies with teachers in her own district as well as online through various social media outlets. Fully embracing her empty nest life, she and her husband love to ride their e-bikes and hike every chance they get with their 2 dogs, Reece & Dug.

**Sara Menssen. Lateral Reading with Extemp Speaking Audience: 9-12. Room 114.**

Lateral reading is a Media Literacy Skill that goes hand in hand with generating factual information for speeches and/or writing. Learn about what it is and how to implement it into your own classroom assignments.

**Sara Menssen** has been a Glacier High School English and Theatre Teacher for the past eight years. She has been a Glacier High School Speech & Debate coach and Theatre Assistant for the past 16 years. She holds a B.F.A. in Technical Theatre with emphasis in stage management and lighting design and additional degrees to satisfy MT English education requirements.

**Jane Dews & Kami Heinz. Readers' Theater Revisited. Audience: 3-8. Room 116.**

In order to improve reading, students need to read often. Struggling readers don't often experience success in reading which in turn discourages them from wanting to read. By providing fun ways to get students to read more, struggling readers improve their mastery of texts, leading to feelings of pride and accomplishment, which in turn leads to more reading! By using Readers' Theater, students can improve reading and comprehension through the structured use of a Reader's Theater routine. Participants in this sectional will come away with an understanding of the importance of repeated readings to increase fluency and improve comprehension. Participants will receive a suggested weekly format, sample 4<sup>th</sup> grade lesson, and links to online resources.

**Jane Dews** is an 18-year teaching veteran who has taught kindergarten and grades 2, 4 and 5. She is currently teaching 4<sup>th</sup> grade at Glacier Gateway Elementary where she works with the lowest of the 4<sup>th</sup> grade readers and has tried out many strategies to improve student reading outcomes. She recently earned her Master's Degree in K-12 Reading.

**Kami Heinz** currently teaches sixth grade reading and social studies at Columbia Falls Junior High. She, also, has experience in preschool, first grade, fourth grade, and seventh grade world history. Kami, with her fourth grade team, had the opportunity to present at the Montana Indian Education for All and the National Council of Teachers of English conferences on integrating IEFA and the Montana Common Core Standards through persuasive writing. She earned her teaching degree from The University of Montana with an endorsement in K-12 Literary and a master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Kansas.

**Sectional 4 (continued) 2:35 – 3:30**

**Jenna Brown. Book Club in the Classroom: Utilizing Small Groups for Literature Lessons. Audience: 6-12. Room 118.**

This sectional is an example of how teachers can use different books and small reading groups to meet the same standards as whole class reading. We will work through the process and practice together.

**Jenna Brown** has been teaching English/ELA in SD5 for over ten years. She splits her time between Glacier High School and the HE Robinson Agricultural Education Center. Her passions in teaching are nonfiction and Native American literature, the latter being where she has focused much of her professional development. She's repeatedly attended OPI's Best Practices conference, SKC's Tribal Ed. PIR day, and, in 2019, the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian's NK360° Summer Teacher Institute.

**Camille Deitz Navigating your Nervous System: Why Self-care should be at the Top of Educators' "To Do List". Audience: All. Room 127**

Self-care doesn't have to be a luxury that you earn after everything else is checked off the "to do list." Learn about your nervous system, co-regulation and why prioritizing your health can increase job satisfaction, strengthen classroom management and lead to greater student educational outcomes.

**Camille Deitz** is a licensed educator, school counselor, and clinical professional counselor in Montana. During the 10 years she spent working in Flathead Valley public schools, she was awarded a Kalispell Education Foundation grant and was recognized twice by the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards as an outstanding educator. Although Camille excelled in some areas as a public school employee, she struggled to prioritize her own wellness and has learned many valuable lessons in self-care. As a clinical counselor in private practice, Camille specializes in working with stress and trauma and has advanced training in EMDR, Somatic Experiencing, and expressive arts.

**Josh Preiss Want New Books? Try Donors choose! Audience: All. Writing Center Lab**

In the last five years, Josh has used Donors Choose to transform his classroom library! Classics and brand new books are balanced across the shelves, motivating students to enjoy daily BOOK LOVE! In this session, Josh will introduce his tips and pointers for successful Donors Choose project. You will finish by creating your own Donors Choose project! Would you like the books you see every summer at this conference? Here is how to do it, without a cent from your own pocket or district budget.

**Josh Preiss** is a 20-year educator. He has taught 4<sup>th</sup> grade for 15 years in Corvallis, MT, and Columbia Falls as well as leading as a principal for 5 years. He currently teaches 4<sup>th</sup> grade at Ruder Elementary in Columbia Falls with an awesome 4<sup>th</sup> grade team.