

LITERACY IS A GIFT FOR ALL



MISSISSIPPI  
DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION

The MS Literacy Association, MS Department of Education,  
and North MS Education Consortium presents the

# Winter Literacy Conference

December 1-3, 2021 || Beau Rivage Resort and Casino

Special Thanks to our Sponsors



Exhibit Booth 14



Exhibit Booth 2



Exhibit Booth 36



# Schedule of Events

## December 1

10:00 AM - 3:00 PM	Exhibitor Setup	Camellia Ballroom
12:00 PM - 2:00 PM	Participant Sign-In	Convention Center Foyer
2:00 PM - 6:00 PM	Exhibit Sneak Peek	Camellia Ballroom
2:00 PM - 2:50 PM	Breakout Sessions	Azalea A-D, Magnolia E-H
3:00 PM - 3:50 PM	Breakout Sessions	Azalea A-D, Magnolia E-H
4:00 PM - 4:50 PM	Breakout Sessions	Azalea A-D, Magnolia E-H
7:00 PM - 8:00 PM	Vendor Reception	Azalea Ballroom

## December 2

7:00 AM - 10:00 AM	Participant Sign-In	Convention Center Foyer
8:00 AM - 6:00 PM	Exhibit Hall	Camellia Ballroom
8:00 AM - 9:40 AM	Welcome & Opening Remarks Vendor Presentations General Session	Magnolia Ballroom
9:40 AM - 9:55 AM	Teacher Tips & Door Prizes Exhibit Hall	Camellia Ballroom
10:00 AM - 10:50 AM	Breakout Sessions	Azalea A-D, Magnolia E-H
11:00 AM - 11:50 AM	Breakout Sessions	Azalea A-D, Magnolia E-H
11:50 AM - 1:20 PM	Luncheon Vendor Presentations	Magnolia Ballroom
1:20 PM - 1:30 PM	Break	-
1:30 PM - 2:20 PM	Breakout Sessions	Azalea A-D, Magnolia E-H
2:30 PM - 3:20 PM	Breakout Sessions	Azalea A-D, Magnolia E-H
3:20 PM - 3:30 PM	Break	-
3:30 PM - 4:20 PM	Breakout Sessions	Azalea A-D, Magnolia E-H
4:30 PM - 5:30 PM	Exhibit Hall	Camellia Ballroom

## December 3

7:30 AM - 8:00 AM	Participant Sign-In	Convention Center Foyer
7:30 AM - 10:00 AM	Exhibit Hall	Camellia Ballroom
8:00 AM - 9:35 AM	Award Ceremony Vendor Presentations General Session	Magnolia Ballroom
9:40 AM - 10:30 AM	Breakout Sessions	Azalea A-D, Magnolia E-H
10:30 AM - 12:00 PM	Bruncheon Vendor Presentations	Magnolia Ballroom
12:10 PM - 1:00 PM	Breakout Sessions	Azalea A-D, Magnolia E-H
1:10 PM - 2:00 PM	Breakout Sessions	Azalea A-D, Magnolia E-H
2:00 PM - 3:00 PM	Exhibit Hall	Camellia Ballroom

For the full schedule of events with session titles, click on Agenda at [www.northmsec.com/wlc](http://www.northmsec.com/wlc).

# Featured Presenters



**Dr. Antonio A. Fierro**

Dr. Fierro is the Chief Impact Officer for Educator Preparation with the Barksdale Reading Institute and a former Texas State Teacher of the year. He is also a member of the national LETRS cohort of literacy consultants led by Dr. Louisa Moats.

Dr. Fierro has contributed to several literacy curricula for English learners and, along with his LETRS colleague, Dr. Mary Dahlgren, co-authored *Kid Lips*, a curriculum that teaches the articulatory features of English phonemes to young children. His areas of interest include early literacy instruction, improving the learning experience of pre-service teaching candidates, and early research that impacts English learners. Dr. Fierro is also dedicated to advancing the knowledge base and understanding of dyslexia and other reading disabilities as his son, Antonio Jr., has dyslexia. Presently, he sits on the Boards of The Reading League and The Southwest International Dyslexia Association.

## **How Structured Literacy Works for EL Students**

This session is ideal for all teachers. The components of structured literacy will be reviewed and how each might look for the English Learner. Special attention will be placed on what skills can transfer from one language to another and what can be done to differentiate instruction especially in the areas of phonological awareness, decoding and vocabulary building.

---



**Danny Brassell**

Inspired by the film "Stand and Deliver," Dr. Danny Brassell chose to teach in the inner city to positively impact students' others deemed as "unteachable." Danny is on a mission to bring joy back into education to combat the consequences of teacher and educational administrator burnout. For the past two decades he has served as an educational advisor to students ranging from preschoolers to rocket scientists. While he has held a variety of titles and worked with leaders from a variety of fields and disciplines, Danny has always considered himself first and foremost a teacher.

A powerful speaker, Danny captivates audiences from beginning to end as he shares incredible stories of extraordinary educators and how they impact student achievement. Drawing from his experiences as a teacher, administrator, student, and parent, Danny inspires people to achieve greatness by stressing the importance of outstanding leadership at every level, beginning with themselves. His message that "education is valuable, but execution is priceless" epitomizes his commitment to having a positive impact on everyone we come in contact with.

## **Bringing Joy Back into Education**

Educators are "kid-people." They do not do what they do for the pay or daily accolades from society; they teach because they care about kids. The standardized testing craze and pandemic have terrified students and led many great educators to quit. Come join Danny as he reminds teachers, administrators, and staff of their importance in the everyday development of children. He'll remind you how to laugh, sing, dance, and play in order to bring the joy back into your school.

## **The Ultimate System for Helping Children Love Reading**

The Reading Breakthrough is the beginning of a journey to bring joy back into education for children – and adults – alike. You do not need an advanced degree to set you and your child on this path. To succeed, all you

must have is a desire and willingness to follow a map. You'll learn how to transform any struggling or reluctant reader into a more passionate and proficient reader, using *The Reading Breakthrough*. But transformation begins with commitment. And commitment begins with establishing routines. Remember, resolutions fail. Rituals – routines – succeed.

---



**Linda Farrell**

Linda is a founding partner at Readsters, located in Alexandria, VA. Linda has the career of her dreams, which is helping children, adolescents, and adults learn to read. She works nationally in schools helping educators implement instruction that ensures all students learn to read. The process always starts with using the right data to select appropriate instruction. Linda's favorite work is modeling in the classroom and coaching teachers. Linda also presents workshops all over the country about effective instruction for beginning and struggling readers. She's written assessments and curriculum with her business partner, Michael Hunter. She is the instructor in the Looking at Reading Interventions series on the Reading Rockets website. In the last five years, Linda has worked in West Africa developing curricula for children learn to read in languages she doesn't even speak!



**Michael Hunter**

Michael, M.Ed., is a founding partner of Readsters, a small company dedicated to supporting and developing excellent reading instruction so all students learn to read. Michael found his passion for teaching struggling readers as a volunteer teaching adult nonreaders. He is now dedicated to helping teachers teach every student to read. Michael has co-authored instructional materials with his business partner, Linda Farrell, including *Phonics Plug-In ONE & TWO*. Michael delivers professional development and advises schools nationally. Some of his favorite work with schools includes coaching and modeling in the classroom. This work with students and teachers keeps Michael's skills fresh. This work also continues to inform the creation of additional instructional materials for beginning and struggling readers of all ages. Michael's work at Readsters has even taken him to Africa to consult on early reading instruction.

