

VMSA 2019 Annual Conference
***“Deliberate Optimism:
Reclaiming the Joy in Education”***

Breakout Session 1
Workshops

10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Leading in the Middle: What Middle School Principals Need to Know and Do

Allegheny

**Dr. Ken Nicely, Superintendent; Mike Riley, Executive Director of Secondary Instruction; Jamie Soltis, Director of Instruction and Career Readiness
Roanoke County and Salem City**

**Special
session for
administrators
only*

One of AMLE's 16 characteristics of high-performing middle schools calls for "leaders who are committed to and knowledgeable about this age group, educational research, and best practices." Principal leadership makes a difference! Learn from the journeys of three former high school teachers who each drank the middle school "Kool-Aid" and became enthusiastic, dedicated principals of middle schools recognized as Virginia Schools to Watch and the young adolescents they serve. All three currently serve on the Board of Directors for VMSA.

Educational Piracy: How to Steal the Attention of your Students

Ballroom C

**Connor Stevenson, Student; Lyndsay Boyd, Student; Katherine McCall, Student
Emory and Henry College**

Educational piracy is a presentation centered around the acronym P.I.R.A.T.E based on the book Teach Like A Pirate by Dave Burgess. Using the 5 core concepts of the acronym, teachers will be provided with a variety of methods to steal the attention of their students. The methods will be grounded in educational theorists, such as Howard Gardner, whose theories served as the foundational methods in the book.

What Do Restorative Practices Look Like?

Classroom 2

**Jim Dutrow, Principal; Jennifer Tallman, Teacher
Lake Ridge Middle School**

A hands-on overview of how to implement the continuum of Restorative Practices in middle school to create a school community, build relationships between all stakeholders (student-student, student-staff, administration-student, administration-staff), and simultaneously reduce exclusionary discipline. By giving all stakeholders a voice, Restorative Practices changes building culture.

All Aboard! How Our Students Built an EcoBus

Classroom 3

**William Laney, Instructional Technology Specialist
Old Donation School**

A group of 8th-grade students at Old Donation School took an old, unused school bus and converted it into an environmentally friendly, bio-fueled learning lab on wheels. This session features students highlighting the challenges and rewards they experienced on this yearlong journey. Come hear their story -- it may spark an idea for a community-centered project that you can take back to your own students!

2018 VMSA Teacher Grant Winning Projects

Classroom 4

**Kaarn Thomas and Kristin Clay
Clifton Middle School and Swift Creek Middle School**

2018 VMSA Teacher Grant winning teachers will share their projects and outcomes. Kaarn Thomas is an art teacher in Alleghany County and her grant helped fund a relief printmaking project. Kristin Clay is a special education teacher in Chesterfield County and her grant helped fund a sensory diet project for students with disabilities. Information about how to apply for VMSA Teacher Grants is located on the VMSA.org website.

Practical Use of Digital Content in a Personalized Learning Classroom

Classroom 7

Scott Phillips, Principal; Kathlyn Sasso, 6th Grade Math Teacher; Jennifer Burns, 7th Grade English Teacher; Maria Cademartori, 8th Grade Science Teacher; Traci Wilson, Special Education Cross Category Teacher
Eagle Ridge Middle School

As a school in our 3rd year of the LCPS Personalized Learning initiative, come listen to real teachers in real classrooms who have implemented practical and applicable methods to integrate digital content such as Aleks Math, Discovery Education, No Red Ink, Newsela, and others into grade level standards-based classroom instruction.

Reflective Writing and Thinking With Reading

Highlands

Melissa Harrell, Reading Specialist
North Fork Middle School

This session will show hands on strategies that can be used the day you return back from the conference to the classroom. Writing and thinking strategies that support comprehension skills, writing skills and the new reflective writing standard introduced at grade level 6. This is a workshop for all level teachers, instructional coaches and lead supervisors. If they can write and talk about it then they comprehend it!

