



Preliminary Program

National Catholic Educational Association

2026 Convention & Expo | April 7-9 | Minneapolis, MN
Minneapolis Convention Center



Get ready for NCEA 2026 Minneapolis

Connect with Catholic School Educators
from Across the U.S.



Why Attend

**Make your plans now to join us for
NCEA 2026: Believe! Registration and housing
are officially open.**

Held in partnership with the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, NCEA 2026 is one of the largest private-education association gatherings in the nation. This annual event brings together thousands of teachers, principals, presidents, superintendents, and diocesan leaders from across the United States, Canada, and beyond.

Whether you're serving in early childhood, elementary, secondary, or higher education or supporting Catholic education through parish or diocesan leadership, NCEA 2026 offers meaningful learning, connection, and inspiration for everyone.

At NCEA 2026, you will attend engaging sessions led by experts in the field, participate in beautiful liturgies, and connect with peers who share your love of the mission of Catholic education. Don't miss the Expo Hall, where you can explore the latest innovations in educational products, services, and technology.

Be part of this energizing, faith-filled experience.
Register today and secure your spot!



October 7, 2025

Dear Friends in Catholic Education,

It is with great joy and anticipation that I invite you to join us for NCEA 2026: Believe, taking place April 7-9, 2026, in the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis. This annual gathering, one of the largest convenings of Catholic school educators in the country, is a vibrant expression of our shared belief in the promise of Catholic education.

As we plan for this event, we do so with the recognition that on August 27, 2025, the lives of so many were forever impacted. That horrific event left many in a state of shock and sadness. At the same time, we saw heroes emerge and we saw a community of faith come together to offer an outpouring of support. It is in these times of sorrow that we are reminded of our sacred duty to stand together, to pray for healing, and to accompany one another as a community of hope. As we prepare for NCEA 2026, let us do so with renewed conviction in the shared belief that our Lord walks with us. Let us work to make sure that our time together will be not just a time for learning and networking, but also an opportunity to support our friends and colleagues as they heal, believing in the unshakable strength of our Catholic faith.

To believe is to see with the eyes of faith. It is to trust that in every classroom, every lesson, and every act of care that you are doing more than teaching. You are forming the future and educating for eternity. Catholic schools have always been up to the task of this sacred mission. As Pope Leo XIV reminded the Christian Brothers in May 2025:

"These are demanding challenges, but we too, like Saint John Baptist de La Salle, can turn them into springboards to explore ways, develop tools and adopt new languages to continue to touch the hearts of pupils, helping them and spurring them on to face every obstacle with courage in order to give the best of themselves in life, according to God's plans."

We believe that we exist to bring glory to God. We believe in the future of Catholic schools. We believe in the children and families we serve. And we believe in you.

May God bless each of you and may Our Lady, Seat of Wisdom, under whose patronage our host archdiocesan schools are placed, shower our Catholic school community with Her blessings.

I look forward to welcoming you to Minneapolis for NCEA 2026.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'St. F. Cheeseman'.

Dr. Steven F. Cheeseman
President/CEO
National Catholic Educational Association

National Catholic Educational Association

200 N. Glebe Road | Suite 730 | Arlington, VA 22203 | t 800.711.6232 | f 703.243.0025 | www.NCEA.org



Catholic Schools
OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF
SAINT PAUL AND MINNEAPOLIS

Forming our future. Educating for life.

October 21, 2025

Greetings from Minnesota!

On behalf of the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, I'm happy to invite you to Minneapolis — the City of Lakes — for the 2026 National Catholic Educational Association Convention. We are so grateful for your witness to Jesus Christ through the gift of Catholic schools.

As Catholic schools of the Archdiocese began the 2025-2026 academic year amid a terrible tragedy, Annunciation in South Minneapolis has witnessed a surge in solidarity and support from across the nation and the world. So many hearts have been moved to help in a time of great need: real manifestations of Christian charity and hope. We truly look forward to being with you this year at NCEA 2026 and see in this gathering a great sign of solidarity with Annunciation. There will be something for everyone serving in the mission field of Catholic schools.

Reflective of our own commitment to offering an integrated Catholic school curriculum, we are excited to offer learning tracks around student formation, special education, collaborative leadership, instructional excellence, school sustainability and stewardship, and more. In addition to sessions for teachers and leaders, there will be dedicated content for campus ministers, counselors, advancement and marketing directors, and pastors serving schools.

When you're not attending these inspiring and informative sessions, we hope you'll be able to experience the rich history and vibrant Catholic culture in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul. We encourage you to jump at this opportunity to join us for a fulfilling convention.

Until we are together in April, be assured of prayers for your efforts to help students encounter Jesus Christ through a Catholic school.

Please persevere.

Sincerely in Christ,

Dr. Jason E. Slattery
Director of Catholic Education and Superintendent of Schools

OFFICE FOR THE MISSION OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION
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spmcatholicschools.org



ARCHDIOCESE
OF
SAINT PAUL &
MINNEAPOLIS

OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

October 21, 2025

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Thank you for your service in Catholic education. The Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis is honored to host the 2026 National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) Convention, and I would like to invite you to join us at the Minneapolis Convention Center from April 7-9, 2026.

I hope you are able to take advantage of the formation, professional development, and collaboration (and excitement!) that will be offered to you and thousands of others who share your commitment to helping young people encounter Jesus Christ. We are excited about this great opportunity to unite with you in the mission of Catholic education across the United States.

The faithful of this Archdiocese remain appreciative of your prayers and support following the tragedy at Annunciation Church and School in Minneapolis. We are particularly looking forward to joining you in prayer at the Convention, especially at Holy Mass, and exploring with you how we, nourished by the Eucharist, can together move forward to be signs of hope in a world in need of Christ's healing.

The Convention providentially coincides with our Archdiocesan celebration of our 175th Anniversary. Throughout those years, Catholic education has remained a constant priority. We are grateful today to be serving more than 30,000 students and families through our schools, enriched by the joyful witness of priests, school leaders, teachers, and staff.

Guided by the NCEA 2026 theme, *Believe*, it will be great to be with you to: thank our God for the blessings that flow from our schools; attend sessions to help us provide the best Catholic education to the students entrusted to our care; celebrate that we have a new Holy Father who knows firsthand the importance of a Catholic education; and share in the joy we have in our vocations and as disciples of Jesus Christ.

Until we are together in the Twin Cities, I hasten to commend you to the help of Our Lady, Seat of Wisdom, patroness of our Archdiocesan Catholic school system. With the promise of my prayers, I remain,

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading '+Bernard A. Hebda'.

Most Reverend Bernard A. Hebda
Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

NCEA 2026 Schedule at a Glance

Schedule as of October 7 and is subject to change. Check www.NCEA.org/NCEA2026 for the most up-to-date information. All activities take place at the Minneapolis Convention Center (MCC) unless otherwise indicated.



MONDAY, APRIL 6

8 AM – 6 PM

Exhibitor Set Up

EXPO HALL D

8 AM – 4 PM

Registration and Badge Pick Up

LOBBY D

6 – 8 PM

President's Reception & Dinner
Sponsored by FACTS and Blackbaud

HILTON MINNEAPOLIS

TUESDAY, APRIL 7

7 – 8:30 AM

Exhibitor Set Up

EXPO HALL D

7 AM – 5 PM

Registration and Badge Pickup

LOBBY D

Please note: Registration and Badge Pickup will be closed during main stage events on Tuesday. Badges must be worn to gain entry to all events. Please plan accordingly.

8:30 – 10 AM

Opening Ceremonies & Keynote

HALL C

10:30 – 11:45 AM

Professional Learning Sessions #1

VARIOUS ROOMS, LEVELS 1 & 2

12 – 1:30 PM

Catholic Higher Education
Supporting Catholic Schools
(CHESCS) Lunch and Meeting

MCC

11:45 AM – 6 PM

Expo / NCEA Central

EXPO HALL D

12 – 1:30 PM

Lunch Available for purchase

EXPO HALL D

12 – 1 PM

Opening Expo Hall Reception

EXPO HALL D

1:30 – 2:45 PM

Professional Learning Sessions #2

VARIOUS ROOMS, LEVELS 1 & 2

3:15 – 4:45 PM

Opening Eucharistic Liturgy

HALL C

5 – 6 PM

Expo Hall Reception

EXPO HALL D



WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8

8:30 AM – 6 PM

Registration and Badge Pickup

MCC, HALL D LOBBY

8 AM – 5 PM

Boards Day

Lunch sponsored by VenturEd

HILTON MINNEAPOLIS

9 – 10 AM

Morning Liturgy

MCC, HALL C

10 AM – 6:15 PM

Expo Hall / NCEA Central

EXPO HALL D

10:30 – 11:45 AM

Professional Learning Sessions #3

VARIOUS ROOMS, LEVELS 1 & 2

12 – 1:30 PM

Lunch Available for Purchase

EXPO HALL D

12 – 1 PM

Reception in the Expo Hall

EXPO HALL D

12 – 1:30 PM

Superintendents Lunch

Sponsored by Renaissance

BALLROOM B

1:30 – 2:45 PM

Professional Learning Session #4

VARIOUS ROOMS, LEVELS 1 & 2

3:15 – 4:30 PM

Professional Learning Sessions #5

VARIOUS ROOMS, LEVELS 1 & 2

5 – 6 PM

Expo Hall Reception

EXPO HALL D

THURSDAY, APRIL 9

7 – 11:30 AM

Registration and Badge Pickup

HALL D LOBBY

8 – 11:30 AM

Expo Hall Open

EXPO HALL D

8 – 9:15 AM

Professional Learning Sessions #6

VARIOUS ROOMS, LEVELS 1 & 2

9:45 – 11 AM

Professional Learning Sessions #7

VARIOUS ROOMS, LEVELS 1 & 2

11:20 AM – 12:30 PM

Keynote Speaker/Closing Ceremonies

HALL C

12:30 – 1:30 PM

Closing Eucharistic Liturgy

HALL C



NCEA 2026 Special Events



President's Dinner

Monday, April 6

6 – 8 PM

By Invitation Only

Sponsored by FACTS and Blackbaud

HILTON MINNEAPOLIS

NCEA kicks off Convention with a reception and dinner to recognize the outstanding contributions of Catholic school leaders across our country. Lead. Learn. Proclaim. (LLP) and the President's Awards recipients will be honored.

Superintendents Lunch

Wednesday, April 8

12 – 1:30 PM

By Invitation Only

Sponsored by Renaissance

MINNEAPOLIS CONVENTION CENTER, BALLROOM B

The Superintendents Lunch is the opportunity for diocesan leaders from around the country to connect. It is open to system leaders, superintendents, and other diocesan leaders who can register when registering online for the Convention. Tickets will NOT be available at the door. (This event is not for teachers or principals).

**Do you know someone deserving
recognition? Nominate them today!**

Nominations close on November 7.

www.NCEA.org/LLP

**NCEA has a longstanding tradition
of honoring and recognizing
excellence and distinguished
service in Catholic school
education.**



LEARN MORE

Boards Day

Wednesday, April 8

9 AM – 5 PM

Lunch Sponsored by VenturEd

HILTON MINNEAPOLIS

Offering targeted programming for Catholic school board members. Boards Day will be fully integrated into the NCEA 2026 schedule, allowing board members to participate in curated sessions, network with others, and explore the broader offerings of the event.

NCEA Catholic School Recognition

Thursday, April 9

2:15 – 3:45 PM

This reception will recognize the 2025 cohort of schools that were to have received the U.S. Department of Education Blue Ribbon recognition. Each of them met all of the requirements to be named a Blue Ribbon school prior to the programs elimination.



NCEA 2026 Registration Rates



REGISTER NOW

NCEA 2026 Registration Rates

	Early Bird (October 7, 2025 - January 12, 2026)	Advanced (January 13 - April 3, 2026)	Onsite (April 4 - 9, 2026)
Member			
Full Convention	\$305	\$460	\$560
One Day Only	\$400	\$400	\$400
Non-member			
Full Convention	\$550	\$700	\$820
One Day Only	\$650	\$800	\$1,000
Speaker*			
	\$100	\$100	\$550

*Speakers must register through their speaker portal to get the discounted rate. Please note NCEA does not pay speakers nor reimburse for travel or hotel expenses.

About Title II-A

Title II-A funds for professional development under Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) may be available for you to attend NCEA 2026. These funds may be used to pay for the "secular, non-ideological" sessions a participant attends. Funds may be used for registration, travel, lodging, etc. Requests must be made to the LEA that controls government funding for these programs. Registration fees can be paid directly to NCEA by the LEA. If using Title II-A funds, please have your LEA contact events@ncea.org for additional assistance. Permitting religious organizations and secular organizations alike to provide secular services to schools does not violate the Establishment Clause and absent specific language to the contrary (e.g., ESEA sections 1117(d)(2)(B), the Department generally considers faith-based organizations to be eligible to contract with grantees and sub grantees and to apply for and receive Department grants on the same basis as any other private organization. See 2 C.F.R. 3474.15(b)(1); 34 C.F.R. 72.52(a) (1). Of course, the Department will continue to implement all other provisions of ESEA, including the requirement that all equitable services be "secular, neutral and nonideological." 20 U.S.C. 53(a)(2), 7881(a)(2).

NCEA 2026 Terms and Conditions



Terms & Conditions

1. Payment is due upon receipt of invoice. Send checks payable to NCEA, PO Box 220230, Chantilly, VA, 20153-0230.
2. To ensure proper credit, please be sure to include the name of the attendee and/or order number in the memo of the check.
3. Purchase Orders will be accepted until March 3, 2026. As of March 4, 2026, only checks or credit cards will be accepted.
4. Fees associated with tickets to any special event must be paid in full prior to or upon arrival at NCEA 2026. If there is an outstanding balance for special event tickets, you may not be allowed to attend the special event.
5. Schools will be responsible for all registration fees if payment is not made by the local educational agency (LEA) by June 30, 2026.
6. Registration fees do not include meals or hotel accommodations.
7. Please send cancellation requests to events@ncea.org. Individuals requesting a refund prior to or on January 12, 2026, will receive a full refund. Requests made between January 13, 2026, and March 3, 2026, will receive a 50% refund. Refunds will not be granted after March 4, 2026.
8. Cancellation of Convention registration does not constitute cancellation of a hotel room. Please be sure to handle both separately.
9. No one under the age of 18 is permitted to attend NCEA 2026.
10. Attendees are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner and agree to accept responsibility for their actions while at an NCEA event. Please speak with an NCEA staff member if anyone is acting inappropriately at an NCEA event.
11. Any individual who is soliciting business in public spaces or is in violation of the event venue's rules and regulations will be asked to leave immediately.
12. Please bring your registration confirmation with you for check-in.
13. Attendees will be charged a \$25 fee to reproduce any name badge that has been misplaced on site.