### **Focused Oral Reading Practice: A New Approach to Fluency Instruction**

Fluency programs are often considered the “solution” for struggling readers. This interactive session examines underlying skills necessary for fluent reading along with three critical parts of fluency: accuracy, rate, and prosody. It provides a simple research-based framework for determining which students need fluency, developing instruction to meet individual needs, and assessing growth. The new method includes focusing on accuracy before turning to rate. It also is effective at getting students to read with appropriate accuracy and rate the first time they attempt a passage. Participants receive tracking charts based on the three-part framework for fluency instruction.

### **Help My Student Is Stuck at Sound-By-Sound Reading**

Teachers are often puzzled by their students who can orally segment and blend phonemes, know letter names and sounds, yet continue to read many words by first sounding out each letter, then blending the sounds into a word. Most of these students are in 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, or 3<sup>rd</sup> grades, with a few in 4<sup>th</sup> grade or higher. The core problem with most of these students is that they have not mastered complete phonemic awareness, which David Kilpatrick explains so well in his book, *Essentials of Assessing, Preventing, and Overcoming Reading Difficulties*. Participants will (1) learn why these students don't progress to whole word reading, (2) learn steps to help these students move to whole word reading, (3) practice activities to help students progress, and (4) receive some materials they can use with these students.

## How and When to Use Decodable Readers for Maximum Effectiveness

Teachers often ask us how to include decodable readers during phonics instruction. This session answers that question. Teachers will learn how decodable texts are critical for beginning phonics instruction, when to start using decodable text, when it is appropriate to move away from decodable text, and how to track students' progress with decodable texts. Teachers will also learn the importance of using decodable text to practice a new advanced phonics pattern when it is taught, even though students are capable of reading grade level text independently. There is a brief discussion of the difference between decodable and leveled texts.

---



**Dr. Julie Washington**

Dr. Washington is a Professor in the School of Education at the University of California, Irvine (UCI). Dr. Washington directs the Learning Disabilities Research Innovation Hub and is Director of the Dialect, Poverty and Academic Success lab at UCI. Currently, Dr. Washington's research is focused on the intersection of literacy, language variation, and poverty. In particular, her work focuses on understanding the role of cultural dialect in assessment, identification of reading disabilities in school-aged African American children and on disentangling the relationship between language production and comprehension on development of reading and early language skills for children growing up in poverty.

## Teaching African American Children to Read: The Impact of Language Variation

Learning to read depends upon learning the phonemic, phonological, syntactic, and morphological structure of words. For children who speak varieties of English that differ from General American English these domains of language may differ significantly from text, making it harder to learn to read and write. In the case of African American children in particular, use of the language variety African American English has been found to influence outcomes in reading, writing, spelling and assessment and this is particularly true for children growing up in poverty. This presentation will focus on the intersection of language variation, poverty and reading acquisition for African American children in preschool through fifth grade.

---



**Tim Clue**

Long before he was an educator, professional speaker, comic, published playwright, and father, Tim was an undiagnosed hyper-active dyslexic, rug rat raised in a small rural town outside of Chicago. By twenty-four, Tim was an award-winning college professor and coach of a nationally recognized speech team. By thirty he established himself as a nationally recognized comic opening for Jerry Seinfeld and performing for a former President, George Bush Senior. By forty Tim was published playwright. Now this transformative speaker, educator and writer is helping reshape the way educators build culture and connection for minds in the making. Tim transformed his struggles in the classroom to become the teacher he never had and now mentors a nation into rethinking our 21<sup>st</sup> century education. "We must create lifelong curious learners more capable to light the path to their own journey."

## An Improv Way: Connect, Communicate, Collaborate AKA The 3C's

The tools and rules of Improv changed Tim's mind, his life, and way of teaching. The 3C's (Communication, Collaboration and Confidence) increases self-esteem, deeper connection to others, and incorporates best SEL (Social Emotional Learning) practices for all learners but especially nontraditional learners "which is most of us," Tim proclaims. This session focuses on how to change minds and cultures with tactical and practical tools of connection, collaboration, and communication. Tim method are a highly interactive experience to provide teachers with simple ways to help more students light the path to their own powerful journey. Zip- Zap-Zop!

**Unlikely Teacher: Education Experienced - Falling Up**

A challenged learner becomes a teacher and nationally recognize presenter celebrating and supporting educators with poignant, meaningful humor, and stories. Tim Clue is a top motivational speaker for those in education; a speaker who can help our school teachers relax, laugh, and remember the joy of why they are teachers. His focus is to promote and demonstrate Experiential learning's power and possibility, and share how community and participation hold the key to curating lifelong curious minds. "We need to hand over the keys and let students unlock doors to the paths and journeys they wish to light."

# Breakout Sessions

## **Abacadabra!! School Wide Reading is Not Magic**

*Administrators, General Education Teachers, and Special Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3), Adolescent Literacy (4-8), and Other (SEL, High School, Classroom Management, etc.)*  
Presented by Emily Noble and Kathi Wilson

The session will present an intentional plan for reading that positively changed the culture of one MS school. Learn how a rural MS school grew 150 points on the MS Accountability Matrix by adopting a school wide focus on reading. Beginning with the school leadership team giving teachers ownership in book selection, and with content teachers selecting high relevance books in their social studies and science subject matter, teachers collaborated regularly with the literacy coach to add effective Tier 1 strategies that improved comprehension and background knowledge. The principal worked with professional and support staff to create and maintain sacred time for reading. This interactive session will provide participants with the necessary tools to organize a school owned reading initiative that will improve student achievement.

---

## **Accelerating Reading Growth via High-Dosage Tutoring: Evidence, Best Practices, and Partnerships to Help MS's Children Thrive**

*Administrators and General Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3), Adolescent Literacy (4-8), and Other (Out of School Time Providers and Community Partners)*  
Presented by Ashley Parker Sheils

Mission Acceleration is a GEER-funded high-dosage tutoring model which utilizes MS's best and brightest college students to provide tutoring instruction for students in grades K-5 based on the science of teaching reading. Currently, Mission Acceleration is in seven communities across the state of MS. On average, students who participated in Mission Acceleration in the summer of 2021 demonstrated on average four months of reading growth after seven weeks of participation. Program evaluation data, best practices for designing a high-dosage tutoring model, and strategies to utilize community partners in programmatic work will be shared.

---

## **Accelerating Student Learning: Coaching Data-Driven Instruction**

*Administrators of Other (SEL, High School, Classroom Management, etc.)*  
Presented by Stephanie Parkinson and Candace McClendon

As educators, we are constantly asking ourselves, "How can I best meet my students' needs?" School leaders and coaches add another layer to that question by asking, "How can I best support my teachers in meeting their students' needs?" This session will walk instructional leaders through the process of using the data that they have to support teachers in maximizing their time with students to reach and master grade-level standards. We will explore the TADA (Taking Action with Data) Framework to identify crucial steps in the data-driven instruction process. We will also practice related coaching moves that we can use as instructional leaders to support teachers in their own data analysis and identifying and acting upon aligned instructional practices. We will focus on literacy data-driven instruction for this session, but the work we do together can be applied to all content areas.

---

### **Adapting Grade-Level Texts for Students with Specific Learning Disabilities**

*General and Special Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3)*

Presented by Denise Harrison and Melanie Watkins

In this hands-on presentation, participants will not only learn about the research that supports increased reading comprehension outcomes for students with specific learning disabilities but will also engage in the process of creating their own adaptive, grade-level text to use with their students to promote comprehension.