Breakout Session 1
STW Roundtable Presentations

10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Deeper learning using PBLs and MinecraftEDU

Ballroom B

Brian Crockett, Teacher; David Redding, Teacher
Glenvar Middle School

Middle level students crave activity and relevance within their learning. During this roundtable, two veteran middle level teachers will share tips and techniques for leveraging these two components to the benefit of student growth. From student-centered project-based activities to collaborative problem solving using MinecraftEDU, your students will love these approaches. And, so will you!

What Does Successful Collaboration Look Like?

Ballroom B

**Debra Sheridan, English Teacher; Martha Rombach, English Teacher
Madison Kreber, English Teacher Stacie Holzberger, English Teacher
River Bend Middle School**

How to create and sustain a Collaborative Learning Team, which effectively supports, works well together, and fosters an atmosphere where teachers and students can thrive. A successful English 8 Collaborative Learning Team in action!

Outbreak! - Students Learning Through a Conference Experience

Ballroom B

**Matthew Heck, Math Department Chair; John Puterio, Dean;
Farmwell Station Middle School**

7th grade students at Farmwell Station Middle School attended a PBL experience through their first ever Outbreak Conference. Students were given registration badges as they arrived at the first day's general session, an expert Keynote in the study of diseases. They perused the conference booklet describing the various sessions offered and then chose the topics they were most interested in attending. Multiple community experts and teaching staff delivered the content. Come learn how to offer a high level PBL experience for an entire grade level that students will be talking about for weeks.

***Personalized Professional Development at Belmont Ridge Middle School-
Creating Confidence and Clarity in our PL Vision***

Ballroom B

**Felecia Lewis, Dean; Ryan Mikulsky, Dean; David McKenzie, Assistant
Principal; Amanda Boss, Teacher
Belmont Ridge Middle School**

Modeling the learning experiences we create for our students, Belmont Ridge offers a Personalized Professional Development approach for all licensed staff members. Explore how we use the Educational Element's Core Four to create our staff implementation portfolios, how we conduct book studies, provide technology related PD, and encourage learning walks amongst our staff.

Successful Unified Mental Health Team and Advisory Protocols

Ballroom B

**Mary Beth Woodford, Assistant Principal; Laura Chamblin, Dean; Byron Woodard, Dean; Matt Swartz, Dean; Christopher O'Rourke, Principal; Karyn O'Neill, Assistant Principal; Ashley Harper, Lead Counselor; Lauren Masarik, English Teacher
Harper Park Middle School**

We will present the strategies and protocols that our UMHT and Advisory program have employed to meet the needs of the whole child. We embedded the following programs through UMHT and Advisory: PBIS, Anti-Bullying, Wellness Wednesdays, Restorative Practices, Character Development/Citizenship, Academic and Study Skills, Executive Function, School Climate, Social-Emotional Learning and Digital Citizenship.

Advisory as a Medium for Positive School Climate

Ballroom B

**Christopher Benson, Assistant Principal; Keisha Bell, Teacher; Amy Hodges, Teacher; Lisa Riddle, Teacher
Hidden Valley Middle School**

Last year at Hidden Valley Middle School, we introduced an advisory program in which students met in small groups each week with an advisor who guided them through lessons centered on social-emotional learning. The goal of this program was to help ensure that all students had at least one adult in the building with whom they could foster a trusting relationship. This school year, students have continued their work with their advisors, but we have made some adjustments and additions to the initial advisory program to better meet the needs of our students and create a more positive school climate overall. For example, we have adjusted our lessons to make more time for student conferencing, and we have introduced clubs once a month during the advisory time. Please join us for this breakout session to learn more about our process for creating and molding our advisory program into what it is today.

**Breakout Session 2
Workshops**

11:10 a.m. – 12:10 p.m.

Too Many Initiatives, Not Enough Time!

Allegheny

Barbara Nichols, Executive Director, VMSA

**Special
session for
administrators
only*

Retired Director of Middle School Education, Loudoun County Public Schools

As a school leader, your role is to monitor the effective implementation of **all** initiatives to ensure the greatest impact on student achievement. Sometimes there are just too many programs to monitor and not enough time to do so effectively! This session will focus on strategies for identifying and prioritizing key initiatives in your school, monitoring their effectiveness, and planning next steps for continuous improvement.