REGISTER NOW



NCEA 2026 Hotel and Travel Information



Book Inside the Block!

We are now accepting hotel reservations for NCEA 2026.

The official housing vendor for NCEA 2026 is Connections Housing. Through this website you can book, modify, or cancel your hotel reservations at any time and receive updated information about the event. We look forward to seeing you! The hotels within the official block offer the best rate and service to our attendees.

If you choose to book outside of the block, NCEA cannot guarantee the quality of service that the official hotels can provide. It has come to our attention that housing poachers have been contacting NCEA exhibitors and attendees and identifying themselves as being affiliated with NCEA. NCEA has NO affiliation with these organizations and in no way endorses their services. Please do your part by booking inside the block!

NCEA 2026 Hotels

Name of Hotel	Rates (S/D)**	Distance from MCC
Hilton Minneapolis*	\$199	Connected
Hilton Garden Inn Minneapolis	\$229	Across the Street
Holiday Inn Express & Suites	\$179	Across the Street
Hyatt Place	\$169	.2 Miles
Hyatt Regency Minneapolis	\$209	.2 Miles
Indigo Minneapolis	\$229	.2 Miles
Sheraton Minneapolis	\$199	Connected
W Minneapolis	\$229	.5 Miles

*Headquarters Hotel

**Single/Double Occupancy. Rates are quoted exclusive of any applicable taxes (which is currently 17%), applicable fees, and/or hotel-specific fees. Currently a Downtown Improvement District Recover Fee will also be added at \$2.00 per night. Subject to change.



BOOK NOW



Don't Forget About Real ID. Starting May 2025, U.S. travelers must be REAL ID compliant to board domestic flights and access certain federal facilities

Travel To Minneapolis, MN

Minneapolis has many options to get you around town. Including an award-winning transit system with light rail and bus-taxis, Uber, Lyft-and bike rentals on the streets with dedicated bike lanes all over the city.

Airport

Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport (MSP) is located approximately 12 miles from downtown Minneapolis. Seventeen airlines including Delta Airlines, service MSP.

Public Transportation

Buses: Bus fares range from \$2 to \$3.25, depending on time of day. To ride a few blocks in the Downtown Zone, the fare is \$.50. "Free Ride" buses will take you along Nicollet Mall.

METRO/Trains: Catch the train on the Blue or Green Line. Light-rail transit (LRT) connects downtown Minneapolis with the airport, Mall of America, Saint Paul, and 43 other stations.

Taxis: Downtown Minneapolis is approximately 12 miles from the airport, with fares averaging \$39 - \$49.

Lyft/Uber, Rideshare Apps
A popular option and one that will drop off exactly where you need to be. MSP airport has designated

areas for Rideshare pick-up points. The app you are using will give you directions on how to find your ride, but we have a few tips if you decide this is your preferred way to get downtown:

- Approximate pricing: \$20-\$40 depending on the time of day and demand.

Parking at the MCC

3rd Ave Parking Ramp (Owned by the MCC): 1401 3rd Ave S., Minneapolis, MN 55404. Rates range from \$5-\$20. You can find parking options at <https://www.mplsparkling.com/>.

NCEA 2026 Justification Letter



Dear _____,

This letter is to request approval to attend the NCEA 2026 Convention & Expo, which will take place April 7-9, 2026, in Minneapolis, MN. This is the largest private-education association gathering in the nation, put on by the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) in partnership with the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis.

Attending professional development and networking with other educators and leaders will help me continue to grow as an educator. I will also be able to meet directly with vendors and suppliers in the Expo Hall to identify new products and services that could help improve my profession.

There will be two general sessions, and over 170 professional development sessions in the areas of: Forming Our Future, Collaborative Leadership, Instructional Excellence, Meeting the Needs of All Students, Nurturing the Whole Child, and School Sustainability and Stewardship.

There are eight official hotels for NCEA 2026. NCEA encourages attendees to book inside their official housing partner, Connections Housing, to ensure the best rates for Convention attendees.

I hope to attend these sessions: _____

Because: _____

Thank you for your consideration,

NCEA 2026 Expense Calculator



See page 7 for more information on how to apply for Title II-A funding.

Use the below Expense Calculator to calculate anticipated cost for NCEA 2026.

EXPENSE	COST SAVINGS TIPS	ESTIMATED COST
REGISTRATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Save money by registering before January 12, 2026.Save money by joining NCEA.	\$ _____
TRANSPORTATION TO/FROM AIRPORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">MSP is approximately 12 miles from downtown.	\$ _____
LODGING	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Book through Connections Housing to get the best rates.	\$ _____
TRANSPORTATION DURING NCEA 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">From taxis, mass transit, and even bicycles, Minneapolis has many different modes of transportation to get you where you need to be.	\$ _____
MEALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">NCEA has arranged for concession stands with a variety of food options to be available throughout NCEA 2026.	\$ _____
PARKING	<ul style="list-style-type: none">There are many parking options near the MCC. Parking rates are subject to change based on activity in and around the area.	\$ _____
	TOTAL ESTIMATED COST:	\$ _____

NCEA 2026 Goals Worksheet



Complete this worksheet with your specific information and submit it with your request for approval to attend NCEA 2026. Use the NCEA 2026 website to find specific professional learning sessions, networking events, and exhibitors.

GOALS EXAMPLES	NCEA 2026 RESOURCE EXAMPLES
Explore opportunities to strengthen my teaching practice.	Learning Track: <list the sessions that relate to this topic>
Connect with vendors and partners offering classroom resources, instructional technology, curriculum tools, and faith-based materials to support student learning.	Expo Hall: <list of vendor names>
Discover leading practices and innovative strategies to address XYZ challenge.	Networking Events to attend for guidance on XYZ: <list networking events>

YOUR GOAL	NCEA 2026 RESOURCE

COMMENTS

NCEA 2026 Tuesday Keynote Speaker



Bishop Andrew Cozzens, S.T.D., D.D.

Tuesday, April 7, 2026

8:30 – 9:30 AM • Hall C

Bishop Andrew Cozzens, a graduate of Benedictine College in Atchison, KS, served as a missionary for young people with both Twin Cities-based NET Ministries and the national college ministry Saint Paul's Outreach before entering seminary. He was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis in 1997 and after serving in two parishes was sent to Rome for doctoral studies, where he completed a doctorate degree in sacramental theology focusing on Saint John Paul II's theology of the *Priest as the Bridegroom of the Church*. His book *A Living Image of the Bridegroom: The Priesthood and the Evangelical Counsels* was published in 2020 through the Institute for Priestly Formation out of Omaha, an organization for which he also serves as president. After teaching in seminary formation for eight years, Bishop Cozzens was ordained to the episcopacy in 2013 as an auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis. On December 6, 2021, he was installed as the eighth bishop of the Diocese of Crookston. He was tasked by the U.S. Bishops with leading a three-year National Eucharistic Revival which began in 2022 and has impacted the U.S. Church at every level seeking to strengthen Eucharistic belief and practice and help the U.S. Church make a missionary conversion. As part of the Revival, he founded and is the first President of the National Eucharistic Congress Corporation and he oversaw the 10th National Eucharistic Congress July 17-21, 2024, in Indianapolis where over 60,000 Catholics gathered to worship the Eucharistic Lord and be sent on mission across the country. This was the first National Eucharistic Congress in the United States in almost 50 years.

NCEA 2026 Thursday Keynote Speaker



REGISTER NOW

Sr. Mary Grace, SV

Thursday, April 9, 2026

11:30 AM – 12:30 PM • Hall C

Sr. Mary Grace, SV, grew up on the shores of Sydney, Australia, and graduated from the University of Notre Dame Australia with a degree in theology. After meeting the Sisters of Life during World Youth Day Sydney, she was captivated by the beauty of every human life and feeling compelled to lay down her life to protect it. She worked for the campus ministry team before entering the Sisters of Life in the Bronx, NY, in 2013. Sister Mary Grace made her first vows in 2018 and professed her final vows in 2023. She was first missioned for three years in Toronto, Canada, serving vulnerable pregnant women and their unborn children, inviting those wounded by abortion into the healing mercy of Jesus, and offering retreats. Sister currently serves as the Evangelization Mission Coordinator for the Community in Denver, where she currently resides. The Evangelization Mission coordinates the sharing of the charism of life and fostering a culture of life throughout the US and worldwide, through in-person mission trips, media, and online outreach. She is also the co-host of the Sisters of Life Podcast 'Let Love' and is currently pursuing a Master of Arts in Theology.

NCEA 2026 Continuing Education Units (CEUs)



Earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs) at NCEA 2026

Show your dedication to excellence in Catholic education and lifelong learning. Advance your professional growth and earn one CEU (ten hours) for attending NCEA 2026.

**Participants should check with their diocese or their state to ensure CEUs will be recognized*

Fees

NCEA Members: FREE - A benefit of your NCEA membership!

Non-Members: \$50.00 - [Join NCEA today](#) to waive fees and enjoy other exclusive benefits!



[LEARN MORE](#)

How to Earn Your CEU

Participants must attend breakout sessions in full and complete the corresponding session, submit a reflection assignment, and Convention evaluations. Partial credit will not be given. Participants who meet all requirements will receive a certificate of completion. More information can be found by scanning the QR code.

NCEA 2026 Invited Sessions

Session speakers who have accepted NCEA's invitation to speak as of October 7.

Please check www.NCEA.org/NCEA2026 for the latest information.

All sessions take place at the MCC unless otherwise indicated.



Collaborative Leadership

Avoid Teacher Burnout: Lean into Prayer and Fill Your Cup

This session is geared toward educators at all grade levels. The focus of this session is on best practices and strategies for teachers to avoid burnout by focusing on prayer, rest, and intentionality. Teachers will discover ways to regroup, recharge, and "fill their cup" while spending time praying with and for their school community.

NSBECS Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

ELM, SEC

(Board Series) I Am the Vine, You are the Branches: The Spiritual Core of Catholic School Governance

One of the most transformational forces in Catholic education is a well-formed school board. Grounded in the NSBECS and informed by current research and Vatican documents, this interactive session explores the spiritual foundations of board service, how board members support mission, and how effective formation strengthens Catholic identity.

Participants will engage with best practices from the field for integrating prayer, discernment, and mission into board work, with time to learn from one another. Attendees will leave with practical tools and strategies they can use immediately to enhance the faith formation of their boards.

NSBECS Domain: Governance and Leadership

BOA, ADM

(Board Series) Setting the Standard - Utilizing the NSBECS to Cultivate a Standards-Driven Culture

This session will explore how school boards can strategically leverage the *National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools* (NSBECS) to foster a thriving educational culture. We will delve into how a board's commitment to these benchmarks moves beyond mere compliance, serving as a powerful blueprint for guiding vision, mission, and operational vitality. Participants will learn practical approaches for integrating standards into board governance, ensuring fiscal responsibility, and championing

the school's unique mission and Catholic identity. Discover how a standards-driven approach empowers the board to provide grace, guidance, and a clear vision, ultimately leading to sustained success and a vibrant Catholic school community.

NSBECS Domain: Governance and Leadership

BOA, ADM

(Board Series) Believe and Lead: A Transformative Servant Leadership Model to Deepen Mission Fidelity and Inspire Sustainable Catholic School Governance

This interactive session, presented entirely in Spanish, explores the transformative impact of servant leadership in Catholic schools. Dr. Raúl Nieves, drawing from his doctoral research, presents data, lived leadership experiences, and pastoral insight to examine how this model can address declining enrollment, disengaged communities, and weakened Catholic identity. Participants will reflect and engage in dialogue, gaining tools to renew school culture. Rooted in the Gospel and inspired by Robert Greenleaf,

SESSION TARGET AUDIENCES:

BOA Board Members

DIO Diocesan Leaders

ADM Site Administrators

ECT Early Childhood Teachers (Preschool-Kindergarten)

ELM Elementary Teachers

MID Middle School Teachers

SEC Secondary Teachers

CNS Counselors

MKT Advancement/Marketing Directors

PAS Pastors Serving School Communities

CAM Campus Ministers

this approach highlights the role of leaders and teachers as co-responsible agents of mission, whose influence extends beyond administration into the spiritual and human formation of the school community.

NSBECS Domain: Governance and Leadership

ADM, MID

Build Your Board to Build Your School

In this session, attendees will learn how to strengthen their Catholic school board through intentional recruitment strategies rooted in mission and focus on the strategic needs of the school. Using a sample board matrix tool, participants will assess needs aligned with their school's goals, identify and vet prospects, and develop a plan to engage new board members. The session includes interactive exercises and practical resources to help leaders build boards that are diverse, mission-driven, and capable of advancing the school's vision. Whether you have an advisory board, board of specified jurisdiction, or board of trustees, you will walk away with concrete action steps to build your board!

NSBECS Domain: Governance and Leadership

BOA, PAS

(Board Series) Visionary Leadership Unleashed: Strategic Planning for Catholic Secondary Schools

Visionary strategic planning involves creating a bold, long-term vision that aligns with your school's mission, inspires a broad array of stakeholders, and is rooted in Catholic identity. Done effectively, it requires identifying emerging trends, understanding community needs, and setting ambitious yet achievable goals. This process prioritizes innovation, leveraging resources creatively, and building partnerships to maximize impact. It also calls for skilled change leadership strategies and an

entrepreneurial mindset from the school leader and the board. Effective visionary planning also incorporates flexibility, allowing your school to adapt to changing circumstances while staying true to its core mission and distinctive purpose.

NSBECS Domain: Operational Vitality

BOA, ADM

Catholic Schools and Gender Ideology: What's at Stake? What Should We Do?

This presentation aims to equip Catholic school leaders with a foundational understanding of gender ideology and its growing influence on educational institutions. As government schools increasingly adopt "gender affirming" practices, Catholic school educators must be prepared to respond with clarity, compassion, and fidelity to Church teaching. The session will introduce participants to key terminology used in contemporary discussions about gender identity, including transgender, cisgender, and more. We will examine how these terms are rooted in a worldview that often conflicts with a Catholic understanding of the human person. Participants will learn to communicate essential truths about the human person with charity and confidence.