---

### **Advancing Thinking Through Writing – An Overview of The Hochman Method**

*Administrators, General Education Teachers, and Special Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3),*

*Adolescent Literacy (4-8), and Other (SEL, High School, Classroom Management, etc.)*

Presented by Dina Zoleo and Kelly Downing

This session will introduce participants to the Hochman Method, an explicit set of sequenced strategies for teaching expository writing that can be integrated into any content. Since sentences are the building blocks of all writing, the Hochman Method, developed by TWR's founder, Dr. Judith C. Hochman, begins with strategies at the sentence level, and then builds to paragraphs and compositions. These strategies can be used by educators of all subjects and at every grade level. The content of the curriculum drives the rigor of the writing strategies. During the session, participants will receive a high-level overview of the method, and be introduced to some key sentence-level strategies. The session is open to all educators in grades K-12, but is especially suited to teachers (including Special Education and ENL) of English and social studies.

---

### **Are We Asking the Right Questions?**

*Administrators, General Education Teachers, and Special Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3),*

*Adolescent Literacy (4-8), and High School Literacy (9-12)*

Presented by Casey Wilberding and Crystal Glenn

Are our teachers asking the RIGHT questions: based on standards and based on the DEPTH of the standards? This engaging, interactive session will provide participants with activities designed to model how to plan questioning, how to create questions within the questioning sequence, and how to determine effectiveness of the questions being asked. Participants will leave the session with an "Effective Questioning Toolkit" that will allow them to immediately begin more effective questioning in their classroom.

---

### **Blueprint for Writing: Tips and Techniques**

*Administrators, General Education Teachers, and Special Education Teachers of Adolescent Literacy (4-8) and Other (SEL, High School, Classroom Management, etc.)*

Presented by Anne Anderson

Discover high-impact, research-based activities to strengthen writing in your classroom. Anne shares tips for integrating writing and literacy instruction to maximize instructional time. Using five of her favorite ideas, Anne explains and models how to scaffold writing lessons. Leave energized and with a blueprint for teaching and using writing with your students.

---

### **Building Background Knowledge Through Text Sets**

*General Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3)*

Presented by Miriam Comans

In this presentation participants will learn the importance of building background knowledge to support comprehension. Participants will also learn how to create text sets that will build students background knowledge of a topic and engage students in reading a variety of genres.

### **Building Comprehension and Reading Interest through Science and Social Studies**

*General Education Teachers of Adolescent Literacy (4-8)*

Presented by Mary Gregg and Sarah Horn

Educators will be provided with examples of engaging and high interest science and social studies texts as well as learn how to ensure it aligns to their ELA standards. Next, educators will be provided with examples of color coding and other strategies we have successfully used to teach vocabulary, main idea, inferencing, and other comprehension building standards with these types of text and units. Finally, we will explain and demonstrate to educators how we have used these methods to successfully build interest in reading and keep kids asking for more.

---

### **Catching Up**

*Administrators and General Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3) and Adolescent Literacy (4-8)*

Presented by Courtney Sheriff and Elizabeth Hadaway

This presentation is based on Annual Growth, Catch Up Growth: The Book by Fielding, Kerr, and Rosier. It examines annual growth, “catch up” growth, and time considerations to close the gap. The presentation also delves into the Closing the Gap Formula and provides the participants opportunity to apply the formula.

---

### **Celebrate Literacy Every Day - In a Fun Way!**

*Administrators, General Education Teachers, and Special Education Teachers of Adolescent Literacy (4-8) and Other (SEL, High School, Classroom Management, etc.)*

Presented by Anne Anderson

Overwhelmed? Overloaded? Overextended? Join Anne and discover how to maintain your sanity, meet the instructional needs of your students, and have fun! This fast-paced session includes activities to reinforce previously taught skills, strengthen vocabulary, and build general world knowledge. Leave with a smile and a plethora of ideas!

---

### **Classroom Management 2.0**

*General and Special Education Teachers of Other (SEL, High School, Classroom Management, etc.)*

Presented by Julie Anne Moore Hall and Sarah Rollins

This session will introduce fresh classroom management strategies in a traditional and virtual setting.

---

### **Data-Driven Instructional Frameworks for Teachers, School, and District Leaders**

*Administrators, General Education Teachers, and Special Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3) and Adolescent Literacy (4-8)*

Presented by Richard Schroeder

This unpredictable school year brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic has magnified challenges that educators face—school districts are grappling with the interruption of learning that occurred over the past year. Now is the time to address learning gaps and use this school year to design a data-driven instructional framework.

---

### **Developing Effective Writers in Upper Elementary and Middle School**

*General Education Teachers of Adolescent Literacy (4-8)*

Presented by Kevin Smith and Laurie Lee

The session will help participants become familiar with the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) practice guides Teaching Elementary School Students to be Effective Writers and Teaching Secondary Students to

Write Effectively. Participants will engage in activities that may be utilized in the classroom to implement the recommendations.

---

**Disciplinary Literacies: Teaching Students to Think, Read, and Write Like Experts**

*General Education Teachers of Adolescent Literacy (4-8)*

Presented by Gretchen S. Goode

During this session, we will examine the differences between content area literacy and disciplinary literacy (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2020). I will provide multiple examples of disciplinary literacy thinking, reading, and writing in the academic disciplines, including social science, science, and ELA (Lent & Voight, 2019). I will model how to plan for integrating disciplinary-specific literacy skills for intermediate and middle school classrooms using *The Thing About Jellyfish* by Ali Benjamin (2015) and *A Day in the Life of Maya of Mohenjo-Daro* by Mulk Raj Anand (1968).

---

**Dyslexia Snapshot: Characteristics of Dyslexia and Student Support**

*Administrators, General Education Teachers, and Special Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3), Adolescent Literacy (4-8), and Other (SEL, High School, Classroom Management, etc.)*

Presented by Kristi Tanner

Dyslexia impacts every classroom, affecting approximately 15-20% of the student population. Although the prevalence of Dyslexia exists on every campus, it often goes unrecognized leaving many students without adequate support. Awareness of the characteristics of Dyslexia and provisions of effective instructional support in the classroom will help ensure that all students with Dyslexia experience success in the classroom and beyond.

---

**Face the Challenges: Strategies to Master Reading**

*General Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3)*

Presented by Summeral Newman, Tiffany Nickleberry, and Brandi Bankston

This presentation will discuss the challenges of reading for our struggling students in kindergarten through third grade, and give strategies for support.

---

**Filling the Gaps: Use Text Sets to Build Knowledge and Improve Comprehension Presentation Title Across Content Areas**

*Administrators and General Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3) and Adolescent Literacy (4-8)*

Presented by Elizabeth Simmons and Natalie Crowder

Using text sets in the classroom can help build knowledge and improve comprehension in all content areas. This presentation will teach educators how to create text sets to teach skills in English, science, social studies, and even math! We will discuss how multimodal, multi-genre text sets are a versatile teaching tool for the classroom, how to create a text set, and provide examples using the MS Equipped Book List for All.

---

**For the Love of Literacy!**

*Administrators, General Education Teachers, and Special Education Teachers of Adolescent Literacy (4-8) and Other (SEL, High School, Classroom Management, etc.)*

Presented by LaQuanta M. Nelson

Building a love for literacy in secondary education is not a task for the faint at heart! It is, however, a mission possible. Come explore strategies and initiatives that you can utilize school wide or in any classroom to help young adolescents reignite their love of literacy!

---

**Have You Lost Momentum?**

*Administrators, General Education Teachers, and Special Education Teachers of Other (SEL, High School, Classroom Management, etc.)*

Presented by Shakinna Patterson and LeKeisha Sutton

Have you ever thought about the impact that momentum has on your daily quest to meet professional goals? Momentum helps us persist through interruptions and overcome roadblocks. This reflective and interactive session is designed to allow participants to reflect on principles for sustaining momentum and determine strategies they can employ to ensure goals are achieved.

