

# Schoolwide Best Practices for Blended Environments

## Event Overview

### Keynotes

**Tom Hierck**—*A Little R & R (Resilience and Relationships) During Remote Learning*

**Regina Stephens Owens**—*Ensuring Equity in a Remote Learning Environment*

### Breakouts

**Tina H. Boogren**—*180 Days of Self-Care for 2020 Educators*

**Joe Cuddemi**—*Protocols: Increasing Student Engagement in the Virtual Learning Environment*

**Aaron Hansen**—*Intentional Teaching Practices to Help Students Trade a Fixed Mindset for a Growth Mindset*

**Brandon Jones**—*Prepare for the Unpredictable: The Work of Teams in a Changing Landscape*

**Karen Power**—*Prioritize: Narrowing the Focus of Essential Outcomes*

**Nathaniel Provencio**—*Community Connections and Your PLC at Work*

**Tom Schimmer**—*Sound and Accurate Grading in a Remote Learning Environment*

**Katie White**—*Starting the Year Right: Pre-Assessment That Powers Learning*

**Katie White**—*Empowering Students as Partners in Assessment*

## **Keynote Session Descriptions**

### **Tom Hierck**

#### **A Little R & R (Resilience and Relationships) During Remote Learning**

We know that the COVID-19 pandemic has been stressful for many students, families, and education staff. Some may experience the stress as trauma. Engaging in trauma-informed practice through a compassionate lens of understanding will be helpful to all students and staff. Building resilience in all students and ensuring they all have quality relationships with educators is a challenge during times of remote learning. Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or significant sources of stress. The current pandemic encapsulates all of these conditions and we need to ensure we build this skill in all students. Quality relationships provide students with a sense of belonging, allowing for a sense of safety to develop. The psychological safety fostered in a relationship-focused classroom is the key to a student's ability to not only survive but thrive even in a remote learning environment.

### **Regina Stephens Owens**

#### **Ensuring Equity in a Remote Learning Environment**

Equity in the remote learning environment is about opportunity and ownership. How will we ensure a demonstration of essential behaviours anchored to our values that results in equity in the remote learning environment? We must overcome challenges with collective responsibility. We must leverage virtual learning by making learners visible. We must commit to a culture of care and collective inquiry to ensure high levels of learning for all. Join us as we discuss the steps to create equity in a remote learning environment.

## **Breakout Session Descriptions**

### **Tina H. Boogren**

#### **180 Days of Self-Care for 2020 Educators**

Now, more than ever, educators are reporting unprecedented levels of job-related stress. Not only is this a concern for our educators, but it's a serious problem for our students as well. Students with stressed-out teachers have more behavior issues, and those students have lower overall achievement. This session explores easy-to-implement 'wellness hacks' that will positively impact both the adults and the students in your district, building, or classroom.

Participants can expect to:

- Review the four seasons of a school year and how to help yourself (and your staff members) thrive through each phase.
- Explore multiple self-care and wellness 'hacks' that are easy to implement at both the personal and professional level that correlate to the seasons of the school year.

### **Joe Cuddemi**

#### **Protocols: Increasing Student Engagement in the Virtual Learning Environment**

Protocols are powerful tools that help facilitate conversations among adults and students in the virtual learning environment. Protocols have a variety of purposes, ranging from educators examining professional practice and issues to students examining their work, rendering a text, or analyzing successful learning strategies.

In this session, participants will:

- Explore a plethora of protocols and their various purposes.
- Examine proven strategies for using protocols to help facilitate learning in the virtual learning environment.
- Learn how protocols balance voice and increase engagement during the learning process.

### **Aaron Hansen**

#### **Intentional Teaching Practices to Help Students Trade a Fixed Mindset for a Growth Mindset**

A number of students are just floating through school. They are going through the motions at best, while some don't even try at all. They see school as a 12-year act of compliance before they enter the "real world". This session explores some of the psychological fear that many students face and how that translates into why some kids don't try. The session will then give teachers practical steps to help their students start to take ownership of their learning journey step by step and become the hero in their own story.

Participants will:

- Explore the psychological principles at play when some kids lose motivation and don't try.
- Learn 6 practical steps they can use to help students face their fears and trade in their fixed-mindset for a growth-mindset.

## **Brandon Jones**

### **Prepare for the Unpredictable: The Work of Teams in a Changing Landscape**

There is a lot of speculation about what the school setting will look like in the future. Although the structures of school may vary, the foundations of learning will remain the same. Working as a highly effective collaborative that embraces the fundamental concepts of the PLC at Work process has never been more important. In this breakout session, Brandon Jones examines the role of one of the most powerful tools available to educators: targeted feedback. When used correctly and consistently, teachers can expect to see marked growth in student learning. Participants learn how to implement effective feedback techniques as well as identify traditional feedback practices that are detrimental to the learning process.

## **Karen Power**

### **Prioritize: Narrowing the Focus of Essential Outcomes**

Teachers always identify essential skills that they know are the “must learns.” This practice becomes even more important as we begin the 2020–2021 school year. What is essential in your grade level? How do you know what learnings have been missed because of the COVID-19 break? What tools and strategies can you use to meet the students where they are and continue the learning journey in a very meaningful way? How can we do this remotely when necessary? It's simply not possible to deliver the same amount of instruction to students who are working from home. In this session, participants learn how to collect and use evidence to identify a small handful of “need to knows” that they can focus their instruction on.

## **Nathaniel Provencio**

### **Community Connections and Your PLC at Work**

In a PLC, every student, teacher, staff member, parent, and family member is vital to the success of the school. With an emphasis on transparency, mutual trust, and clarity of purpose, this session provides a road map to growing community engagement and involvement.

In this session, participants will:

- Gain insight into the importance of parent and family engagement with schools as part of students' success.
- Learn key concepts of the PLC at Work process and how they apply to foster school engagement with families and other community stakeholders.
- Gain strategies to encourage community involvement in goal setting within schools.
- Understand how to overcome the barriers of economically disadvantaged families and communities traditionally underserved by schools.
- Acquire best practices for involving stakeholders in a collaborative process of learning and growth.

## **Tom Schimmer**

### **Sound and Accurate Grading in a Remote Learning Environment**

Grading and reporting were arguably the most complex issues to emerge during remote learning. This session highlights how teachers can maintain the academic integrity of the grading and reporting practices despite not being in the classroom on a daily basis. Specifically, this session focuses on how summative judgments can be valid and reliable even if learning is personalized within an online or asynchronous context.

## **Katie White**

### **Starting the Year Right: Pre-Assessment That Powers Learning**

Educational contexts seem filled with uncertainty. We have questions about which goals students explored at the end of last year, which were left out, and whether students will remember anything given the level of change they experienced in such a short time. We want to honour student needs as they currently exist, while still remaining hopeful that we can teach our courses next year with the degree of rigor we know students will need. This session explores how we might use pre-assessment to power instructional decision-making at the beginning of next year. By designing thoughtful formative assessment processes in advance of instruction, we can focus our valuable learning time on what students need in order to think at high levels with confidence and optimism.

### **Empowering Students as Partners in Assessment**

Partnering with students is now more important than ever. We know that when students work with teachers to clarify success, engage in reciprocal feedback, reflect on progress in relation to goals, and make instructional decisions, everyone benefits. However, this level of partnership requires mutual understanding, strong relationships, and practice in order to be fully realized. This session will explore practical strategies for engaging students in the kind of partnership that enhances learning in both face-to-face and remote learning contexts.