NSBECS Domain: Governance and Leadership

ADM, PAS

Crisis Planning Preparedness: From the Binder to Implementation

To meet requirements for comprehensive crisis plans, Catholic school leaders need to include intricate responses to various emergencies and critical incidents. Training faculty, staff, and students to follow these protocols has unique differences and similarities from school to school. This presentation will illuminate best practices for



training on the crisis plan and conducting drills with faculty, staff, and students. These best practices will allow school leaders and crisis response teams to proactively adjust procedures accordingly and identify areas for improvement before an actual incident occurs.

NSBECS Domain: Operational Vitality

DIO, ADM

Effective Partnership with Parents: A Simple Approach to Parent Formation

Attendees will learn how to mobilize key parent partners in their community who understand and live out the mission of the Church and school to assist in the effective formation of parents.

Attendees will also be provided with templates that can be used at their site to replicate a similar parent formation. Everyone will be given concrete ideas on how to meaningfully engage with parents as "thought partners" and the primary educators of their children in mutually beneficial ways (for both parent and school).

NSBECS Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

ADM, PAS

Forming Faithful Partnerships: How Parent Agreements Empower Schools to Set and Enforce Expectations

The Church teaches that parents are the primary educators of their children, making the school-parent relationship essential to the success of Catholic education. This session explores how a solid school-parent relationship serves as a vital tool when working through difficult situations. When serious student misbehavior occurs, teachers and administrators must work with parents to address the situation. If a solid relationship already exists with the parents, the process can be smooth. If instead there is no relationship, or a bad relationship, parents might undermine the school mission through gossip, hostility, or refusal to cooperate. Establishing a solid relationship throughout the year - through teacher and administrator contact and parent partnership agreements - provides a solid foundation for addressing student or parent misconduct when it arises.

NSBECS Domain: Governance and Leadership

SEC, MID

Forming the Future: Collaborative Leadership in Launching a Catholic Teacher Corps

Discover how Seattle University and the Archdiocese of Seattle partnered to launch the Catholic Schools Teacher Corps (CSTC)—a transformative teacher formation program rooted in service, spiritual development, and academic excellence. This session explores the collaborative structures that made the initiative possible, offering ideas for dioceses, schools, and universities seeking sustainable solutions to Catholic school staffing, mission alignment, and community formation.

NSBECS Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

DIO, ADM

From Compliance to Culture: A System-Wide Continuous Improvement Process for Catholic School Sustainability

This session outlines a replicable, system-wide Continuous Improvement Process (CIP) that helps Catholic schools move from compliance-driven metrics to mission-centered growth. Built upon NSBECS and accreditation alignment, the CIP incorporates a strategic dashboard, goal-setting templates, and an evaluation rubric that supports leadership development, instructional excellence, and operational vitality. Participants will learn how one diocese is shifting culture, not just compliance, while building leadership capacity and advancing long-term school sustainability.

NSBECS Domain: Governance and Leadership

DIO, ADM

From McNeice to Lynch: Building a Leadership Pipeline from Teacher to Principal

In this session, attendees will learn about the Archdiocese of Boston's strategy to develop Catholic school leaders through a tiered model that leverages both internal programs and external partnerships. Internal programs such as the McNeice Academy for Excellence in Catholic Education orient new teachers to the pillars of Catholic school leadership: faith formation, excellent instruction, and executive management. External partners, such as Boston College Lynch Leadership Academy, offer advanced leadership training to lead teachers and aspiring and sitting principals. Attendees will consider how they might develop a leadership pipeline in their own school communities.

NSBECS Domain: Governance and Leadership

DIO, ADM

From Vision to Impact: Transforming Catholic Schools Through Collaborative Leadership

In a time when Catholic schools must be both mission-driven and results-oriented, collaborative leadership links visionary planning with real outcomes. This session highlights how diocesan leaders, school administrators, and mission-aligned partners can forge dynamic partnerships that elevate Catholic identity, academic excellence, and sustainability. Using real case studies, presenters will share frameworks, strategies, and tools to build trust-based partnerships, align vendor services with school goals, and sustain momentum. Participants will gain a practical model for transformative, collaborative leadership.

NSBECS Domain: Governance and Leadership

ADM, MKT

Generational Grief: Creating a Space to Be Seen and Heard

Bereavement, especially unique losses, is often misunderstood, with multigenerational grief overlooked and under-researched. This session introduces foundational grief concepts and explores how loss impacts multiple generations through real-world case studies—such as grandparents mourning a grandchild and siblings born after a sibling's death. We'll examine how grief manifests differently across generations and its psychological and relational effects. Finally, practical strategies for schools and parishes will be discussed to foster supportive environments where healing, acknowledgment, and being truly seen and heard are possible.

NSBECS Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

PAS, DIO

How to Handle Parents Who Bully the School

Specific communication tools and strategies exist for handling a difficult or challenging parent. The skills taught in this session are simple, practical, and rooted in core Catholic values. This session will show participants how to transform a tense situation with a parent into an opportunity to forge a productive and rewarding partnership that enriches the school, the student, the student's family, and the parish community as a whole. This immersive session helps participants become more comfortable and confident engaging with challenging parents through a better understanding of the human component of being a good communicator.

NSBECS Domain: Governance and Leadership

ADM, MID

Improving Collective Efficacy through the Pastor-Principal Relationship

This session targets how to strengthen the relationship between the pastor and principal to increase mission-related outcomes for the entire church and school community.

NSBECS Domain: Governance and Leadership

PAS, ADM

Let's Get Real About Teacher Retention

In this candid and solution-focused session, we'll get real about the challenges of teacher retention in today's Catholic schools.

Participants will explore the root causes of burnout, disengagement,

and turnover—along with research-based strategies to retain, support, and reignite passion in teachers. Through open dialogue, practical tools, and real-life examples, attendees will leave with actionable steps to build a culture of belonging, purpose, and professional growth. Whether you're a school leader, instructional coach, or educator, this session offers honest insight and hope-filled solutions for sustaining mission-driven teams.

NSBECS Domain: Governance and Leadership

ADM, DIO

Enhancing Board Engagement - From Passive Participants to Active Problem Solvers

Too often, Catholic school boards are underutilized and function as passive recipients of leadership reports that are "managed" to not do harm. Learn tools such as "playing stupid" and "asking for a presentation on..." to bring individual board members from the scripted passive role to an engaged problem-solving role in the area of operational vitality, lifting a burden that by default falls entirely on school leadership. This is NOT one more thing for school leadership to do; in fact, if it is, you're doing it incorrectly. In this session, you will develop a one-year plan for board engagement nested within a multi-year plan for board growth and development, beginning with a focus on operational vitality.

NSBECS Domain: Governance and Leadership

ADM, BOA

Partners in Mission: How Pastoral Staff and School Leadership

Partner Together to Prepare Citizens for This Life and the Next

Catholic schools are more than academic institutions—they are missions of the Church, called to form hearts and minds in the gospel's light. Together, a principal and associate pastor will show attendees how collaboration at one school, rooted in Holy Cross identity, strengthens the Church's mission and fosters a vibrant faith community. Central to their approach is a strong commitment to parent partnership. When families, parish, and school unite in faith, students grow not only in knowledge but in discipleship, leadership, and hope. The session offers practical strategies, real examples, and a shared vision for forming students fully alive in Christ.

NSBECS Domain: Governance and Leadership

PAS, BOA

Priestly Leadership in Catholic Schools: What Award-Winning Pastors Do in Their Schools

In this session, attendees will learn about new research completed in 2025 as a follow-up study to the 2015 NCEA book, *Priestly Leadership in Catholic Schools*. This new study will examine the clergy winners of NCEA's Lead. Learn. Proclaim. Awards and look at the leadership behaviors, qualities, formation, and relationships these pastors hold with their principals. Attendees, either clergy or those who work closely with them, will learn what research tells us about the practices of these leaders as well as implications for professional development and policy.

NSBECS Domain: Governance and Leadership

PAS, DIO



Protecting Our Schools and Communities (Panel Session)

In this panel, leaders from three dioceses will share innovative and practical approaches to strengthening school safety and managing risk across Catholic education. Presentations will highlight creative responses to parent concerns, best practices in school security for principals, and the use of Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) as a framework for sustaining Catholic identity, governance, safety, and organizational vitality. Following their individual presentations, the panelists will engage in a joint discussion that connects these strategies and offers diocesan and site leaders practical insights for protecting students, staff, and the mission of Catholic schools.

NSBECS Domain:

ADM

Strengths-Based Teams: Building Connection, Community, and Collective Impact

In this dynamic session, attendees will discover how to build stronger school culture by recognizing and leveraging the God-given strengths of each team member. Rooted in the Core Value Index (CVI), this experience equips educators and administrators to foster empathy, reduce friction, and strengthen collaboration. When team members understand what drives each other, they communicate better, support one another more intentionally, and work toward shared goals with trust and clarity. Whether you're leading a school or supporting your colleagues, this session offers practical tools for building a thriving team and a mission-driven community.

NSBECS Domain: Governance and Leadership

ADM, DIO

The EI Experience: Emotionally Intelligent Leadership in Action

In this interactive workshop, attendees will discover the EI Experience, where emotionally intelligent leadership comes to life. Participants will explore six core competencies that fuel a healthy school culture—self-awareness, awareness of others, authenticity, emotional reasoning, self-management, and inspiring performance. Through hands-on activities, reflection, and real-world examples, attendees will leave with a deeper understanding of their leadership impact and practical tools to elevate trust, connection, and performance across their school communities.

NSBECS Domain: Governance and Leadership

ADM, SEC

The Journey to Excellence: A Case Study in Catholic School Culture Change

This workshop features an experienced and enlightened panel of Catholic school leaders who will illuminate the audience on how a school's culture reveals its true character, shaped by the collective beliefs, core values, and practices of its community. Sharing the transformative journey that these three leaders have forged serves as a case study to demonstrate that effective cultural change demands courageous leadership from both the board and the head of school. Participants will learn how uniting around shared values not only elevates trust but also enhances collaboration and sparks innovation.

NSBECS Domain: Governance and Leadership

DIO, BOA



The Power of Madrinas: Leadership Rooted in Faith, Heart, and Community

Rooted in Latino cultural tradition and Catholic values, the Madrinas model is a powerful way to engage Latina mothers and community leaders in the mission of Catholic education. In this session, participants will explore how Madrinas can serve as trusted ambassadors who accompany new families, promote enrollment, and help build a welcoming, faith-filled school community. Through prayer, conversation, and practical tools, attendees will leave inspired and equipped to launch or strengthen a Madrinas program in their own school or parish.

NSBECS Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

ADM, MKT

The Priest in the Catholic High School

The various roles which may/can be played by a priest in a high school.

NSBECS Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

PAS, SEC

What is on Your Catholic Leadership Bucket List?

Attendees will learn how to integrate Catholic faith into every aspect of school leadership and culture, from redefining job roles to mission-driven hiring and professional development. They'll discover practical strategies for aligning school operations with faith values, creating roles like Dean of Discipleship, and fostering spiritual and academic excellence. The session will offer real examples of service learning, student-led faith groups, and community engagement that build a vibrant Catholic identity. Attendees will leave with actionable tools to transform their schools into faith-filled, high-achieving communities.

NSBECs Domain: Governance and Leadership

ADM, CAM

Forming Our Future

"Let the Children Come to Me." A Blueprint for Campus Ministry PreK-8

Attendees will learn both the administrative and the practical application sides of campus ministry in the PreK-8 setting. Participants will return to their respective schools with a "blueprint" for executing an effective campus ministry program in their own schools. Moreover, this session will enhance Catholic school educators' ability to "Let the children come to Me."

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

ADM, ELM

A Campus Ministry Department of One: Bitter Lessons, Camaraderie Building, and Critical Tools for Survival.

Have you heard of those Catholic high schools with a large "team" of campus ministers and a full-time chaplain who together form amazing disciples while uplifting the Catholic mission for the whole school? That is not the case at my school. However, if you sometimes feel like the only person to keep all the liturgies, retreats, and a myriad of other faith-related things going, then this session is for you. Here, participants will connect with others who may be the only campus ministry person (or close to that) for their school. I will share tough (and sometimes hilarious!) lessons from my 25 years in ministry. Participants will gain practical tools for self-advocacy, self-care, and ministry/family balance.

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

CAM, ADM

AI and Education: What Does the Church Say?

At every turn today, we see encouragement to embrace artificial intelligence (AI) in our personal and professional lives. In education, the call is particularly strong, whether it be as a tool for teachers to write lesson plans or as a quick way for students to complete homework. Should there be something different about the way Catholic schools approach AI? Come learn more about recent reflections on this topic from Pope Leo XIV and the Holy See. This session will provide a summary of these statements and documents, highlighting the ethical and anthropological considerations related to AI in education. This overview will be followed by points of reflection for Catholic

school teachers and leaders and recommendations to guide practice.

NSBECs Domain: Academic Excellence
SEC MID

Alternative Pathways into the Classroom: Addressing the Teacher Shortage and the Need for Renewal in Catholic Education

Our Catholic schools are in need of teachers. With large numbers of teachers retiring, and the number of undergraduate education majors declining, a gap is forming within our classrooms. Simultaneously, our Catholic schools are in need of a renewal in their Catholic identity. How are we to address the pressing need for skilled educators, while not neglecting the need for renewal? Conversely, how do we fill our classrooms with mission-driven teachers who are also trained in the art of teaching. In this session, attendees will learn more about alternative pathways into teaching in a Catholic school, how they serve the need for skilled and mission-driven teachers, and what characteristics make these programs successful.

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

ADM, PAS

Beauty, Wonder, and the Catholic Classroom

In this session, the attendee will learn about the rich Catholic educational tradition rooted in the beauty and wonder of God and His creation. This session will explore the role that beauty and wonder play in education, especially in the formation of a Christian imagination that leaves open the possibility of an encounter with the supernatural in the midst of daily life.

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

MID, ELM

SESSION TARGET AUDIENCES:

BOA Board Members

DIO Diocesan Leaders

ADM Site Administrators

ECT Early Childhood Teachers (Preschool-Kindergarten)

ELM Elementary Teachers

MID Middle School Teachers

SEC Secondary Teachers

CNS Counselors

MKT Advancement/Marketing Directors

PAS Pastors Serving School Communities

CAM Campus Ministers

Believe in the Mission: Making the Church Visible in the Everyday Life of Catholic Schools

What does it really look like when students and staff believe in the mission of the Church and live it daily? This session will share real, replicable practices that bring Catholic identity to life in the classroom, the faculty room, and beyond the school walls. Discover how ordinary routines and school culture moments can reflect the extraordinary truth of the gospel and foster a deep, authentic belief in Christ's presence in our lives. Participants will leave with practical strategies, sample projects, and a renewed commitment to making belief visible every day.