---

**How to Overcome Learning Loss with Structured Literacy in a MTSS Framework**

*Administrators, General Education Teachers, and Special Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3) and Adolescent Literacy (4-8)*

Presented by Paul Black and Ethan Lynn

This presentation is designed for K-12 teachers in general education and intervention settings who are mitigating students learning loss due to COVID-19 disruptions, particularly in literacy. Attendees will leave with a greater understanding of Structured Literacy, MTSS, and best practices to significantly improve reading proficiency across grade levels.

---

**Implementing the MS Seal of Biliteracy Program**

*Administrators, General Education Teachers, and Special Education Teachers of Adolescent Literacy (4-8) and Other (SEL, High School, Classroom Management, etc.)*

Presented by Limeul Eubanks and Sandra Elliott

Have you heard about the MS Seal of Biliteracy Program and want to know more about it? Then this session is for you! In this session participants will learn valuable information about how to implement a local program, MS State Board policy, and the guidelines to award and recognize students who have studied and attained proficiency in English and a world language by high school graduation. This award presents an opportunity to help graduating seniors demonstrate biliteracy skills that will benefit them as they seek college admissions and future employment.

---

**Implementing Writing in the Primary Grades**

*General Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3)*

Presented by Nicole Hunter and Shirley Massey

Teachers will acquire strategies to support writing connected to text in kindergarten through third grade. These strategies can be utilized to support students in developing grade appropriate writing skills.

---

**Inspiring Independent Reading: Improving Literacy One Book at a Time**

*General Education Teachers of High School Literacy (9-12)*

Presented by Logan Lockard and Amy Richardson

In this session, the presenters will cover book speed dating, independent reading expectations, goal setting with independent reading, weekly quick-writes and check-ins, “Books We Have Read” trophy wall, book report menu and projects, establishing a classroom library, “Where We Are Now” results, and pre-reading assessments (STAR testing).

---

### **Introduction to the MS Campaign for Grade-Level Reading**

*Administrators and General Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3)*

Presented by Angela Rutherford

Third-grade reading is a key predictor of future school success and high school graduation, yet more than 80% of children from low-income families do not read proficiently at the end of third grade (NAEP). The Campaign for Grade-Level Reading is focused on community-driven solutions to three major challenges to third-grade reading success for low-income children: school readiness, attendance, and summer learning. Join us to learn how you and stakeholders in your community can mobilize and align efforts to create a plan to rally behind schools and ensure children are reading on grade-level by third grade.

---

### **Leading through Grade Level Text: Leveled Text Leads to Leveled Lives**

*General Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3), Adolescent Literacy (4-8), and Other (SEL, High School, Classroom Management, etc.)*

Presented by Phelton Cortez Moss and Eugene Pringle

This session will discuss ways leaders can support their teachers to provide students with grade-level text every day. Alfred Tatum has often contended, "Leveled texts lead to leveled lives." Let's re-examine our practice to ensure all students have equal access to the high-quality reading materials we offer to our highest-achieving students. Only in this way will all our learners have a chance to thrive. This session will reflect on our past practices, examine our current practices, and plan our new practices to ensure students access high-quality text daily.

---

### **Literacy as a Gift for the Littles: Creating Authentic Literacy Experiences to Bridge the Gaps in Lower Elementary Classrooms**

*General Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3)*

Presented by Ashlee Elkins

This session will provide attendees with tips and ideas to implement authentic literacy experiences at the lower elementary level. Attendees will hear a brief overview of Scarborough's Reading Rope and the Science of Reading, and then, attendees will learn how to carefully and explicitly weave literacy into all aspects of the school day at the lower elementary level. This session will also provide a discussion of ways to incorporate literacy into activities that are not explicitly literacy-based, such as dramatic play or light table experiences. As closure, ideas and tips for intervention strategies to reach students who are not making adequate progress toward yearly goals with whole group and center experiences alone will be discussed.

---

### **Literacy Connections for Spanish Speaking English Learners**

*Administrators, General Education Teachers, and Special Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3), Adolescent Literacy (4-8), and Other (SEL, High School, Classroom Management, etc.)*

Presented by Sandra Elliott

If you are looking for ways to support English literacy skills to your Spanish speaking English learners, then this presentation is for you! This interactive presentation will share some ways that Spanish and English literacy are similar and different as well as provide strategies for instructing beginning readers with a Spanish language background.

---

### **Literacy Leadership: Secondary Principals and Implementation of Literacy Leadership Across the Curriculum**

*Administrators of High School Literacy (9-12)*

Presented by Joshua Yeager

Secondary principals are not equipped with implementing and integrating literacy leadership across the curriculum in grades 9-12. Specific areas such as literacy beliefs, collaboration, assessment, instructional

practice and procedures, professional development, community in-home involvement, and maximizing capacity.

---

### **Making Vocabulary Stick**

*General Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3)*

Presented by Molly Henderson and Delphony Shenel Williams

Research states 85% achievement test scores are based on the vocabulary standards and the size of a child's vocabulary is an accurate predictor of academic achievement. This presentation will guide teachers in correctly selecting vocabulary words for direct instruction on various TIERS through College and Career Readiness Standards, Webb's Depth of Knowledge, and adopted school curriculums. It introduces the stages of vocabulary instruction: encoding, storage, and retrieval. The presentation supplies ways to "prime the brain" to prepare for vocabulary instruction. In addition to numerous hands-on activities will be utilized throughout the presentation to model explicitly teaching vocabulary within each stage.

---

### **Managing a Structure Classroom**

*General Education Teachers of Other (SEL, High School, Classroom Management, etc.)*

Presented by Marsha Hodges

What do Harry Wong, MTSS, and PBIS have in common? They all advocate that a successful classroom begins with a well-structured classroom. This presentation will give teachers immediate strategies for effective classroom management. Starting with procedures and routines, every teacher can have a peaceful classroom.

---

### **Motivational Engagement: Bringing Literacy to Life in the High School Classroom**

*General Education Teachers of High School Literacy (9-12)*

Presented by Tameka Hyland

The purpose of this session is to provide instructional strategies to maximize student achievement through literacy. The aim for this professional development is to connect literacy to real-world applications, motivate student's desire to reach, and how to implement culture and climate to enhance student's motivation.

---

### **No Magic Wand? No problem!**

*Administrators, General Education Teachers, and Special Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3) and Adolescent Literacy (4-8)*

Presented by Casey Glusenkamp, Casey Berry, and Courtney Prather

There is no magic wand for teaching reading. In fact, many of the strategies do not look magical at all. However, we cannot just cross our fingers and "HOPE" that our kids show growth. There are just real strategies that provide real results. South Side Elementary has had great success with the Reading Gate in the past...until COVID. Our district was on a hybrid schedule and with ¼ of our 3<sup>rd</sup> graders choosing to be strictly virtual, we lost significant instructional time and our reading scores plummeted. Our school has implemented several strategies that have helped us to target each child's deficit. In this presentation, we will discuss our Sight Word Tracking Buckets, STAR Data Tracking charts, Reading Rainbow, and Teachers becoming Word Wizards

---

### **Notice and Note: A Refreshing Approach to Close Reading**

*Administrators, General Education Teachers, and Special Education Teachers of Adolescent Literacy (4-8)*

Presented by Melissa Brown

Today, reading in middle school and beyond means more teacher-controlled selections and less student freedom in choosing their own reading material. Furthermore, they are expected to respond to a text with teacher-generated questions and little to no time for rich discussion that leads to generating their own

questions. Combine that with the pressure of competing for better grades and you often get a negative perception and lack of motivation for reading. Implementing the Notice and Note Signposts strategy can increase motivation and engagement with narrative texts because it allows students to progress through texts independently while encouraging them to dig for the deeper meaning that makes literary texts worthwhile.