SEL-A Culture of Connectedness: A Leadership Lens Into Adolescence

Ballroom C

Juliet Finnegan, Assistant Principal; Elena Barham, Assistant Principal Sterling Middle School

Life is coming! Empower middle schoolers with the requisite skills and competencies to succeed academically, socially, and emotionally in life. The transitional period of physical and psychological development – “the adolescence years” – brings stress, strain, and confusion to students’ daily lives. Come and discover how The Second Step holistic program at Sterling Middle School helps create empathy and connectedness amongst students, staff, parents, and community while building a safe-supported learning milieu.

Influencing Academic Success for Special Populations Using Positive Relationships, Data-Driven Targets, and Rigorous Goals

Classroom 2

Meghan Patterson, ESOL Department Chair; Carmela Bauducco, ESOL/Language Arts Teacher Lake Ridge Middle School

In this session, educators will analyze the ways in which our school has used the power of positive relationships to drive instruction and impact academic success for our special populations. Educators will have the opportunity to interact with our student profiles system to create learning targets and language proficiency goals for ELs and dually identified students using the WIDA language level progression chart. This personal,

differentiated approach ensures a high-level of rigor for at-risk students which, alongside restorative practices, has positively impacted student achievement at our school.

Get Going with Google Slides

Classroom 3

**Rosalynn Lucas, Teacher; Marcus Brown, Teacher
Midlothian Middle School**

Google Slides can be used for more than just presentations. Discover how to make Google Slides more user friendly for students, how to package content so students can work at their own pace, and how to infuse more creativity into the classroom. Leave this hands-on session ready to implement new ideas tomorrow and bring the power of Google Slides into your class. Make Slides your go-to G Suite app.

Author Talk: "Susanna's Midnight Ride: The Girl Who Won the Revolutionary War"

Classroom 4

Libby McNamee, Author

A 16-YEAR-OLD GIRL FROM HOPEWELL HELPED WIN THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR! My upper middle grade novel, "Susanna's Midnight Ride: The Girl Who Won the Revolutionary War," is based on the TRUE story of this local heroine, whose story is just becoming known to Virginia, America, and the world. It has a Lexile score of 800-900. This year the 2019 Virginia General Assembly recognized Susana's bravery by designating her birthday (December 5) as "Susanna Bolling Day" throughout the Commonwealth. Almost five years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the American Revolution hung in the balance. In late May 1781, General Cornwallis invaded City Point/Hopewell, VA, and quartered his army there. As 16-year-old Susanna Bolling served the British general and his officers dinner, she overheard their plans to capture General Lafayette and crush the American rebellion once and for all. Under the cover of darkness, she snuck out of her house through a secret underground tunnel and canoed downriver. Then she grabbed a neighbor's horse and rode ten miles to warn Lafayette. But would she make it back home by sunrise without detection? Please see www.LibbyMcNamee.com and www.facebook.com/LibbyMcNameeAuthor for lots more information.

Go To Apps and Resources for Classroom Integration

Classroom 7

**Emmanuelle Hill, Teacher; Madelyn Festa, Teacher
Mary G. Porter Traditional School**

STOP Searching, STOP Shuffling: GO TO APPS and Web Tools for Every Classroom, Every Subject: Do you ever feel frustrated with the ever increasing number of apps? Do you feel like you are always chasing the latest and greatest app? DO you feel like your students never have the opportunity to master the FULL POTENTIAL of the apps you are using? In this session you will learn about tried and true apps and resources. You will see how these two classroom educators use a variety of apps and programs to facilitate student learning through a variety of curriculum areas. Learn to integrate, differentiate, and assess easily!