NSBECS Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

CAM, MID

Brilliant Bilingual Beginnings: Nurturing Multilingualism at the Preschool Level

We will explore the power of early language development in shaping lifelong multilingual learners. This session will highlight the cognitive, social, and cultural benefits of introducing multiple languages in early childhood settings. Participants will gain practical insights and strategies for fostering rich, developmentally appropriate multilingual environments in preschool classrooms. Also, we will share the magnificent story of 62+ schools across two major (arch)dioceses combating the trend of preschool enrollment decline while deeply honoring the rich linguistic gifts of their communities through the formation of language-intensive preschools (30 minutes a day of targeted literacy-focused language instruction).

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence
ECT, ADM

Building a School Mass Choir

In this session, participants will learn the fundamentals of building a choir to serve school needs for school Masses and for other liturgical events within the school community. Participants will explore different methods of recruitment and attrition for members in a way that meets the grade levels and musical and educational expectations of their schools, as well as integrating the choir into the liturgical needs of the school. Participants will also acquire a variety of resources to help them plan and worship at their Masses with a deeper understanding and appreciation of sacred music and the importance of vocal music in the communal prayer of the Church.

NSBECS Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

MID, SEC

Building Belonging and Leadership: How a House System Transformed Culture in a Catholic Upper Elementary and Middle School

In 2023, All Saints Catholic School launched a House System for grades 5–8 to deepen community, promote leadership, and prepare students for high school. In this session, we will share how this classical concept—reimagined for the 21st-century Catholic school—fosters identity, connection, and a strong sense of belonging. Learn how houses are shaping student behavior, engagement, and spiritual formation. Walk away with practical ideas and a roadmap for starting or strengthening a House System in your own school.

NSBECS Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

MID, CNS

Called to Lead: Experiential Wisdom for Catholic School Leaders

Drawing from 25 years' experience founding and heading a PreK-12 Catholic school, this session offers insight and inspiration to

new, recent, and aspiring Catholic school leaders. Different from the good things that are taught in graduate schools, the session presents experiential wisdom to address common questions like, "Am I really the right person for this job?," "I don't feel qualified!," "What if I don't have what it takes to raise money?," and much more.

NSBECS Domain: Governance and Leadership

ADM, PAS

Called to Lead: Lessons from Joan of Arc for Today's Catholic School Leaders

Amid challenges of enrollment pressure, staff burnout, and mission drift, Catholic school leaders are called to lead with the courage and conviction of saints. This engaging, story-rich session draws on the leadership journey of St. Joan of Arc to explore how spiritual clarity, boldness, and deep purpose can shape visionary leadership today. Participants will reflect on their own mission, gain tools for discernment and decision-making, and leave with a "mission map" to lead their communities with purpose and resilience.

Participants will reflect on their own leadership call and learn how to lead with conviction—especially in times of challenge, uncertainty, or change.

NSBECS Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

ADM, DIO

Catholic Culture: How to Build Future Disciples

Having opportunities to foster a Catholic culture is important in every Catholic school. The attendee will learn how to encourage and foster participation in the life of the parish. The presenter will share creative ideas on how to grow the faith life of teachers, students, and parents.

NSBECS Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

PAS, ELM

Catholicism Across the Curriculum

Every subject is always taught from some point of view or other. In a Catholic school, that point of view should be Catholic. But what does this look like in practice? How can we integrate faith across in the curriculum in ways that are authentic, compelling, and respect the integrity of each subject? While adding Catholic content can be a valuable step, it is more important to think about how a Catholic worldview shapes our approach to all knowledge and learning. When we come to see this clearly, we realize that no content is untouched by our faith.

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

SEC, MID

Celebrating the Easter Season: 50 Ways for 50 Days

So many Catholics and Catholic schools do such a great job observing the season of Lent. Students can pray, fast, and give in a variety of ways for all 40 days. But what about Easter? There's a reason the season of Easter is even longer than Lent—let's make our celebration of this season last all 50 days. In this session, we will explore 50 easy ways to keep the Easter season alive and joyful in your school. Ideas will apply to elementary and secondary teachers and campus ministers.

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

CAM, ELM

Character Education with Dr. King's Letter from Birmingham Jail

Martin Luther King, Jr.'s *Letter from Birmingham Jail* was crucial in the cause of racial equality. Its rhetoric still has power. But the heart of his argument, about the foundation of just laws, is less emphasized today, and thus, a great resource for character education is often overlooked. If we wish to instill a firm foundation for human dignity and human

rights, we should recover Dr. King's compelling appropriation of perennial ethical principles.

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

SEC, MID

Community Service through Civics Class

In this session, attendees will learn: 1) How to guide students in identifying meaningful community needs through research and reflection. 2) Strategies for designing effective, creative solutions that address real-world issues. 3) Best practices for supporting student teamwork, planning, and project management. 4) Techniques for organizing and implementing successful community events. 5) Ways to assess student learning and civic engagement throughout the project. 6) How to foster student ownership, leadership, and civic responsibility in project-based learning. 7) Inspiring examples of student-led initiatives that have made a positive impact in their communities.

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

SEC, CAM

Contemplative Leadership: Thinking with a Catholic Worldview for Decision-Making

The Catholic school leader has a distinctive role that requires strategic decision-making. Contemplative leadership practice assists in the integration of reflection and action, grounded in gospel values as exemplified in virtues, Catholic theology, and Church teaching. This session will address how leader decision-making integrates a Catholic worldview into the various domains of school life through decision-making that creates a faith formation culture within the school supported by the curriculum, psycho-social programs, and parent social capital. Attendees will have opportunities to

contribute to the discussion from their real-world experiences.

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

ADM, DIO

Cultivating a Sacramental Worldview Across the Curriculum

This workshop offers Catholic school teachers and catechists the tools to integrate the Church's sacramental vision across all subject areas. Rooted in scripture, the catechism, the writings of the saints, and magisterial teaching, participants will explore how to reveal God's presence through science, literature, history, math, and the arts, and will identify creative ways to infuse truth, beauty, and goodness across the curriculum for all age groups.

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

SEC, MID

Deepening Children's Understanding of God's Word Through Song

Looking for creative and inspiring ways to share scripture with children? Join Australian educator and composer John Burland as he presents a variety of age-appropriate songs that bring the scriptures to life for elementary-aged students. Drawing from both the Old and New Testaments, these engaging and easy-to-learn songs help children encounter the story of salvation history in a meaningful and memorable way. Through the integration of music, movement, and prayer, John will model practical ways to make God's Word come alive in the classroom and beyond. Come ready to raise your voice as we celebrate God's Word through age-appropriate, easy-to-learn, songs of scripture!

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

ELM, MID

Developing a Comprehensive, Four-Year Retreat Program at Catholic High Schools

This session will examine how developmental and multiple intelligence theories can guide the creation of a four-year retreat program at Catholic high schools. Best practices from schools across the nation will be examined, including effective post-retreat follow-up programs and opportunities. Participants will leave with several ideas to improve their retreat program.

NSBECS Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

CAM, SEC

Evangelization in the Age of Polarization: Practical Tips to Foster Respectful and Productive Classroom Conversations That Change Minds

In a post-Roe America, high schoolers are bombarded by pro-choice culture, and it feels impossible to have meaningful conversations about controversial issues like abortion. Rather than resort to angry debate or just avoid the topic, pro-life apologist Emily Geiger wants students to be able to dialogue thoughtfully. Emily will unpack practical tools and arguments to empower your students as effective pro-life ambassadors who can engage intelligently and respectfully with the most powerful pro-choice talking points of our day. Fostering productive dialogue that meets all students—pro-life or pro-choice—where they are forms students into adults who think through important issues for themselves and apply Catholic values to their daily lives.

NSBECS Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

SEC, PAS

Evangelizing as a Missionary Disciple: The Impact of Charism on the Ministry of Catholic Education

This session explores the characteristics of a missionary disciple, the five stages of becoming a missionary disciple and how to progress through these stages/accompany others through these stages. Together, we will also study the definition and types of charisms within the Catholic Church, how charisms infuse our ministries with supernatural effects, and review the research about the perception of Catholic school leaders who discerned their charism and the impact it had on their spiritual leadership.

NSBECS Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

ELM, SEC

Forming Champions for Life: A Holistic Values-Based Approach to Student-Athlete Leadership Development

This session explores a holistic, athlete-centered, and values-based approach to developing leadership in student-athletes. Rooted in Catholic identity and guided by the principles of human dignity, optimized personal performance, and formation of the whole person, participants will learn of core elements in the design and implementation of a student-athlete leadership program that nurtures life readiness—spiritually, mentally, physically, and socially. The model integrates faith formation, character education,

and performance psychology, empowering student-athletes to lead with integrity, humility, and purpose both on and off the field.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence

SEC, ADM

From Burnout to Balance: What the Saints Can Teach Us About Flourishing in Our Vocation While Avoiding Complete Exhaustion

Currently, in the United States, burnout affects workers in nearly every industry. Research shows that 63 percent of physicians, nearly 70 percent of nurses, 55 percent of educators, and 40 percent of the overall workforce are experiencing burnout. Those working for the Catholic Church are also at risk. Alarming numbers of Catholic school educators, lay ministers, social workers, and even pastors are leaving their roles due to burnout. Burnout is real, and the consequences are significant. This presentation explores “vocation” according to the mind of the Church and the lives of the saints. We will also highlight research-based, practical steps for Catholic school leaders and educators to grow in vocation while discovering that elusive “balance in life” that we seek.

NSBECS Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

ELM, CAM



Heart Speaks to Heart: How Leaders Use Rhetoric to Form School Culture

In this session, attendees will learn how to use rhetoric to shape and strengthen Catholic culture in their schools. Drawing on classical and Catholic sources—from Aristotle to St. John Henry Newman—we will explore how a school leader's voice not only reflects but also forms belief: belief in the school's mission, its people, and its future. Participants will gain practical strategies for developing a leadership voice that motivates for mission, inspires trust, and builds a vibrant Catholic culture. Whether speaking to parents, faculty, or students, attendees will discover how intentional communication can move both hearts and minds—and why rhetoric is a vital tool for every Catholic school leader.

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

ADM, DIO



Hearts of Lambs, Energy of Wolves

St. John Bosco devoted his life to serving and forming young men. Today, middle school boys are often categorized as overly energetic, disruptive, and disrespectful. In this session, we will explore the ways that St. John Bosco worked with the boys in his care and relate it directly to how we can improve our boys' experiences in middle school.

NSBECs Domain: Academic Excellence
MID

Igniting Faith in the Middle: Creative Campus Ministry for Middle School Students

In this session, attendees will learn how to engage the unique spiritual and developmental needs of middle school students through creative and age-appropriate ministry. Middle schoolers may be seen as the "middle child" of education, but their potential for faith formation is powerful when approached with intention and innovation. Led by middle school campus minister and religion teacher Kate Beskid, this session will explore practical strategies for energizing school Masses, retreats, service projects, and religion classes. Attendees will leave with a renewed sense of mission, fresh ideas, and a plan of action to enhance the spiritual experience of their students.

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

CAM, MID

Inspiring Catholic School Educators Through the Lives of Saints

Catholic school educators are entrusted with the responsibility of nurturing both the intellect and the spirit of their students. Balancing academic excellence with spiritual formation is central to this vocation. This session introduces educators to six saints whose lives exemplify this balance and whose legacies continue to inspire Catholic education today. Come learn about the lives of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, St. John Bosco, St. Francis Cabrini, St. John Baptist de La Salle, St. Katharine Drexel, and St. Joseph Calasanz, and their contribution to Catholic education. Through their stories, we will discover practical strategies, pedagogical insights, and spiritual practices that continue to inform and inspire Catholic education today.

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

ELM, MID

Integrating Faith and Science in the Biology Classroom

This session will examine data that has led young Catholics to leave the faith because they believe science shows that God is not needed. They propose philosophy as an important link between science and theology and necessary to show the harmony between faith and science. I will share three examples of the integration of science and faith from my own biology classroom: defining life, applying Aristotle's Four Causes to living things, and how Catholic moral teaching applies to somatic cell gene therapy and germ line gene therapy. The heart of Catholic teaching regarding the theory of evolution will also be addressed in brief. Finally, I will share information about available resources and resources I believe still need to be developed.

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

SEC, MID

Middle School Mayhem—Transformed by Love

If immaturity, inability to focus, impulsivity, lack of accountability, and chronic disruptive behavior impedes class productivity in your school, this session will illustrate how two middle schools reversed the COVID-effect and increased student self-control, self-reliance, and industry. Participants will benefit from handout material.

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

MID, ADM

Mission Growth: Connecting Faith and Reason in Accreditation

In this session, the attendees will learn the importance of connecting our Catholic faith and what the Church teaches us on education to the continuous improvement process of accreditation.

Accreditation processes are more than quality assurance and data analysis. In a distinctly Catholic accreditation process, data collected and analyzed should reflect Church teachings and be grounded in prayer and discernment to hear God's call in the process of growth toward mission. This session will guide attendees to find the connection of faith and reason in the accreditation growth process.

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

DIO, ADM

Planning Good School Liturgies: Best Practices from the Church's Documents, Experienced Liturgists, and Wise Educators

How do we prepare and lead children to a deeper realization of their participation at the Eucharistic table and at other liturgies, as the Vatican's Directory for Masses with Children explains (no. 8)? Drawing from that document and others, attendees will come to understand the adaptations the Church recommends when celebrating liturgies with young

people, to include the use of the Lectionary for Masses with Children, Eucharistic Prayers for Masses with Children, and other Church texts. Best practices and wisdom from experienced liturgists and educators will also be shared on how to foster the full, conscious, and active participation of children when celebrating the liturgy, the sacraments, and sacramentals.

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

PAS, CAM

Service Learning Roundtable Discussion

Service is a vital part of Catholic education, but creating meaningful opportunities can be a challenge. Too often, student service is reduced to tasks like mowing a lawn or walking a neighbor's dog. This session invites participants into a guided conversation about what service looks like at their schools—sharing successes, struggles, and creative approaches. Rather than a traditional presentation, this collaborative discussion will offer practical ideas and inspiration for developing service programs that form students in faith and foster a deeper commitment to living out the gospel.