---

**Phonics Acceleration in Action**

*Administrators and General Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3)*

Presented by Hillary Sapanski and Quintana Goodloe-Steen

This presentation will show teachers how to effectively implement acceleration as it relates to phonics instruction in the classroom. It will provide a step-by-step road map for diagnosing, planning, and implementing phonics routines that are on grade level but also address gaps. Participants will have a chance to engage in scenarios to build confidence in working with diagnostic data, and review exemplar routines to implement.

---

**Primary Students Can't Write, Right?**

*General Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3)*

Presented by Britney Dewease and Valerie Gilbert

This presentation will provide an overview of text-dependent writing for emergent readers. Participants will engage in several activities they can implement in the K-1 classroom.

---

**Professional Learning Community Principles and Principal “Look-Fors”**

*Administrators of Early Literacy (PreK-3)*

Presented by Bethani Welch and Jennifer West

Purposeful PLCs tailored to the needs of all stakeholders provide extended benefits to directly promote professional learning that impacts student academic achievement. This session provides insight into the types and expectations of PLCs, tools to plan for PLCs and follow-through, and ultimately shifting the culture of PLCs.

---

**Promoting a Healthy Dose of Oral Language and Reading Readiness Experiences in the Early Childhood Classroom**

*Administrators, General Education Teachers, and Special Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3)*

Presented by Kristi Kirkwood

During this presentation, participants will be introduced to the importance of oral language experiences and reading readiness experiences in order to help reduce the effects of the word gap that many young children face in the classroom. Participants will take part in an interactive teaching session which will include a multifaceted approach to professional development to accommodate all learning styles, including, but not limited to the following: lecture, cooperative learning, hands-on-learning, and demonstrations.

---

**Providing Literacy Support Through the Gifted Education Program**

*Administrators, General Education Teachers, and Special Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3) and Adolescent Literacy (4-8)*

Presented by Mat Sheriff

This session will focus on literacy strategies and best practices within the Gifted Education Program.

---

### **Reaching All Readers: Foundational Skills and MTSS**

*Administrators, General Education Teachers, and Special Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3) and Adolescent Literacy (4-8)*

Presented by Marisa Ramirez Stukey

In this session, we'll reimagine a multi-tiered support system (MTSS) that ensures all students master foundational skills by focusing on alignment across tiers and responsive decision-making through a science of reading lens. Collegial conversations and lesson experiences will ground participants in the research and consider the following questions:

- How does aligned instruction across tiers ensure that all learners develop automatic, independent word recognition skills and strategies?
- What types of data should we capture, and how can we use it to support instructional decision-making?
- How will we intensify instruction when students have difficulties?

---

### **Ready Minds, Ready Readers: Promoting Executive Function Skills in Young Children to Support Literacy Development**

*Administrators, General Education Teachers, and Special Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3)*

Presented by Sarah L. Swauger and Angela S. Rutherford

Learning to read and write requires focus, self-control, making connections, critical thinking, and the ability to take on challenges. Yet, many children unfortunately come to kindergarten without having had ample opportunities to exercise and improve these vital skills. Teachers of young children must promote the development of executive functions by modeling and providing opportunities for practice if they hope to pre-prepare their students for success in literacy and in life (Galinsky, 2010). Participants will learn how executive functions in the K-3 classroom setting influence learning as a whole and specifically literacy attainment, as well as how to provide brain building scenarios that target growth of executive function skills.

---

### **Revisiting the Rope**

*General Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3) and Adolescent Literacy (4-8)*

Presented by Candy Shipp and Alissa Hobart

Is comprehension a mystery for your students? Come find the clues to help solve the comprehension mystery. We will revisit Scarborough's Reading Rope Model to uncover the clues in your students' data and plan strategic instruction to build comprehension skills. Hands-on activities will be included.

---

### **Sentence Level Writing**

*General and Special Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3) and Adolescent Literacy (4-8)*

Presented by Zachary Williams and Mackenzie Allred

Literacy Coaches will discuss what the writing crisis is and how this applies to the students in the state of MS. Attendants will then uncover and discuss what writing is as well as why it can be so difficult for students today. The presentation will also examine different sentence level activities, ways to incorporate these in all subjects, and how to continue to strengthen the writers in the classrooms.

---

### **Social Emotional Learning and Literacy - The Perfect Pair**

*Administrators, General Education Teachers, and Special Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3), Adolescent Literacy (4-8), and Other (SEL, High School, Classroom Management, etc.)*

Presented by Cartesia Angrum and Katie Williamson

At this time in the world today, our students are faced with many changes. Students can learn the skills that can help them problem solve and manage their emotions. By integrating social and emotional learning and

literacy, students can learn new content as well as coping skills. The presentation will provide participants with an opportunity to learn ways to incorporate social emotional learning into their daily lessons.

---

### **Spotlight on Dyslexia 2021**

*Administrators, General Education Teachers, and Special Education Teachers of Other (SEL, High School, Classroom Management, etc.)*

Presented by Laurie Weathersby and Jayda Brantley

This session will provide information to teachers and administrators on how to support students with dyslexia in the classroom, including best practices, strategies, and allowable accommodations. The dyslexia scholarship, dyslexia grant, and state testing accommodations will also be discussed. Information will also be included on the dyslexia awareness training required by House Bill 754.

---

### **Tackling Adolescent Literacy Instruction for Rising Success**

*Administrators and General Education Teachers of Adolescent Literacy (4-8)*

Presented by Staci Bain

This session will provide educators with an opportunity to unpack the complexities of preadolescent/adolescent scholars and efficacious, daily instructional practices. More specifically, this session will help answer the question: What can educators do each day to strengthen reading, spelling, writing, and communication skills for scholars in grades 4-8?

---

### **Teaching Content for Deeper Learning**

*General Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3)*

Presented by Sherry Barnes and Demetras A. Jones

In this presentation, participants will learn what deeper learning is and the thinking skills necessary to promote meaning making by using content available from the Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) series and engagement strategies from Teaching for Deeper Learning: Tools to Engage Students in Meaning Making by Jay McTighe and Harvey S. Silver.

---

### **Teaching Spelling in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

*General and Special Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3) and Adolescent Literacy (4-8)*

Presented by Ann Marie Carlyle and Candice Savage

Teaching Spelling in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century will apply the science of reading to spelling instruction in today's classroom. The session will demonstrate how to teach students to apply spelling and phonics instruction into their independent reading and writing. Participants will be able to differentiate decoding from encoding, and apply these critical skills into their lessons. By the end of the session, participants will be able to write an effective spelling lesson plan with assessment that incorporates rules taught and practiced in phonics lessons.

---

### **Tiny Robots, BIG Outcomes: Coding in the Literacy Classroom**

*General and Special Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3), Adolescent Literacy (4-8), and Other (SEL, High School, Classroom Management, etc.)*

Presented by Melissa Banks

In this hands-on session, participants will use tiny robots (Ozobots) to gain BIG outcomes in their ELA classrooms. Participants will explore ways to combine coding skills with literacy skills, critical thinking skills, communication skills, creativity, and more. Whether you are new to coding or a seasoned veteran, this session is for you!

### **The Gift of Understanding: Connections that Aid Comprehension**

*Administrators, General Education Teachers, and Special Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3), Adolescent Literacy (4-8), and Other (SEL, High School, Classroom Management, etc.)*

Presented by Janice T. Cate

What kind of readers do you want in your classroom? What helps students comprehend text no matter their grade or ability level? Come explore a framework that can change how you and your students relate to text.