One Novel One Day

Highlands

**Tamika Hathaway 6th grade English teacher
New Kent Middle School**

This reading adventure unites your students in an amazing challenge to finish an entire novel in one school day. We completed this challenge at our school summer reading camp this past summer. The students read the novel *All of the Above* by Shelley Pearsall. This not only a literature based camp but we incorporated math and project based activities. During this break out session, I would present the layout implementation plan for the day. Share some of our activity ideas as well as help teachers develop their own. I would also share some of the final projects and success stories of our camp and present the ideas we have for our new One Novel One Day camp for 2020.

Breakout Session 2
STW Roundtable Presentations

11:10 a.m. – 12:10 p.m.

Soaring to New Heights through Engagement, Project Based Experiences, and Personalized Learning Opportunities

Ballroom B

**Matt Strittmatter, Principal; Jennifer Acome, Assistant Principal; Toby Spaulding, Teacher
Elizabeth Davis Middle School**

At Elizabeth Davis Middle School, we focus on the whole child. Each person in our school building matters and, as such, we have created a block of time within our schedule where students' needs are met and extension activities exist. We utilize passion, enthusiasm, and intentional decision making to create a system that promotes positive outcomes for all students.

Harmony Middle School: A Wall-to-Wall Project Based Learning School

Ballroom B

**Eric McGrady, 7th Grade Dean; Jeff Jacobson, 8th Grade Dean
Harmony Middle School**

This session will detail Harmony Middle School's journey from a beginning Project Based Learning (PBL) school through their decision to become the first Wall-to-Wall PBL middle school in Loudoun County. This session will focus heavily on the process taken by the Harmony Administration to obtain and implement the designation as a Wall-to-Wall School.

Career and Life Readiness for Middle School Students

Ballroom B

**Brittin Payne, Teacher
St. Clare Walker Middle School**

Learn how a career and life readiness course for middle school students was designed. This session will review course curriculum, which focuses on developing skills students need as they continue through middle and high school and then enter either college or the workforce. Project examples will be shared.

Saunders Middle School

Ballroom B

**Kenny Harkins, Teacher; Emily Willis, Teacher; Matt Eline, Teacher
Saunders Middle School**

The work that is being done at Saunders to promote a positive mindset and to give students ownership of their education.

Mobile School Store - Positive Student Experience

Ballroom B

**Melanie Knowles, Principal; Katrina Dunlap, CTE Teacher and
Department Chair
Bailey Bridge Middle School**

Join representatives from Bailey Bridge Middle School to hear about a school-wide effort to celebrate students and recognize positive behaviors. In conjunction with our PBIS Committee, our school store is now mobile! Student leaders from a CTE class organize and "sell" school items in exchange for Bear Bucks and students with special needs assist the store in various ways. Join us to hear about enhancing a positive school culture through this school-wide effort.

**Breakout Session 3
Workshops**

1:10 p.m. - 2:10 p.m.

How to Build Staff Morale and a Culture of Excellence

Allegheny

**Dr. David S. Ellena, Principal
Tomahawk Creek Middle School**

Strategies that are used at Tomahawk Creek Middle School will be shared that help create a positive school culture and build staff morale. The strategies will range from free to low cost ways that you can build a culture where people want to work.

Best Practices in School Safety - The ALARM Protocol

Ballroom C

**Daniel J. Palmer, Sr., Safety and Security Assistant Manager
Chesterfield County Schools**

Progressive school systems continually reevaluate safety protocols. At the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year, one school division initiated the ALARM (Active response/Lockdown with barricades/Alert others/Run/Make a decision) protocol in an effort to use current best practices for schools in the event of an active shooter attack. This session will review the tenets of ALARM, look at myths and facts about active shooters, and look at personal safety issues for staff.

Illuminating Integration

Classroom 2

**Adam Fletcher, 6th Grade Teacher; Christie Kargbo, Counseling Director
Mary G. Porter Traditional School**

This presentation will focus on the aspect of integration across all middle school contents. This session will cover how to effectively plan with co-teachers for the best outcomes and will also give ideas on how other teachers can work with their team members to integrate their lessons on a weekly basis. This session applies to any and all middle school teachers and administrators.