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

CAM, SEC

Studying the Bible through Annotation

Attendees will work with an annotation system that will allow them to better observe Bible text. They will learn how to relate these annotations to discussions about the interpretation and the application of the text to the lives of their students.

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

CAM, CAM

Teaching the History of the Church as an Interdisciplinary Project

The Church, by its own definition, is not simply an organization. It is a society in its own right whose boundaries transcend geography and whose membership is constituted by those baptized into the community. As St Augustine famously observed, this makes Catholics citizens of both an earthly city and a spiritual city. A deeper and more mature understanding of Christian discipleship requires, of course, a better understanding of theology, but it also requires a stronger acquaintance with the history of the Church community. This session will consider ways of de-complicating the 2,000 years of the Church's experience, as well as recognizing the action of the Spirit beneath the surface of secular events.

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

SEC, MID

Teen Girls: The Crisis, The Cause, and The Creator

More than any other demographic group, teen girls are facing increasing crises in the culture in which we live. These challenges are revealed in unprecedented numbers of girls feeling hopeless, depressed, and considering suicide. This is far beyond concerning—it is shocking! The why is complicated but warrants discussion. The answer lies in all that is true, beautiful, and good. Join us to discover how to bring your teen girls to wholeness, holiness, and health!

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

MID, SEC

To Lead as Jesus Did: Practices for Developing Student Leadership

This session will present practices for student leadership development emerging from a doctoral study of campus ministers and student activities directors from Catholic secondary schools in California. It will also provide criteria for determining the effectiveness of student leadership and a cycle for developing student leaders. The practices, criteria, and cycle can be implemented as strategies to strengthen the purposeful development of student leaders in Catholic schools.

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

CAM, SEC

To the Heights: Witnessing to Virtue in our Catholic Schools

This session looks at the goal of Catholic education as defined by the Church, our recent popes, and those who have served in Catholic education. Specifically, attendees will learn how to intentionally cultivate and celebrate virtue in the school; what the Church teaches about being a witness as a teacher; practical ways to serve as a witness and support teachers in the classroom as witnesses of their faith and excellence; practical ways to incorporate virtue into the formation of students, families, and teachers; and how cultivating closer relationships with Mary and the saints keeps us aligned to our mission.

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

ADM, PAS

(Board Series) Transforming Catholic School Leadership: A Mission Retreat for Board Members

In this session, attendees will explore a mission-focused retreat framework designed to strengthen Catholic identity and leadership from the top down. "Illuminate the Mission" offers governing board members a dynamic and prayerful experience that deepens understanding of the Church's mission as it applies to Catholic education. Grounded in Trinitarian theology and apostolic witness, this model is structured for consistent use across dioceses and school systems. Participants will leave equipped to champion and sustain a mission-driven culture in their schools.

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

BOA, DIO

Instructional Excellence

Authentic Assessment in Early Childhood

Assessment is often associated with paperwork and formal documentation, but what if we shifted our perspective to view assessment as a meaningful opportunity to know, understand and support the development of the children in our care? In this session, educators will learn how to: Recognize and interpret the many ways young children communicate their learning, growth, and needs; Implement authentic assessment strategies that reflect developmentally appropriate practice; Create environments and experiences, then invite children to demonstrate their knowledge in multiple ways. By the end of the session, attendees will leave with a renewed vision of assessment, as

a relational informative process, not just a procedural task.

NSBECs Domain: Academic Excellence
ECT, ADM

Being Intentional with Evaluations & Observations

This session will focus on the role of administrators in the evaluation of teaching staff. The goal of this session is for administrators to leave with an intentional and structured approach for staff evaluations and observations, including pre-observation and post-observation discussion and resources. Attendees will receive tools and resources that can be implemented immediately. This session will help administrators become comfortable with the evaluation process and ease their staff's anxiety surrounding the process. The approach shared in this session will enable administrators to be intentional with the evaluation and observation process to not only support their staff but also to align the process with their school's mission, improvement plan, and goals.

NSBECs Domain: Academic Excellence
ADM, DIO

Believe in Bright Beginnings: Building Knowledge and Early Literacy

This session explores how early literacy is rooted in rich language, joyful engagement, and intentional instruction. Educators will learn research-based strategies for building emergent literacy through oral language, phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, vocabulary, and comprehension. Participants will examine high-impact routines, the role of read-alouds, and ways to create print- and language-rich environments. The session emphasizes inclusion,

SESSION TARGET AUDIENCES:

BOA Board Members
DIO Diocesan Leaders
ADM Site Administrators

ECT Early Childhood Teachers (Preschool-Kindergarten)

ELM Elementary Teachers
MID Middle School Teachers
SEC Secondary Teachers

CNS Counselors

MKT Advancement/Marketing Directors
PAS Pastors Serving School Communities
CAM Campus Ministers

equity, and developmentally appropriate practices for diverse learners. Ideal for preschool and kindergarten educators committed to strong starts and lifelong learning.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence
ECT, ELM

Building Thinking Skills in Preschool and Kindergarten: A Brain-Based Model of Early Childhood Education

What does science teach us about the development of the brain in preschool and kindergartens, and how can we apply current research to the methodology we use in early childhood education, including religious education? Dr. Joseph D. White, clinical child psychologist and early childhood religious education author, will discuss what we know now about how young children learn best, and how we can put it into practice.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence
ECT, ADM

Classroom Changes with Ripple Effects on Students' Math Learning

Many instructional changes have an impact on student engagement and learning in math. Number sense is one area that has profound ripple effects on student success. Research has shown number sense is closely tied to achievement and success in mathematics at any grade level. Come participate in evidence-based learning activities that you can implement in your classroom immediately for a big impact on your students' number sense and success in mathematics

learning. Activities and learning will be appropriate for elementary through middle school learning environments. You will leave this session with activities and actions that you can implement tomorrow in your classroom.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence
ELM, MID

Conceptual Learning—Building Connections

Learn more about how to help your students go beyond learning facts to developing conceptual understanding. Participants will explore topics vs. concepts using Minnesota State Science Standards as an example. They will engage in visible thinking strategies that work across content areas. Participants will learn the value of connecting prior and new knowledge, connecting facts, procedures and thinking, and connecting learning to both local and global environments.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence
ELM, MID

Conceptualizing Math Through the CRA Model

This session will equip educators with practical strategies for using math manipulatives to strengthen conceptual understanding and student engagement across grade levels. Participants will explore the purpose and benefits of manipulatives, examine common tools like base-ten blocks, geoboards, and fraction tiles, and discover how to make effective use of everyday and virtual materials.

The session provides a framework for how to introduce, manage, and model manipulatives in ways that support diverse learners, build number sense, and promote mathematical thinking. Teachers will leave with guiding questions, implementation tips, and thrifty ideas for classroom use—plus ready-to-use online resources.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence
ELM, MID

Dante's Lessons for Teachers

Dante's Comedy tells the story of a man who is lost in life and in need of direction. He is given direction in the form of two teachers—Virgil and Beatrice—who lead him from a condition of bondage, ignorance, and death into freedom, knowledge, and life. In Dante's poem, then, the role of the educator is understood as participating in and being ordered to God's loving plan for every human being. More than this, however, Dante's poem offers educators today key insights into the vocation of the teacher, the role of authority, and the loving relationship that structures every true educational endeavor. In this presentation, we will examine these lessons and discuss how we might implement them into our own teaching.

NSBECS Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity
SEC, MID



Engineering Faith: Designing Interdisciplinary Student Projects with Purpose and Catholic Identity

Walk away from this session with lessons that demonstrate that God is present in your school! We will provide a roadmap linking Catholic Identity to STREAM and cross-curricular lessons that enhance student learning, elevate faith formation, and enrich the lives of your school community.

*NSBECs Domain: Academic Excellence
ELM, MID*

Faith and Reason as Two Wings: Teaching Psychology as a Gateway to Catholic Faith

Psychology education presents a distinct opportunity to blend Catholic thought with secular academic study, thereby promoting intellectual rigor and spiritual growth. This presentation will show how to harness students' natural curiosity about themselves and their world to explore deeper questions of Catholic anthropology. Modern students naturally grapple with a wide range of questions like "Can AI ever become conscious?" "Why memorize anything when we have the internet?," or "What's wrong with living together before marriage?" We'll explore practical strategies for guiding these conversations toward meaningful encounters which highlight the convergence between psychology research and Catholic teachings.

*NSBECs Domain: Academic Excellence
SEC, CNS*

From Data to Decisions: How Data Literacy and Diocesan Leadership Brought Change to Instructional Practices

This session equips you with the practical skills to create a data-driven culture in your school and provides a framework for data-driven instructional decision making that works across tools and contexts to drive academic growth and target areas of need from the

student to curricular levels. We will explore the significance of data literacy in Catholic education, focusing on how data leadership in the Diocese of Bridgeport has enhanced decision-making, improved student outcomes, and aligns with the mission of Catholic schools. Participants will examine a case from the Diocese of Bridgeport, where data-driven initiatives have led to personalized learning environments and innovative teaching practices.

*NSBECs Domain: Academic Excellence
ELM, MID*

From Fear to Formation: Helping Students Thrive with AI Through a Catholic Lens

Artificial intelligence is changing the way we teach and learn, but Catholic schools have an opportunity to respond with something deeper than caution or curiosity. We can respond with conviction. In this session, members of the iDEAL Institute at Loyola Marymount University will share their Catholic Companion Framework for AI and Innovation, a tool to help Catholic schools and communities approach emerging technologies through the lens of faith. Designed for teachers, leaders, and parish ministers, the Catholic Companion Framework offers practical strategies, reflection, and faith-informed guidance to support students in growing in virtue, wisdom, and digital responsibility. While this session will highlight middle school and high school applications, the framework itself can be used by all grade levels and roles, making this session valuable to anyone invested in Catholic education.

*NSBECs Domain: Academic Excellence
MID, SEC*

From Silence to Strength: Cultivating Student Voice Through Total Participation Techniques

Discover how Total Participation Techniques (TPTs) can transform passive classrooms into dynamic spaces where every student is heard. This session will explore practical, adaptable strategies that engage all learners, foster equity, and build confidence across grade levels. Participants will leave with ready-to-use tools that elevate student voice, promote active thinking, and create a culture of meaningful participation in every lesson.

*NSBECs Domain: Academic Excellence
ELM, MID*

Get Them Writing! Creative Multimodal Approaches for Upper Elementary Writers

In this session, attendees will learn creative multimodal strategies to inspire upper elementary students' writing by integrating literary texts, visual arts, music, drama, and poetry. Participants will explore how these diverse art forms can support writing across genres, build student voices, and foster authentic engagement.

*NSBECs Domain: Academic Excellence
ELM, MID*

How Catholic Schools Are Actually Using GenAI

Curious how Catholic schools are navigating the rise of generative AI? This session pulls back the curtain on what's actually happening in Catholic school classrooms across the country. We'll explore how educators are experimenting with AI tools, what kinds of policies—both formal and informal—are emerging, and how professional development is helping teachers and leaders use AI wisely. We'll also spotlight promising tools that remain under the radar and share insights from the field that can inform your own next steps.

*NSBECs Domain: Academic Excellence
SEC, ELM*

I Need More Time! Hacks, Including AI That Give You More Time.

Teachers juggle endless tasks—lesson planning, grading, communication, and classroom management. This workshop delivers quick hacks and AI-powered tools to help you save time, reduce stress, and focus more on what matters most: your students.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence SEC, MID

Leading for Learning: Adaptive Leadership, Feedback, and Data Cycles to Close Student Achievement Gaps

Adaptive school leaders must address student achievement gaps rooted in cultural and instructional disparities. This session introduces strategies from the Adaptive Leadership Framework to guide PLCs in answering: "What do we do when students do not master a concept?" Attendees will learn to apply Mandouri and Hattie's Effective Learner Feedback Model and Bambrick-Santoyo's Data-Driven Coaching Cycle to develop action plans that increase teacher efficacy and support small-group instruction within Tier 1. Participants will leave with practical tools to foster collaboration, improve learning, and fulfill the Catholic mission to serve all students.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence ELM, MID

Leading with Purpose: How Catholic School Leaders Can Use AI to Lighten the Load and Lead with Clarity

Catholic school leaders juggle an enormous range of responsibilities—from evaluation and parent communication to instructional planning and community-building. This session explores how AI tools can support school leaders in managing operational tasks with greater efficiency and purpose. Rooted in

Catholic values, the session will showcase time-saving tools for drafting newsletters, analyzing school data, supporting teacher feedback, and more. Leaders will also explore common concerns about AI use and walk away with realistic, ethical ways to model responsible AI use in their school communities.

NSBECS Domain: Governance and Leadership

ADM

Math Fluency: Moving Beyond Basic Facts

This session will focus on mathematical fluency beyond basic facts. Based in research, participants will understand how fluency is built upon conceptual understanding, strategic competence, adaptive reasoning, and procedural fluency. Through simple activities, participants will gain knowledge of how they can improve their student's fluency without revamping what is already happening in their classroom. These small tweaks helped our urban school increase our MAP scores significantly.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence

ELM, MID

Math Party! Engaging Mathematical Thinkers in Upper Elementary and Middle School

Want to make math engaging and relevant for your students? Want to encourage your students to think like mathematicians, find patterns, make sense of numbers, and enjoy math? Then this is the session for you! This interactive session will include tried and true activities as well as new content not shared in my previous NCEA sessions. You will learn many whole group, small group, and center activities as well as daily routines you can use right away in your classroom. We will spend a small amount of time discussing the latest



research on math instruction and number sense, and a lot of time learning practical strategies for teaching math. Most, if not all, of the activities shared are free. Let's make math creative, accessible, and enjoyable!

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence MID, ELM

Matteo Ricci: Interdisciplinary High School Programming in the Catholic Tradition

This session is an interdisciplinary approach to learning, allowing students to explore themes at the core of the gospel: compassion, justice, stewardship, human dignity, and community. This kind of learning also mirrors the holistic view of humanity that the gospel promotes. Jesus didn't just speak in parables to theologians—he spoke to fishermen, tax collectors, and the sick. Interdisciplinary education reflects that spirit: it meets people where they are, connects real-world issues to deeper truths, and nurtures both intellect and soul. Specifically, attendees will hear about curricula, pedagogy, and assessment methods that are research-based and valuable to the missions of all Catholic schools.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence SEC, MID

Mic Drop Moments—Setting the Stage for WOW Learning!