---

### **The Road to Instant Word Recognition**

*Administrators, General Education Teachers, and Special Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3)*

Presented by Jeannine Herron

Trying to learn to read and write with just your eyes and your ears is like trying to drive a car without a motor. Speech is the motor for literacy. Children can learn to use the alphabet to turn words they can say into words they can see. This session will cover how segmenting and constructing words builds brain pathways for instant word recognition, and how encoding-to-decode (writing to read) instruction with 4-6 year olds can lead to skilled reading.

---

### **The Science of Reading: A Defining Moment**

*Administrators, General Education Teachers, and Special Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3) and Adolescent Literacy (4-8)*

Presented by Laura Stewart

Literacy is a fundamental human right that empowers individuals in a society. The time is now to provide all stakeholders with the knowledge of the science of reading so that children can thrive as citizens of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This session will address these big ideas:

- What “the science of reading” IS, what it is NOT, and why a common definition is necessary;
- What are the required components necessary for research to be scientifically-based;
- What insights the evidence has shown about how skillful reading develops;
- What the science has revealed about how reading is processed in the brain; and
- Instructional practices that are supported by evidence and not supported by evidence (do this, not that!).

This truly is our defining moment, when we can come together as a community of professionals to learn about and share the power of the science of reading in order to ensure all children have a place at the table of opportunity.

---

### **The Science of Reading: What Educators Should Know About Foundational Literacy Skills**

*Administrators, General Education Teachers, and Special Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3)*

Presented by Nathan Clemens

Participants will explore what the science of reading tells us about how children learn to read, what forms of reading instruction and strategies are most effective, and what the evidence tells us about reading difficulties.

---

### **The Science of Reading from Pedagogy to Practice: A K-5 Classroom View**

*General and Special Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3)*

Presented by Laura Butler

What is the Science of Reading and how might it look in a K-5 classroom? In this session, we'll examine methodology from renowned reading expert and Savvas author, Dr. Sharon Vaughn. Participants will gain insight into instructional models that reflect best practices in a "science of reading" classroom and engage in reading routines that foster meaningful reading experiences for students of all abilities.

**The Teacher Table**

*General Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3)*  
Presented by Mandy Logue

Teachers will learn current best practices for teacher-led small group instruction with a focus on the use of decodable readers.

---

**The Vocabulary Attuned Teacher**

*General Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3)*  
Presented by Chelsea Kilgore

In this session, teachers will explore what it means for students to truly know a word. This exploration will be done by examining the components of an informed instructional framework, while developing an understanding of the vocabulary-comprehension connection.

---

**The Vocabulary Village**

*Administrators, General Education Teachers, and Special Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3)*  
Presented by Amanda Malone and Elisa Brooks

How can teachers, parents, and administrators support students in building and maintaining a robust vocabulary? This session will explore practical, fun, and engaging activities for the school and classroom as well as activities that can be shared with caregivers to enhance vocabulary development for students in kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

---

**The Writing Café: Effective Strategies for Writing Across the Curriculum**

*General Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3) and Adolescent Literacy (4-8)*  
Presented by Shakita Bagwell-Jackson and Alissa Hobart

Are you struggling to teach writing? Are your students struggling with writer's block? Join us at the writing café! In this session, we will build your confidence in teaching writing and provide quick and simple instructional strategies that can be implemented to teach writing across the curriculum. As a result, students will become better readers, thinkers, speakers, and learners in a discipline when they are given the opportunity to process their ideas through writing.

---

**Unwrapping Structured Literacy and Why It Is Important for All Classroom Teachers**

*Administrators, General Education Teachers, and Special Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3)*  
Presented by Katie Tonore

15-20% of students have symptoms of dyslexia. Children with dyslexia are in every classroom BUT effective instruction is NOT in every classroom. Structured Literacy explicitly teaches systematic word identification strategies. These strategies benefit students with dyslexia along with MOST students in the classroom. This session will offer strategies for incorporating Structured Literacy in K-3 classrooms.

---

**Using a Blended Learning Approach to Promote Bi-Literacy Among Emergent English Learners and Their Families**

*General Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3) and Adolescent Literacy (4-8)*  
Presented by Carl W. Swartz

Research suggests it may take 3-8 years for Latinos who are English learners to acquire both social and academic language skills. The impact of COVID-19 may exacerbate the challenges English learners present to classroom teachers and interventionists. This session will present an assets-based approach to blended

learning that may result in improve the educational and social well-being of English learners and their families.

---

**Using Manipulatives in a Multisensory Literacy Classroom**

*General and Special Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3)*

Presented by Elizabeth Murray

The study of the science of reading has taught us all that a multi-sensory approach is best for children in the "learning to read" phase of their reading journey. But HOW? WHAT? This session will provide hands-on practice with several different types of manipulatives to enhance the multi-sensory experience in YOUR classrooms.

---

**Using Morphological Awareness to Improve Vocabulary Instruction**

*General and Special Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3) and Adolescent Literacy (4-8)*

Presented by Allison Ruhl

Vocabulary is one of the five major components of reading and is embedded in the Language Comprehension aspect of the simple view of reading. Reading ability in grades K-3 is directly linked to students' phonemic awareness, but, in grades 4 and above, their morphological awareness takes precedence. Morphological awareness can be a powerful tool to improve vocabulary comprehension, spelling, oral reading fluency, and reading comprehension in students grades K-8. Using Marzano's steps of vocabulary instruction, the presenter developed a pictorial approach to teaching morphology to students and tested its effectiveness on middle school Tier II and Tier III students. This non-linguistic approach of vocabulary instruction improved their vocabulary acquisition and reading self-efficacy, and Dr. Ruhl wants to share her method with you. She will also present additional activities and a suggested scope/sequence for morphology instruction. These methods can be used for students in grades K-8 and will, hopefully, help your students grow into confident readers.

---

**Using SeeSaw to Enhance Literacy Instruction**

*General and Special Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3), Adolescent Literacy (4-8), and Other (SEL, High School, Classroom Management, etc.)*

Presented by Michelle Walker Talley

In this session, we will discuss how teachers can use SeeSaw to enhance literacy instruction, promote student engagement, and provide students with voice and choice. Participants will be able to use their current SeeSaw account or create a new one to create activities for students.

---

**Visual Literacy: An Essential Component of Comprehension**

*Administrators, General Education Teachers, and Special Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3), Adolescent Literacy (4-8), and Other (SEL, High School, Classroom Management, etc.)*

Presented by Limeul Eubanks

"The study of the arts and the study of text reading parallel each other in the skills and knowledge children must have to become literate citizens." This interactive session will focus on supporting visual literacy that enhances comprehension on multiple levels. Participants will learn how to teach visual literacy lessons and the complex interaction between the reader and the text in a visual literacy lesson as well as how support students as they learn to apply critical and creative thinking skills to artistic expressions and when solving artistic problems.

---

### **What Does the Reading Block Look Like in My Classroom?**

*Administrators and General Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3)*  
Presented by Stephanie Mollett and Kasey Rather

This presentation is designed to give educators and administrators a breakdown of the Simple View of Reading, an overview of each strand in Scarborough's Reading Rope, and strategies to increase rigor for a structured literacy classroom. They will also review appropriate schedules for their Reading Block to ensure they are providing adequate time daily for literacy instruction.

---

### **What in the Diagnostic!?**

*Administrators and General Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3)*  
Presented by Lydia Aderholt and Candy Shipp

Diagnostic assessments provide a deeper look into the needs of the students in the classroom. When looking at screener data, it is important to know the correct steps in instruction or intervention. Diagnostics are that answer. We will examine the differences between a screener and a diagnostic, identify specific diagnostics for each component of reading and determine next steps of using the diagnostic data to drive instruction. This session will focus on STAR and iReady data, and provide hands on activities to allow for immediate practice.