Save Your Sanity: Build Student Agency

Classroom 3

**Susie Strong, Language Arts 7 Teacher; Lindsey Leja, Language Arts 7 Teacher
Trailside Middle School**

Don't overwhelm or dedicate your time solely to managing active behaviors. Save your sanity and manage your class while you teach. This session will provide you with tools to scaffold and build student agency that you can use tomorrow. Join us to learn about tools and tactics that have been used in grades 6-8 and unique class make ups. Come prepared with any issues and goals you have for your class; there will be time for questions so the session is customized to the group's needs. With the knowledge and tools you gain from this session your students will become masters of their own positive classroom behavior and success.

PSA - Think Globally, Work Locally

Classroom 4

**Lori Eckert, Sixth Grade English; Lindsay Hendrix, Stephanie Wright,
New Kent Middle School**

Students work in small, collaborative groups to create a PSA that draws attention to an issue in their community. Students are tasked with researching the issue and finding attainable solutions to the problem. Great cross-curricular project based learning activity and lends itself to the 5 C's of Virginia is for Learners!

Innovation Over Remediation: A “Study Hall” Experiment

Classroom 7

**Jason R Vest, Teacher
Hungary Creek Middle School**

When my principal shared that we would be converting our advisory block, I had an idea. What if we used the full 90 minutes to focus on innovation, entrepreneurship, and design thinking? What if we gave students a space to truly be themselves, to solve problems that mattered to them, and even be on their cell phones during class? During this session, I'll talk about the things that went well, the things that didn't, and what we can do to guarantee more students get this type of experience.

**Breakout Session 3
STW Roundtable Presentations**

1:10 p.m. – 2:10 p.m.

Incorporating Cognitive Thinking into the Physical Education Program Ballroom B

**William Pratt, Health and PE Teacher
William Byrd Middle School**

Eliminate down time and discipline problems by utilizing Physical Education Portfolios to allow the students to show their cognitive knowledge of the Physical Education curriculum as well as utilize resources available to them. Physical Education Portfolios allow students to understand the how and they why of the physical activities they are performing and helps them learn the correlation of how physical activity relates to health concepts. The use of technology is also integrated to allow the students to perform critical evaluations of themselves and their peers.

Inclusive Reading Practices for Students with Diverse Learning Needs Ballroom B

**Samantha Russell, Special Education Teacher; Jennifer Kassander,
Administrative Dean
River Bend Middle School**

This presentation will highlight how special educators at River Bend target and deliver reading intervention to both students with and without IEPs in a fun, inclusive club setting that incorporates growth mindset, multi-sensory decoding strategies, and development of comprehension skills.

Teaching the 5 Cs: Interdisciplinary Learning

Ballroom B

**Luke Roadcap, Social Studies Teacher; Tracy Matthews, Math and Science Teacher; Kelly O'Baugh, English and Social Studies Teacher
Elkton Middle School**

Moving to a teaching approach to include the 5 C's- Elkton Middle has changed its schedule to include more teaming and cross-curricular teaching in all grades. The implementation of a STEM Academy in 8th grade with interdisciplinary studies as well as blending instruction on teams of two teachers teaching all subjects in 6th and 7th grades.

Using Tiered Interventions for Student Academic, Emotional and Behavioral Success

Ballroom B

**Eryne Racino, Lead Counselor; Danielle Savastano, Counselor Brion Bell, Principal
Blue Ridge Middle School**

Blue Ridge Middle uses tiered interventions to address student concerns. Those concerns range from emotional and academic to behavioral. The tiered approach emphasizes a community that is both data driven and relational. Participants will receive our tiered pyramid and handouts that help apply these skills to their own school and community.

7th Grade Students Need PBL & Brain Breaks!

Ballroom B

**Julia Barnett, 7th Grade Math Teacher; Laurie Walsh-Reed, 7th Grade Math Teacher; Eva Gudmundsson, 7th Grade History Teacher
River Bend Middle School**

Using Project Based Learning and Brain Breaks, discover how to implement practical strategies to keep seventh grade students both curious and interested. This round-robin session will include examples from history and mathematics.