Turn your classroom into a stage where students can't wait for the curtain to rise! In this high-energy session, we'll explore ways to create "mic drop moments"—those unforgettable, joy-filled experiences that leave students inspired, engaged, and ready to take the spotlight. We will look at ways to create hooks and interactive moments—whether it's a dramatic question, a quirky prop, or a surprising twist—they will set the tone and help motivate students through the excitement of learning. Every day, your classroom becomes a stage where you have the opportunity to show your students the endless possibilities of learning and to create a classroom experience full of "WOW" moments that will leave a lasting positive impact!

*NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence
ELM, MID*

Mild, Medium, and Spicy: Differentiating with Clarity and Challenge

Rooted in the belief that each student is uniquely gifted, this session introduces an instructional and assessment approach inspired by Peter Liljedahl's Building Thinking Classrooms. By breaking down standards into mild (approaching), medium (meeting), and spicy (exceeding) levels, teachers can differentiate learning, set clear expectations, and encourage students to grow with confidence and purpose. This methodology was developed with math class in mind but can be applied in other content areas. The shared language of mild, medium, and spicy supports student ownership, promotes equity, and fosters a culture of high expectations rooted in dignity and hope—hallmarks of Catholic education.

*NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence
MID, ELM*

Numerical Literacy: Making Math Accessible to All Learners

Attendees will learn how mathematical skills develop through a neuroscience-informed lens, with a focus on number sense and decomposition/recomposition. This session will explore the neurological foundations of dyscalculia, hands-on strategies to support number sense, and schema-based instruction for solving word problems. Teachers will engage in brain-based, multi-sensory activities using manipulatives and interactive games to strengthen neural pathways and deepen math understanding—equipping them to support all learners more effectively.

*NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence
ELM*

Powerful Learning Through Play

Session attendees will experience how to integrate engaging hands-on learning into K-12 Catholic school STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math) programs using LEGO Education solutions, including the new LEGO Education Science program. This program features standard-aligned lessons specifically designed for the science core classroom, catering to grades K-8. Participants will explore our learning tools, make curriculum connections, and have fun learning by doing, just like our students! Attendees will leave with innovative, practical ideas to bolster STEAM learning across their classrooms and enrich their science instruction.

*NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence
ELM, MID*

Right From the Start: Unlocking Success Through Oracy, Writing, and Knowledge Building

How can we set multilingual learners up for success from day one? This session explores the powerful intersection of oracy, writing, and knowledge building to accelerate academic growth in one or more languages. Attendees

will discover engaging strategies to help students develop strong language skills while deepening their content knowledge. Learn how to create vibrant classroom environments where students confidently express their ideas, engage in meaningful discussions, and transform their thoughts into clear, compelling writing. Walk away with practical, high-impact approaches to empower multilingual learners and elevate their learning experience!

*NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence
ELM, SEC*

Rooted in Faith, Growing Together: A Journey into Multiage Learning for a PreK-8 Microschool

This session invites educators and school leadership into the story of moving from a traditional grade-level classroom structure into a PreK-8 building featuring flourishing multiage learning communities. Led by school leadership members and a veteran teacher who helped guide the transformation, attendees will walk through the challenges and graces of shifting into a multiage school. Presenters will describe the establishment of vibrant multiage learning communities, a first step in the foundation of a viable microschool.

*NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence
ELM, DIO*

Shining Light in the Digital Sphere: Forming Students for Online Discipleship

In today's increasingly digital world, Catholic educators are called not only to teach academic content, but also to form students as disciples who live out their faith in all aspects of life—including online. This session explores how Catholic schools can integrate digital citizenship education with gospel values. Rooted in Catholic social teaching and virtue ethics, this session offers practical strategies to help students navigate the digital world with integrity, compassion, and faith.

Educators will learn how to guide students in becoming not just responsible digital users, but active disciples who use online platforms to promote truth, build community, and reflect Christ's love in a complex digital culture.

*NSBECs Domain: Academic Excellence
ELM, MID*

The Science of Reading: Getting it Done Instructionally

Understanding the Science of Reading is essential, but successfully applying it in the classroom requires thoughtful, research-based instructional strategies. This session will provide educators with practical tools to effectively teach foundational reading skills, including phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. Attendees will explore evidence-based approaches that support all learners, ensuring high-quality instruction that aligns with reading science. Through real-world examples and actionable steps, attendees will leave with concrete strategies to bridge research and practice, making literacy instruction both effective and engaging.

*NSBECs Domain: Academic Excellence
ELM*

There's No Crying in Math Class

Discover how to build a math classroom culture that fosters academic safety, student engagement, and a love for learning. Drawing on the work of Geoff Krall, Jo Boaler, Brené Brown, and others, this session first explores how to move from passive to active care, address math trauma, and dismantle stereotype threats. Then, learn high-impact strategies like Building Thinking Classrooms (BTC), low-floor/high-ceiling tasks, and integrating real-world modeling to make math accessible and meaningful. We'll

also share small but powerful practices that help students feel seen and supported. Walk away with tools to create a space where all students can take risks, learn from mistakes, and see themselves as capable mathematicians.

*NSBECs Domain: Academic Excellence
MID, ELM*

Unlocking Potential: Strengthening Executive Function in All Learners

In this session, attendees will learn how executive function skills affect student learning, behavior, and overall development. Participants will explore how small adjustments to classroom routines can significantly support struggling learners. Through a Catholic lens, this session introduces two practical strategies: the use of an organizational binder and instructional visuals. These tools are designed to help students improve time management, planning, and self-regulation while reinforcing faith-based principles of dignity, structure, and academic excellence.

*NSBECs Domain: Academic Excellence
ELM, MID*

Meeting the Needs of All Students

21st Century Classroom Management: Strategies for Success

In this workshop, we will explore the most effective strategies and techniques that teachers can implement so they can spend more time facilitating instruction and cultivating student relationships in their classrooms, and less time handling low-level student behavior issues, such as disrespect, interruptions, inattention, and reluctance to follow directions.

*NSBECs Domain: Academic Excellence
ELM, MID*

After the Storm: Supporting Survivors of Trauma

Many students carry trauma from abuse, loss, neglect, or chronic stress, shaping how they think, learn, and behave. This session unpacks trauma effects on the developing brain and translates the science into classroom practice. Participants will learn to spot trauma signals, respond in ways that promote healing, and craft safe, consistent routines where learning can flourish. Grounded in current research and Catholic faith, the workshop equips educators to be steady, compassionate witnesses who guide wounded children toward hope and growth.

*NSBECs Domain: Academic Excellence
SEC, CAM*

Bridging Achievement: Supporting Spanish-Speaking Students in English-Only Instruction

As U.S. Catholic schools serve growing multilingual populations, supporting students whose home language is Spanish but receive English-only instruction presents both challenge and opportunity. This session introduces a three-pillar framework—Language, Knowledge, and Skills—to foster achievement and whole-child development. Drawing on research, practical strategies, and culturally responsive pedagogy, it equips educators to design inclusive environments. With over 75 percent of emergent bilinguals speaking Spanish (NCES, 2023), this session offers timely, mission-informed guidance to strengthen instructional practice and student success.

*NSBECs Domain: Academic Excellence
ELM, MID*

SESSION TARGET AUDIENCES:

BOA Board Members
DIO Diocesan Leaders
ADM Site Administrators

ECT Early Childhood Teachers (Preschool-Kindergarten)

ELM Elementary Teachers
MID Middle School Teachers
SEC Secondary Teachers

CNS Counselors

MKT Advancement/Marketing Directors
PAS Pastors Serving School Communities
CAM Campus Ministers

Catching FIRE and the LRN Framework: A Comprehensive Approach to Inclusion for Catholic School Leaders

Discover a framework for meaningful inclusion tailored to the context of Catholic schools. This presentation emphasizes iterative processes and aligns with Catholic social teaching principles. You'll explore six comprehensive steps, guided by five key principles that reflect Catholic values while supporting all learners. New this year, we will be joined by the board president of the Dallas FIRE Foundation, who will share her perspective as both a parent of a child with a disability and as a Catholic lay leader. She will reflect on what families and partners look for in ethical, inclusive improvement efforts. Join us to explore how Catholic school leaders can evaluate with clarity, compassion, and conviction.

NSBECS Domain: Governance and Leadership

ADM, DIO

Catholic Inclusion in Action: Strategies and Stories for Serving All Learners (Panel Session)

This panel explores how Catholic schools can build and sustain inclusive education rooted in mission and faith. Drawing on the work in two dioceses, presenters will share strategies for creating supportive systems, fostering acceptance, and partnering with families and educators. Attendees will gain practical insights and inspiration to strengthen inclusion in their own schools and communities.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence

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NSBECS Domain:

AUDIENCE

Cultivating Engagement: National Study Examining Hispanic Parental Engagement in Catholic Schools

Drawing from the results of Boston College's National Study Examining Hispanic Parent Engagement in Catholic Schools, which collected survey, focus group, and interview data from Hispanic and non-Hispanic parents in Catholic schools in 2025, attendees will be immersed in a critical and transformative look at Hispanic parent engagement in Catholic schools. Specifically, attendees will be given a brief overview about the contributions of Hispanic families to Catholic schools, their patterns of engagement, and the barriers typically faced by Hispanic families in embracing their role as primary educators (Hamman-Ortiz, Reyes, Sada, 2024; Paredes Scribner & Fernández, 2017). Attendees will walk away with actionable strategies to engage families.

NSBECS Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

ADM, SEC

From Intake to Inclusion: Rethinking Enrollment for Students with Diverse Learning Needs

How can Catholic schools ensure that students with diverse learning needs are welcomed, supported, and set up for success? In the Archdiocese of Philadelphia secondary schools, enrollment and learning support

leaders partnered to rethink the admissions process through the lens of inclusion. This session will share tools and real-world examples: developing a master accommodation list, conducting family-centered intake interviews, evaluating efficiency of data collection and reporting utilizing systems, and having open conversations with parents and students. This session will help participants to implement scalable practices that align the enrollment process and procedure with support—ensuring every student is seen, known, and believed in.

NSBECS Domain: Operational Vitality
CNS, MKT

From Struggle to Success: Supporting Every Learner Through a Collaborative SAT Process

How to build and sustain an effective Student Assistance Team (SAT) process within a Catholic school setting. Attendees will explore how our school uses goal setting, collaborative problem-solving, and data tracking to support struggling learners. We'll share the structure of our weekly SAT meetings, how we partner with public school resources, including those from your local education agency, such as school psychologists, and the specific tools and forms we use to help teachers make data-informed decisions that lead to academic and behavioral growth. Participants will leave with a practical framework and resources to implement or strengthen their own SAT model.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence
ADM, DIO

Guided by Faith, Powered by AI: A Shared Path to Supporting All Catholic Learners

In this session, attendees will learn how AI tools can be used by teachers, students, and families to support the whole child in Catholic education. Through live demonstrations and practical examples, participants will see how AI can help personalize learning, strengthen home-school collaboration, and support struggling learners and their peers. Tools that generate reading supports, writing prompts, translations, and simple progress check-ins will be modeled. Educators will leave with practical strategies they can share and apply immediately, guided by mission and empowered by innovation. Participants will leave with AI tools for teachers, but also designed for the student-user. Solutions to support home engagement will be included.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence ELM, MID

How Not to Create Inclusive Catholic Schools in Four Easy Steps

Through a candid exploration of counter-productive practices, we will expose the subtle ways we might be unintentionally creating barriers rather than breaking them down. Participants will be challenged to re-evaluate their current approaches by considering what happens when we: prioritize mere professional development over deep professional formation; focus solely on the individual student rather than nurturing the entire school community; rely on ad hoc approaches instead of developing a systematic framework; wallow in helplessness rather than normalizing support.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence ADM, DIO

In Their Shoes: Understanding Students with ADHD

This session is an experiential workshop designed to offer a deep, empathetic understanding of what it's like to live with ADHD—particularly from a child's perspective. Through interactive, hands-on activities and guided simulations, participants will experience the sensory overload, executive functioning challenges, and emotional regulation difficulties that children with ADHD navigate daily.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence ELM, MID

Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Equitable Services Guidance from the U.S. Department of Education

The U.S. Department of Education will provide an overview of the requirements and discuss the 2022 guidance under the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) related to children with disabilities enrolled by their parents in private schools. This includes the equitable services consultation requirements to ensure that eligible children with disabilities enrolled by their parents in private schools can participate equitably in programs authorized under this Act.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence ADM, DIO

Literacy Leadership for Student Success

Writing is not just for English Language Arts classrooms—it is a critical tool that strengthens comprehension and deepens learning in every subject. In this interactive session, participants will explore the powerful relationship between reading comprehension and writing, drawing from Scarborough's Reading Rope and research on writing-to-learn strategies. Educators will experience evidence-based practices first-hand, including Power Writing,

Because-But-So sentence frames, and Shared/Interactive Writing, all designed to fit seamlessly into content-area instruction. These strategies, adaptable for all grade levels, require minimal time investment yet have proven impact on student engagement, memory, and synthesis of content. Participants will also reflect on common barriers—such as lack of time, student readiness, or teacher preparation—and learn practical solutions to integrate writing in meaningful, efficient ways. The session will conclude with guided planning time so participants leave with actionable next steps to bring back to their classrooms.