---

### **What is the SoR? Why is it important?**

*Administrators, General Education Teachers, and Special Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3)*  
Presented by Christine Spell and LaTondra Robinson

This presentation is designed to dig deeper into the meaning of the Science of Reading. It is designed to give teachers and administrators a greater understanding of what the Science of Reading is and how to implement it into buildings.

---

### **Word Consciousness: Engaging and Interactive Vocabulary Ideas**

*General Education Teachers of Early Literacy (PreK-3) and Adolescent Literacy (4-8)*  
Presented by Kenny Gibson

Direct Vocabulary Instruction should not just be taught through direct explicit instruction and word learning strategies. Students should actively think about and engage in word consciousness activities in order to facilitate appropriate vocabulary usage. Engage your students in word play, word part awareness, word relationship, and word choice activities that will make them aware of the importance of the right word at the right time.

---

### **Writing Unwrapped**

*Administrators, General Education Teachers, and Special Education Teachers of Adolescent Literacy (4-8)*  
Presented by Sondra Hinton and Kim Bey

During our presentation, we will introduce the writing strategy, Say-Mean-Matter, which helps students strategically organize a basic literary analysis in response to a text. This instructional strategy spans intermediate through high school grade levels and proves to be effective among students of all ability levels. Say-Mean-Matter is a teaching method that prepares students for the daunting task of on-demand writing they will encounter on the MAAP assessment, as well as a tool that helps them question a text, search for deeper meanings, and make connections between a text and their lives. Come prepared to be actively engaged in this hands-on session as we unwrap the gift of writing.

*The Say-Mean-Matter method is not one we created; Kelly Gallagher is responsible for this strategy, and he discusses it in his book Deeper Reading: Comprehending Challenging Texts.*

# About the Presenters



**Lydia Aderholt**

Lydia serves as a Regional Literacy Coordinator with the MS Department of Education. Before joining MDE, she taught kindergarten for six years in the MS Delta. Lydia has a passion for the early grades and a love for phonological awareness and phonics. She has a BA in Elementary Education and Spanish from Aurora University and holds a Master's in Education from Delta State University.

Lydia lives in Oxford, MS with her husband, Michael, and her two boys, Carson and Camden. She loves spending time with her family, all things Ole Miss sports, and running as a St. Jude Hero.



**Mackenzie Allred**

Mackenzie, Ed.S., began her career as a 5<sup>th</sup> grade English Language Arts teacher and transitioned to a 4<sup>th</sup> grade ELA teacher. Mackenzie is currently serving as a Literacy Coach for the MS Department of Education to assist with implementation of new curricula and best practices in literacy instruction.

Mackenzie is a wife, and an aunt to a nephew.



**Anne Anderson**

Anne served as a district content coach after teaching 8<sup>th</sup> graders for twenty-four years. Since retiring in 2011, Anne has worked as an educational consultant, presenting at local, regional, and national conferences, and offering onsite trainings for public and private schools across the nation. Anne credits the LSUS National Writing Project and her summer residency with Poetry Alive! as pivotal points in her teaching career. She is a frequent reviewer of professional books for MiddleWeb.com.



**Cartessia Angrum**

Cartessia has been an educator for seventeen years and currently serves as a Literacy Coach for the MS Department of Education. She has degrees from Alcorn State University and MS College and is currently pursuing a degree in Dyslexia Therapy. She has presented at several conferences and informational sessions such as Tools for Literacy, Passport to Literacy, Making Connections, and Parents As Partners. Cartessia is honored to have an opportunity to work with teachers and parents across the great state of MS.



**Shakita Bagwell-Jackson**

Shakita is a Nationally Board-Certified Educator that has worked in several capacities ranging from elementary to high school. During her educational career, she has served as an elementary education teacher, Learning 4 Today Tutor, and Youth Opportunities Unlimited Mentor. Over the past six years, Shakita has worked diligently as a Literacy Coach with the MS Department of Education. Her role as a Literacy Coach has given her the opportunity to conduct observations, conferences, professional development, grade level meetings, modeling, and co-teaching. She has worked with school administrators and teachers to analyze data to make instructional decisions that drive instruction in the classroom.

Shakita currently lives in Batesville, MS with her husband and daughter, Joi. She specializes in literacy, writing instruction, data analysis, and implementing instructional strategies to promote change.

---

Educators may know Dr. Bain from Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) national professional learning sessions and MS's LETRS Phase 3 videos. Dr. Bain has facilitated LETRS, reading science instruction, and assessment professional learning at a regional and state level since 2008, and nationally since 2013 -- supporting educators in all 50 states. Staci is thrilled about the opportunity to connect with educators and unpack theoretical frameworks and the preponderance of research evidence that supports a Structured Literacy approach to tier one literacy learning and teaching.

Staci was born and raised in the Pacific Northwest, completing a B.A. in Psychology at the University of WA. Staci went on to receive her Master's, national board certification, and administration credential. In 2019, Staci completed her doctorate and superintendent credential from the University of WA with a published dissertation in online learning persistence and satisfaction.



**Dr. Staci Bain**

Dr. Bain has served as a public educator in a variety of roles, including: preschool teacher, classroom teacher, school principal, district migrant/bilingual director, Prek-12 assistant executive director of learning and teaching, and superintendent cabinet member.

Staci believes in educators and the ability of our collective efforts to build a literate society. As such, Dr. Bain is a university associate professor, will serve as the incoming president of The Reading League - WA chapter and currently sits as an executive board member for the International Dyslexia Association (WA, ID, MT branch). Staci is resolute in her belief that literacy is a civil right that must be afforded to every individual through professional learning, efficacious instruction, and supportive systems.

Dr. Bain is the Co-Founder and Chief Education Officer of EDUCATE America. She has authored a variety of educational material including the newly published K-8 resources include "Science of Reading Routine: Daily Planner(s)" to help educators structure tier one time for maximum results. Dr. Bain's additional book is entitled, "Thrive: Teaching with Virtual and Reading Science Best Practices".



**Melissa Banks**

Melissa joined the MS Department of Education as an Instructional Technology Specialist in December of 2015. In January of 2021, she transitioned to the role of Director of Digital Learning and has worked to create a team to deliver coaching, professional development, and resources to support educators as they increase their capacity to deliver high-quality digital instruction to all students across the state. Before joining the MDE, Melissa taught high school business and technology courses for eight years. In addition to teaching, Melissa also served in many leadership roles at her school and created and led multiple professional development sessions regarding instructional technology in the classroom. Melissa completed her Master of Arts in Teaching in August of 2010 and received her National Board Certification in 2013. She has also earned technology credentials that include Google Certified Educator and Microsoft Innovative Educator.



**Brandi Bankston**

Brandi's experience in education includes seven years of teaching 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and three years in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Like most teachers, she assumed many other roles, responsibilities, and leadership opportunities during her time in the classroom. She chose to leave the classroom to become a MS Department of Education Literacy Coach four years ago to help serve the teachers and students across MS and beyond!

Brandi is a wife to Jeremy and a mother to three children: Brex, Bella, and Corbin.



**Sherry Barnes**

Sherry has been an educator for twenty-four years. From being a kindergarten teacher all the way to 8<sup>th</sup> grade special education, and most recently a Literacy Coach for the MS Department of Education. She has enjoyed many very different experiences as a teacher.