NSBECS Domain: ELM, MID

Making Room at the Table: MTSS in Catholic Schools as a Framework for Belonging and Excellence

Catholic schools are called to be tables of welcome, excellence, and belonging. This session explores Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) through a Catholic lens—as a structure for forming both minds and hearts. Teachers will leave with a clear vision for dynamic Tier 1 instruction, practical Tier 2 strategies, and data-driven practices that ensure every student is known, supported, and prepared to flourish in their God-given identity and purpose.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence ELEM, MID

Meeting Students Where They Are: A Model for Support, Growth and Achievement

Discover how the Seton-LaCroce Learning Center at Mother Seton School has successfully provided intervention and support to students with language-based learning disabilities and related challenges. This session will share proven strategies, tools, and resources teachers can adapt in their own classrooms to help their students thrive academically.

and emotionally. Attendees will explore the core components of an effective school-based learning support program, including the identification, referral, and intervention process. Through real-world examples of structured schedules, collaborative teaching, and research-based practices, participants will leave equipped with practical approaches to better support their students' growth and success.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence ELEM, MID

Middle School in the Middle of It All: Helping Teachers Protect Connection, Character, and Focus Amid Growing Digital Pressures

The middle school years are a critical crossroads—where students face mounting digital pressures just as their brains, identities, and values are taking shape. This session equips Catholic school educators with practical tools to help students navigate social media, gaming, and smartphone use with clarity and courage. Attendees will explore how screen habits affect connection, behavior, and academic engagement—and learn how to build screen-resilient classroom cultures. With a focus on character, attention, and spiritual formation, this session empowers teachers to support students and families during one of the most vulnerable stages of development.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence MID, ELM

My Catholic LETTERS, Words, and The Saints from A-Z: Building Catholic Identity, Character, and School Readiness in PreK and K

This hands-on, interactive presentation is by the creators of the award-winning Handwriting Without Tears and Get Set for School methods. In this session, they will walk you through engaging ideas to develop letter knowledge, handwriting skills, and language/literacy skills. They will present new ideas

developed for the Catholic school educator to instill Catholic identity while teaching core curriculum to all learners. Participants will learn to incorporate over 100 Catholic words while teaching the skills of handwriting and school readiness. Additionally, everyone will walk away with fun and developmentally appropriate activities to teach the lives and qualities of more than 30 saints.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence ECT, ELM

Nurturing Student Growth and Virtue Through Small Group Instruction

Small Group Instruction (SGI) is a powerful, research-based way to personalize learning and accelerate student growth. By tailoring instruction, providing timely feedback, and using preteaching and reteaching, SGI helps educators meet students' needs and move them forward with purpose. This engaging workshop highlights four key advantages of SGI and equips participants with practical tools they can use immediately. Participants will: explore grouping strategies using data and student interests; learn management techniques for smooth transitions and independent work; reflect on challenges and implementation strategies. Perfect for educators new to SGI or looking to strengthen their small group instruction practices.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence ELM, MID

Professional Development Partnerships 101: Building Creative, Collaborative Communities for Catholic Schools

Collaboration is at the heart of our Catholic mission. This session explores how Catholic schools can build effective partnerships with universities, parishes, parents, and community organizations.



Participants will learn practical strategies to form sustainable relationships that strengthen professional development, enrich student learning, and expand access to shared resources. By connecting our schools with the broader Church and community, we bring innovation into classrooms and support the spiritual, academic, and emotional growth of every child.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence ADM, ELM

Reaching Every Learner: Evidence-Based Practices to Support All Students

Rooted in the belief that all students can learn, this session highlights the importance of differentiated instruction in meeting the diverse needs of learners in Catholic classrooms. Participants will explore evidence-based strategies that promote engagement, equity, and academic growth for all students. With a focus on practical application and faith-informed teaching, educators will leave equipped to create inclusive learning environments that reflect the dignity and potential of every child.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence ELM, MID

School Choice, We have it! Handling the Change in Student Population

The state of Iowa passed Educational Savings Accounts which began in the 2023-2024 school year. The 2025-2026 school year marks the third year of the program. The attendees will learn how St. Paul the Apostle Catholic School in Davenport, IA, quickly adapted to the changes in student population including academic and SEL needs, cultural diversity, along with religious diversity, while maintaining Catholic identity and high academic and behavioral expectations. Attendees will take away tools that can help them not only in areas that have school choice initiatives, but also for schools that are experiencing a change in population for a multitude of reasons.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence
ADM, ELM

Strengthening Dyslexia Support Using Partnerships: Tools, Training, and Inclusive Practices in Catholic Classrooms

Discover how general education teachers can support students with dyslexia through proven screening tools and instructional practices. Drawing on a successful three-year partnership, this session shares the Archdiocese of Chicago's experiences for teacher development and inclusive practices, empowering educators with strategies that promote early identification, effective intervention, and student growth. With nearly 200 educators trained, this session highlights scalable practices for general education classrooms.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence
ELM, ADM

Student Success Beyond the Classroom: Enhancing the Educational Journey Through Developmentally Informed Programming

In this session, participants will explore how a child development lens can guide daily teaching practices and help shape meaningful classroom experiences. We'll look at practical strategies that support students' academic, social, and emotional growth, with an emphasis on what teachers can implement in their own classrooms. Attendees will gain insight into how being intentional—with instruction, family engagement, and student supports—creates stronger learning outcomes. Together, we'll highlight how collaboration between educators and families empowers students to thrive—both in the classroom and beyond.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence
MID, ELM

The Learning Covenant: Assessment Strategies that Practice What We Preach

Is it okay, or even moral, to give students grades in theology class? Can we really assess a faith-based curriculum? What does it mean to tell a student they are a "C-student" in a religious education context? This session will explore strategies for reconsidering student assessment in light of our Catholic values and consider how assessment practices can better reflect the dignity, creativity, and autonomy that God has given each of us. The "Learning Covenant," an approach to contract learning, aims to empower each student as a unique learner while emphasizing our Catholic beliefs in practice, not simply in content.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence
SEC, CAM

Twice Blessed, Twice Exceptional: Integrating Faith and Evidence-Based Practice for 2e Learners in Catholic Schools

Twice exceptional (2e) students, those who are gifted and also have diagnosed learning or attentional challenges, require both high-level enrichment and targeted support. This session invites educators to believe in the full potential of these complex learners by combining current neuropsychology, Catholic anthropology, and practical classroom strategies. Participants will analyze case studies, examine tiered instruction and executive function supports, and explore tools for differentiation and social-emotional formation. Rooted in the belief that every child is "unique and unrepeatable" (St. John Paul II), this session equips Catholic school educators to challenge giftedness, support needs, and nurture the whole child.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence
ELM, MID

Using IDEA to Support Services and Inclusion for Our Students with Special Needs in Our Catholic Schools

Participants will gain an understanding of the benefits of participating in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) for Parentally Placed Private School Students. This session is intended for central office, building administrators, resource/exceptional student education staff, and classroom teachers. The session will cover Child Find, effective consultation, types of services allowed, and how to maximize those services and supports to students and teachers. Participants will be given tools and strategies for maximizing their participation in these programs, which result in direct benefits to our most vulnerable students. The session will be collaborative and offer the opportunity for Q & A.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence
ELM, MID

Using Media To Engage ALL Students

In a world where students are constantly surrounded by screens, Catholic school educators have a unique opportunity to meet them where they are and point them toward something deeper. This session explores how media can be used to engage students of all learning styles, attention spans, and backgrounds in meaningful, faith-centered ways. Through examples, stories, and practical takeaways, we'll unpack how media can spark curiosity, open hearts, and bring the gospel to life in today's classroom. Whether you're tech-savvy or just getting started, this conversation will help you think creatively about how to use media to reach all your students, not just some.

NSBECs Domain: Academic Excellence
ELM, MID

Wings to Fly: Embracing Learning Differences in a Catholic School Setting

As the first elementary school in Rhode Island to establish an official inclusive education program, we are redefining what's possible in a faith-based setting. This session will showcase how our school responded to the growing needs of students with learning differences by creating a structured, sustainable, and student-centered program. Through creative staffing, targeted professional development, and a commitment to embracing neurodiversity, we've built a model that supports all learners while maintaining high academic expectations. Attendees will gain insight into how the program was developed, its impact on student growth, and how intentional collaboration among faculty has transformed our school culture. Key

takeaways will include: Steps for launching an inclusive education program in elementary and middle school settings, Practical strategies for supporting students with language-based learning differences, and Tools for building staff and community trust. Whether you are just beginning this journey or looking to refine your current approach, this session will inspire.

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

ELEM, MID

Nurturing the Whole Child

"Believe and Sing!" A Journey of Faith Through Music

This interactive music session, "Believe and Sing!", shows Catholic school educators how to inspire faith through music. We'll learn a Bible story with songs and movements and explore other musical activities on the theme of "believe." Get ready for a hands-on, joyful experience that provides practical ways to deepen spiritual understanding and enrich your classroom!

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

ELM, ADM

"F" Does Not Mean Failure: 4 Fs that Flourish in Catholic Schools

A religious congregation's charism can be indispensable in forming the culture of a school. It can provide the "skeleton" from which all the major elements of the school may hang. Don Bosco used a framework for his educational institutions that included the values of family, faith, future, and fun. These correspond to young people's needs: to belong, to believe, to learn, to play (or socialize). This is a universal approach that aligns the mission of Catholic schools with their actual

practice at all levels. Join us and learn about this framework and how you can employ it in your own school for a unified approach to your educational program.

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

CAM, ADM

Ask One More Question: How Curiosity Helps Us See Through God's Eyes

Research tells us that strengthening teachers' and leaders' resiliency skills increases student achievement. Grounded in gospel narratives and Visio Divina, this session will examine ways to support student flourishing in the classroom by strengthening teachers' and leaders' cognitive agility and addressing effective SEL strategies. This session will outline how to embody and model resilience skills and SEL tools in the classroom, specifically how asking one more question can empower everyone in the classroom to take concrete steps toward fulfilling their potential. Curiosity can help all of us see through God's eyes; helping them allow themselves and others to be the person God created them to be.

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

ELM, CNS

Belief in Action: Helping Students Live What They Learn About Love

Students long not just to believe—but to live lives of purpose, love, and connection. This workshop offers strategies for integrating a Theology of the Body-informed understanding of love, freedom, and responsibility into faith formation and behavior expectations. Discover how to help students make meaningful connections between what they believe about God and how they treat themselves and others.

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

MID, ELM

SESSION TARGET AUDIENCES:

BOA Board Members

DIO Diocesan Leaders

ADM Site Administrators

ECT Early Childhood Teachers (Preschool-Kindergarten)

ELM Elementary Teachers

MID Middle School Teachers

SEC Secondary Teachers

CNS Counselors

MKT Advancement/Marketing Directors

PAS Pastors Serving School Communities

CAM Campus Ministers

Building Resilience in a Jesuit Middle School: Labyrinths and the Ignatian Imagination

Our session details an art and contemplation curriculum for middle schoolers, developed in collaboration between a Catholic, Jesuit middle school and university in urban St. Louis. Attendees will learn: 1) The details of a curriculum that emphasizes the role of the Ignatian Imagination in middle schoolers' spiritual growth. 2) The Catholic history of labyrinths as spiritual tools and links to contemporary mindfulness practices and social-emotional learning. 3) The personal experiences of middle schoolers and their teachers in the application of novel prayerful techniques, especially designed to engage non-Catholics. 4) The dynamics of navigating an ongoing university partnership among stakeholders with a shared Jesuit-inspired mission.

NSBECS Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

CAM, MID

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd in the School

The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd offers both children and adults the opportunity to receive, ponder, and proclaim the essentials of the Catholic faith. This session will address not just the beauty of this method of formation, which focuses on prayer and encounter with Christ through scripture and liturgy, but also the challenges that can occur in attempting to implement it in a school setting.

NSBECS Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

ECT, ELM

Classical Education & Catholic Renewal: Challenges & Opportunities

Together, we will investigate the approach known as "Classical Education," which has gained enormous momentum in the

last decade. Why have many schools adopted this approach? The session will locate classical education within the history of Catholic education, as well as explore the qualitative and quantitative benefits. In addition, the session will dive into key areas of the classical model and how it can augment the Catholic vision of educating the whole person, created in God's image and likeness. How does classical education contribute to: mission/identity; character/virtue formation; integrated curriculum; living Catholic culture; and academic excellence? What are its unique and dynamic characteristics? We will explore these questions.

NSBECS Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

SEC, ELM

Encountering Creation: Do Nature Journaling and Local Species Identification Improve Students' Connection to Each Other, School, the Environment, and God?

This session will share results from a yearlong effort to increase student interaction with creation in integrated science, biology, and environmental science classes. Through weekly nature journaling, students in my classes reflect on questions like "How connected do you feel to your school? To the environment? To God?" My environmental science students will catalog campus biodiversity to create a school nature guide. Surveys given quarterly will reveal insight regarding the potential for increasing students' contact with nature to strengthen their relationships with each other, the environment, and God. The session will share successes, areas for growth, and suggestions for integrating nature-based learning in science classes.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence

SEC, MID

Forming the Formers – Whole-Teacher Formation for Whole-Child Education

This presentation will delve into the profound impact of comprehensive adult formation on achieving holistic student development within Catholic schools. We will utilize the "Whole Child Framework—Adult Formation" as a practical lens to demonstrate how intentional investment in teachers' mission formation, adult relationships, adult capacity, and adult well-being directly cultivates an environment where students can flourish spiritually, cognitively, emotionally, socially, and physically. Participants will gain actionable insights and concrete strategies for designing and implementing robust adult formation plans that foster thriving school communities for both adults and students.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence

ADM, DIO

From the Locker Room to the Upper Room: Cultivating Faith the Lasso Way

In this interactive workshop, Catholic school educators will explore how the seven signs in the Gospel of John—and key moments from the show Ted Lasso—can be used to inspire belief, foster connection, and nurture faith in the classroom. Through storytelling, scripture, and practical classroom applications, participants will gain tools to help students from all walks of life feel seen, heard, and loved as God loves us. Each of John's signs will be paired with a real-world teaching practice that builds bridges, cultivates community, and can be implemented at any point in the school year—whether it's day one, mid-year, or the final bell. Come ready to reflect, share, and leave renewed in your ministry as a Catholic school educator.

NSBECS Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

SEC, MID

God Gave You That?! Helping Kids Discover and Celebrate Their Gifts

In this session, attendees will discover how to break the cycle of comparison, criticism, and competition that can quietly disrupt learning and belonging in the classroom. Rooted in John 17:20-21 and the truth that each child is uniquely created by God, this session helps educators unlock a Christ-centered approach to unity—by recognizing and celebrating God-given strengths. When students know their gifts and see the value in others, cooperation replaces competition and learning flourishes. Educators will leave with a month's worth of fun, faith-filled lessons and tools to build confident learners, compassionate classmates, and classrooms where every child knows they belong.

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

ELM, MID

Implementing Reading Programs for Children with Good and Diverse Books that Inspire Them Without Compromising their Catholic Faith

In the 1840s, St. Anthony Mary Claret said, "If people do not have good books, they will read bad ones. Books are the food of the soul, and just as the body is nourished by wholesome food and

harmed by poisonous food, so it is with reading and the soul." Parents often come to Catholic schools with the hope that their children will be free from books that include the influence of political agendas or social biases. This session will discuss what educators and administrators can do to find good books that not only align with the mission of Catholic schools but also help children develop a love and passion for reading through extracurricular programs that can ultimately benefit their school curriculum and parish community.

NSBECs Domain: Academic Excellence
ELM, MID

Life More Abundantly: Evangelizing with a Catholic Liberal Arts Curriculum

For a Catholic school, every moment is a moment to evangelize. Come learn about the Catholic Liberal Arts model of education and how the Catholic Liberal Arts model can infuse every subject area with our Catholic faith and so capture our students' heart for Christ. This model focuses on the development of the whole child – body, soul, and spirit – and so aligns our academic program with the mission of the church. This session will focus particularly on how the Liberal Arts model in high school classrooms enables us to integrate faith with our instruction.

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

SEC, MID

Meet the Parents

Teachers frequently mention that students are pretty much receptive to what goes on in the classroom. On the other hand, teachers express frustration with the same frequency at having to deal with parents, whose demands often exceed the abilities of teachers. This session will outline parents' needs and wants for their children, parents' own behaviors, and offer strategies for helping parents align their goals and needs with those of the Catholic school. The session will also provide tips on communicating with parents and easing teacher stress in providing good communication with students' homes while maintaining Catholic school principles.

NSBECs Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

ELM, MID

Mirror, Mirror on the Shelf: The Reflective Role of Literature in Moral Formation

Educational psychology highlights the significance of character virtue development for flourishing. As Catholic school educators, how do we help our students to live a good life? Through the capacity to grow in virtue, students choose true goods to flourish. Explore how stories and characters in literature can inspire and transform students in pursuing virtue and deepening their relationship with Christ.

Stories captivate the imagination of students, allowing them to grow in empathy. Literature is a means to nurture the moral, social, cognitive, and emotional capacity of all students. Walk away with practical examples of how to enrich your use of literature in the classroom to deepen comprehension skills and develop your students' lives of virtue.

NSBECS Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

ELM, MID

Not One More Thing

Stop and think about your daily habits. Every day, there are particular routines that you follow naturally. In your classroom, the daily routine can set the tone for the rest of the day. In sum, habits are already a part of the day. Simply put, virtue is the habit of doing good. Yet, it is acquired by education and most especially by witnessing other people living virtuously. This session will provide educators with a foundation of understanding the virtues as well as practical applications from experienced administrators and teachers. You will leave convinced that virtue education is not one more thing.

NSBECS Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

ELM, MID

Our Hearts Are Ready: Turning to the Path of Wonder

In a time of fragmentation and loneliness, what role does the classroom play in a child's formation? What is the importance of our work as educators, and what role does it play in a child's developing sense of identity and, consequently, the health of our culture? We must offer our students something deep to love that they will carry with them throughout the peaks and valleys of life. This session will offer an opportunity to reflect on the role of wonder in

the classroom, as well as propose a meaningful path forward in the growth of Catholic education.

NSBECS Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

SEC, MID

Saint Augustine the Teacher

Saint Augustine of Hippo is a Doctor of the Church. He was also a skilled teacher, and he had a lot to say about teaching. He wrote memorably about the way his early teachers failed him, teaching him to love praise and worldly success. He wrote too about the vocation of the teacher, a vocation he lived out in many ways throughout his life. In his work *On the Teacher*, he observes that no parent sends their child to school to learn what the teacher thinks. He also wrote that teaching is never simply a matter of passing along information. What, then, does Augustine think good teaching looks like? This session draws on Augustine's reflections on teaching to show the ongoing practical relevance of his thought for today's teacher.

NSBECS Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

SEC, MID

St. Ignatius as a Guide for Executive Function

Ignatian Pedagogy is a model that seeks to develop people of competence, conscience, and compassion. This interactive session will share ways to integrate executive function skills for the classroom with the five principles of Ignatian Pedagogy: context, experience, reflection, action, and evaluation. As we focus on teaching the whole child, executive function skills are needed in faith life, school life, and real life,

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence

ELM, MID

The Power and Purpose of Story: How Narratives Can Form Minds and Hearts

This presentation explores how Catholic storytelling traditions, including Bible narratives and saints' lives, can be strategically integrated across all curriculum areas to inspire students and cultivate virtue in today's fast-paced educational environment. Participants will experience engaging narrative techniques and collaborate to develop practical integration strategies that connect faith stories to history, science, and other subjects.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence

ELM, ADM

Whistles and Witness: Forming Leaders through High School Refereeing and Officiating

Looking for a fresh, real-world way to engage students, build leadership, and connect physical education with purpose? This session explores a refereeing and officiating course offered at the high school level. Designed for middle and high school PE teachers, health educators, coaches, and athletic directors, this session unpacks how officiating can become a vehicle for virtue, responsibility, and community connection. You'll learn how students are trained to referee and officiate a variety of sports, build resumes, practice conflict resolution, and gain employment-ready skills—all while being formed as leaders rooted in integrity and service.

NSBECS Domain: Governance and Leadership

SEC, MID

School Sustainability and Stewardship

Abundant Blessings Preschool

Attendees will learn about educating young students about nature as part of God's creation, fostering awe, gratitude, and stewardship. They will learn how to use outdoor settings for simple prayers, moments of quiet reflection, or songs of praise related to nature. They will gain knowledge of how to incorporate literacy, math, art, and science through activities grounded in Catholic values in an outdoor classroom setting.

*NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence
ECT, ELM*

Believe in Every Student: Inclusive Enrollment Strategies for Mission-Driven Catholic Schools

This session, delivered entirely in Spanish, will explore enrollment strategies that go beyond filling seats to building inclusive, mission-driven school cultures. Our schools are called to be places where every student is recognized, nurtured, and empowered to thrive. Particular attention will be given to engaging the growing population of Hispanic and Latino families, while also addressing effective outreach to other underrepresented groups—multilingual households, families with children of differing abilities, and those from various socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds. Through real case studies and practical tools, attendees will learn how to design enrollment pathways rooted in Gospel values and open to all.

*NSBECS Domain: Operational Vitality
ADM, DIO*

Creation Care Across Your Campus, Curriculum, Community, and Culture

This session provides practical tools for bringing the integral ecology to campus, curriculum, community, and culture. The session takeaways include: 1) How to develop an ethics of ecology, and help students "through effective pedagogy, to grow in solidarity, responsibility, and compassionate care." (Pope Francis, Laudato Si', 210) 2) How to reckon with the truth that "our efforts at education will be inadequate and ineffectual unless we strive to promote a new way of thinking about human beings, life, society, and our relationship with nature." (Pope Francis, Laudato Si', 214-15) 3) How to accompany our students through the reality of climate disruption, with a spirit of hope and joy.

NSBECS Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

SEC, MID

Data-Driven Decision-Making for the Health and Sustainability of Your School

Every day, Catholic school leaders face choices that shape the future of their schools, their students, and their communities. We'll explore using the power of data to make informed decisions, optimize your time and efforts, and make a greater impact on your school. You don't need to be a data expert to analyze admissions metrics, student engagement, and revenue sources—including state choice funding and fundraising—and to get a picture of your school's overall health. Using reports and dashboards to monitor your school's vitality today can help strengthen it for the future. You'll get actionable insights to guide decision-making, budgeting, and

strategic planning and practical tools to help lead your institution to long-term success.

*NSBECS Domain: Operational Vitality
ADM, DIO*

Enrollment Intelligence: A New Model for Catholic School Growth

What if Catholic schools could predict yield, identify barriers to application completion, and adapt recruitment strategies in real time? That's the promise of "enrollment intelligence"—a forward-looking approach rooted in data and decision science. This session will walk attendees through how Catholic schools can integrate digital tools to capture application trends, track prospective family engagement, and make mid-cycle strategy shifts. We'll highlight real examples from private schools using this model to refine their outreach and improve conversion. The goal: boost enrollment while staying true to your school's mission.

*NSBECS Domain: Operational Vitality
DIO, MKT*

Enrollment is Everything and Everything is Enrollment (Panel Session)

"Come learn practical strategies for growth and retention. This panel brings together proven strategies and practical tools to help Catholic schools strengthen enrollment and sustainability. Drawing on the work of enrollment experts, the session will highlight ten essential strategies for building a culture of growth and share low-cost, high-impact approaches for attracting and retaining students and families. Participants will walk away with a clearer understanding of enrollment dynamics and an action planning guide to create their own game plan for success.

*NSBECS Domain:
MKT*

SESSION TARGET AUDIENCES:

BOA Board Members

DIO Diocesan Leaders

ADM Site Administrators

ECT Early Childhood Teachers (Preschool-Kindergarten)

ELM Elementary Teachers

MID Middle School Teachers

SEC Secondary Teachers

CNS Counselors

MKT Advancement/Marketing Directors

PAS Pastors serving school communities

CAM Campus Ministers

Federal Education Benefits and Services Available for Students and Teachers Under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESSA)

In this session, the U.S. Department of Education will provide an overview of the equitable services provisions for eligible private school students and teachers under the ESEA. Topics will include implementation requirements for all covered programs, including Title I and Title VIII covered programs, and will include strategies to help private school officials engage in timely and meaningful consultation.

NSBECS Domain: Academic Excellence
ADM, DIO

Financial Sustainability for Small Schools

On average, over 200 Catholic schools have closed annually over the last 10 years, primarily due to financial hardship due to shrinking enrollment. But there are numerous examples of financially viable schools with enrollment well under 100 students. Clearly, these schools operate differently than larger schools. We will delve into how these small schools operate, including staffing, operational decisions, and how we can emulate their success. Yes, we can actually reverse the trend of closing Catholic schools and start looking for opportunities to expand Catholic education.

NSBECS Domain: Operational Vitality
DIO, ADM

Leveraging Strong Roots for a Sustainable Future: Multiage Catholic Schools

Critical elements of strong, successful Catholic schools are not determined by school size. This session will address core elements, recognizing the flexibility required to adapt to enrollment changes without sacrificing the integrity of instructional programs. In this session, learn how a multiage instructional program can make a mission-driven school even better able to meet the broad continuum of student needs with limited resources. With attention to building a runway to effective and seamless change, it addresses strategic communications and welcoming approaches to involve stakeholders in designing a strong, sustainable, multiage Catholic school experience.

NSBECS Domain: Operational Vitality
ELEM, MID

From Gratitude to Growth: Building a Plan to Steward, Engage, and Recognize Donors

The success of Catholic education is deeply rooted in the strength of its relationships—with community members, parishioners, and donors. This session will equip teachers and school leaders with practical strategies to build and nurture these essential connections. Discover simple yet impactful ways to engage key supporters through classroom activities, school events, and everyday interactions that reflect the mission and values of Catholic education.

NSBECS Domain: Operational Vitality
SEC, MID

Fundraising Momentum: Practical Strategies from Corporate America & Collegiate Advancement

Ready to boost your school's fundraising? This session demystifies advancement by blending practical strategies from the corporate world and proven collegiate fundraising techniques. Tony Mullen (25 years Fortune 500 sales/marketing, 3 years Catholic high school advancement) and Seamus Kelly (10+ years collegiate fundraising from St. Olaf/Iowa State) share practical tools. Learn simple forecasting for predictable revenue (e.g., "December surge") and how to track progress. Gain strategies for engaging your community, empowering your team, and creating a sustainable financial future, applicable to any school's starting point.

NSBECS Domain: Operational Vitality
MKT, DIO

Mission & Message: Creating an Annual Report

Mission & Message: How to proclaim your mission by creating an annual report. The session will provide an inspiring rationale as well as a practical guide for administrators, boards, and development directors on the fundamentals of creating an annual report. This session is ideal for elementary school principals who never thought they could create a beautiful document that highlights the mission of their school. The session will provide a template to use. I have offered this presentation to diocesan principals and multiple school boards. I have also presented this session at multiple NCEA conferences in the past.

NSBECS Domain: Operational Vitality
MKT, ADM

Selling Catholic Schools the Digital Way: Lessons from Big-Box Retailers

In today's competitive educational landscape, it is important to go beyond the traditional word-of-mouth marketing—Catholic schools must market themselves with the same savvy as successful retailers. This session explores how schools should leverage modern digital strategies to attract families. From smart keyword searches and digital ad buys to harnessing the power of ratings and reviews, "people who bought this bought that" recommendations, and real-time customer service tools like chat and AI, you'll gain actionable insights to increase visibility and engagement. This session will equip you with practical tools and proven techniques to meet families where they are—online—and present your Catholic school as their top choice.

NSBECS Domain: Operational Vitality
MKT, DIO

Succession Planning – Who Needs That?

Why succession planning is key in educational facilities, especially those with significant turnover in post-COVID years. Knowing a few small steps is fundamental to ensuring all constituents are well versed in each employee's job duties (both daily and annual). Learn some very unique, but essential, skills that will guarantee your school will function seamlessly with any transition in role/leadership/moderator. This session will also highlight the sensitive transitions that occur when veterans and novice employees alike leave behind peers and colleagues, and how to manage staff/student morale in the mix.

NSBECS Domain: Governance and Leadership

ADM, SEC

The Annual Fund: The Core of Catholic School Advancement

This session explores how a thriving annual fund strengthens Catholic school advancement, enrollment, and culture. Learn to build a mission-centered case for giving, engaging stakeholders, and implementing a multi-phase campaign strategy. Attendees will leave with tangible tools, a sample campaign checklist, and ideas for stewardship, development tours, and donor communications. Whether launching your first campaign or refining an existing one, this session will help you elevate your school's institutional advancement.

NSBECS Domain: Operational Vitality
MKT, ADM

The Cadence of Catholic School Development/Advancement: Connecting the Dots

This session will highlight the new NCEA publication, *The Cadence of Catholic School Development/Advancement*. Attendees will learn the 26 steps of establishing the correct infrastructure for a successful Catholic school development/advancement effort. With the presenter being the author, he will share with the attendees the highlights of each step that will connect the dots of Catholic school development. When it comes to development/advancement, many Catholic schools have different disparate programs in place—the Annual Fund, a Golf Tournament, the Gala, a candy sale, etc. The challenge is that there is no "cadence" that assures a logical sequence of what needs to be implemented 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc. This session will present that order.

NSBECS Domain: Operational Vitality
ADM, MKT

We Believe in Our Catholic Schools and Their Legacy: We Must Not Just Survive, We Must Thrive, Seeking Operational Vitality

In the office of Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Atlanta, we make Operational Vitality a priority for our Catholic schools and our Catholic school system. This session will focus on the areas of Operational Vitality in the *National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools*. In this session, attendees will learn: 1) An overview of the issues that impact school leaders and issues they must address for school viability. 2) Best practices we learned to develop a strategic plan. 3) Real examples of best practices and collaborating with various groups to combine resources and seek opportunities for growth. 4) Practical tools and resources for schools and dioceses to use in Operational Vitality.

NSBECS Domain: Operational Vitality
ADM, DIO



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