She has been married for twenty-eight wonderful years and has three sons: Garrett, Zack, and Jeremy. She really enjoys being a Literacy Coach and stretching the impact teachers have on their students as well as spend time reading, traveling, and all things Disney.



**Casey Berry**

Casey is currently a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher at South Side Elementary in West Point, MS. This is her tenth year in the field of education with experience in kindergarten and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. She received her Associates Degree from Copiah Lincoln Community College, Bachelor's Degree from MS State University, and Master's Degree from Delta State University. This year she is starting the process of National Boards.

Casey is married to Brandon Berry, and has two children, Meredith and Greer. Outside of the classroom, she is always on the go with her children. She is President of Junior Auxiliary of West Point, a member of 100 Women of Clay County, and a Mission Friends Teacher at her church. Helping children has always been her passion and she enjoys learning new strategies to use in the classroom.



**Kim Bey**

Kim was born and raised in the MS Delta and is a proud product of MS Public Schools. After graduating from Greenwood High School in 1990, she attended and graduated from Harding University in Searcy, AR. Her teaching career began at Washington School in Greenville, MS, where she taught high school English and sponsored the yearbook and dance team. After teaching there for three years, she moved to Olive Branch, MS, where she taught English and drama at Olive Branch Middle School. After her third year at OBMS, she decided to pursue her Master's Degree in Administration and Leadership; so, she entered the sabbatical program through Delta State University. For the next fourteen months, she interned at various schools in DeSoto County and completed her coursework. She then went on to complete her specialist degree in administration and leadership through Delta State. In 2003, she began her work as assistant principal at DeSoto Central Middle School.

In addition to her school responsibilities, Kim is a wife, daughter, and mother. Her husband, Stan Bey, works for Memphis Fire as an EMS Lt. Her mother lives in Horn Lake, MS, and is a retired teacher from Horn Lake High School. She has a son, Whit, who is in 12<sup>th</sup> grade, and a daughter, Sara Wynn, who is in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. In addition, she gained four amazing stepchildren in her recent marriage that range from thirteen to twenty-one. She attends Goodman Oaks Church of Christ in Southaven, MS.



**Paul Black**

Paul, Ed.S., NCSP, holds advanced degrees in Human Exceptionality and School Psychology. He has practiced as a Nationally Certified School Psychologist for the past seventeen years and is also currently working as an Education and Literacy Specialist for Reading Horizons in Kaysville, UT. Paul has extensive experience in psychology, literacy, and technology; and understands how to accurately identify, re-mediate, and monitor student's specific needs so parents and school-based teams are empowered to make meaningful improvements in students' lives.



**Jayda Brantley**

Jayda, M.S., M.Ed., CALT, is the Academic Intervention Specialist with the MS Department of Education and a Certified Academic Language Therapist. Mrs. Brantley received her Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees from MS State University and a Master of Education in Dyslexia Therapy from MS College. Prior to joining the MS Department of Education, Mrs. Brantley served as a certified dyslexia therapist, school interventionist, and classroom teacher. She has worked with students in grades K-12 as well as adults.



Elisa currently serves as a Literacy Coach for the MS Department of Education. Elisa has worked with teachers throughout the state of MS as an elementary teacher, English chairperson, writing consultant, literacy coach, and professional development provider. She has presented at Rethink Literacy, MDE/MWTI Strategic Teaching of Reading and Writing Cohorts II and III, the Making Connections Conference, and various writing trainings across the state.

**Elisa Brooks**

---



**Dr. Melissa Brown**

Dr. Brown is beginning her fourteenth year in education. She is currently a Literacy Coach with the Office of Special Education at the MS Department of Education and an adjunct professor in both the Department of Languages and Literature and Department of Education and Human Sciences at Southwest TN Community College. She recently taught fourth grade ELA for Lee County Schools, which is her EIR district. She also has experience teaching PreK and worked with the Office of Elementary Education as a K-3 Literacy Coach for five years.

She and her partner, Brent, reside in Fulton with their three children: Ethan, Alex, and Ella.

---



**Laura Butler**

Laura is a former classroom teacher, supervisor, and consultant who loves blending the worlds of reading, social studies and science while working collaboratively with teachers.

A lifelong learner, Laura balances her work life with time with family, schnauzers, travel to favorite places, including the Tetons, and is well on her way on her personal goal to visit as many national parks as possible. Laura's current source of inspiration is National Park Ranger Betty Reid Soskin who is celebrating her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday as an active ranger at the Rosie the Riveter and WWII Home Front NP in CA.

---



**Ann Marie Carlyle**

Ann Marie, B.S., Ed., has over thirty years of experience working in education as a teacher, consultant, administrator, and adult educator. Currently she serves as a Literacy Coach for the MS Department of Education. As a coach, she provides support for kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teachers by modeling, co-teaching, planning, and providing feedback on best practices in literacy instruction.

---



**Janice T. Cate**

Janice has over twenty-five years of experience teaching English Learners in grades K-12. She has presented sessions at International Literacy Association Conferences, MLA Conferences, Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) Conferences, and AL/ MS TESOL Conferences. She is presently serving as the State Coordinator for MLA.



**Dr. Nathan Clemens**

Dr. Clemens is an associate professor in the Department of Special Education at The University of TX at Austin and an affiliated faculty member with the Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk. Dr. Clemens studies reading difficulties in children and youth. His research focuses on improving instruction and intervention for students with reading difficulties (including dyslexia) in kindergarten through adolescence.

Dr. Clemens is an author of HMH Into Reading.

---



**Miriam Comans**

Miriam has worked with various population as an elementary education teacher, lead teacher, interventionist, and literacy coach in the state of MS. She has presented at the MS Department of Education Literacy Symposium, Superhero's in Training Conference, Literacy is Power Conference, and Building Strong Readers Conference.

---



**Natalie Crowder**

Natalie is the English Language Arts Content Director for the MS Department of Education. She holds a master's degree in teaching from Belhaven University. Natalie served as a teacher and department chair and has worked in curriculum design and new teacher professional learning.

---



**Britney Dewease**

Britney is a third-year Literacy Coach with the MS Department of Education and has nine years prior experience as a general education teacher. She holds a Bachelor of Science in K-8 Education, a Master of Science in Gifted Studies, and a Specialist in Educational Leadership from William Carey University. Britney has facilitated and presented at various MDE regional trainings for teachers in the state.



**Kelly Downing**

Kelly is a dynamic educator with over twelve years of experience teaching in the New York City Department of Education. During his tenure, he served as TWR Coordinator at A. Philip Randolph Campus High School where he oversaw the program's successful school-wide implementation.

Kelly's previous experience as the Coordinator of Student Activities at Harlem Children's Zone-Promise Academy High School included developing school culture and implementing several male mentoring initiatives. His understanding of the challenges faced by socio-economically disadvantaged students in grades 7-12 and adult learners was shaped by his experience as the Co-Director of the Letters Department at The College of New Rochelle, School of New Resources. Kelly graduated from New York University. He holds a Master of Music degree in Jazz Voice from Manhattan School of Music and a Master of Science in Teaching from Fordham University. Additionally, Kelly has earned a Master of Education degree from the College of Saint Rose and is currently completing his Ph.D. in Literacy at St. John's University.



**Ashlee Elkins**

Ashlee is a kindergarten teacher at West Elementary in Sturgis, MS, with nine years of classroom experience, most of which has been spent in kindergarten and first grade. She received both her Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education and Master of Education degree in Reading and Literacy from MS University for Women, and has a huge passion for equitable, developmentally appropriate literacy education for lower elementary students. While in graduate school, she focused heavily on reaching at risk students and bridging the language gaps between high SES students and low SES students entering kindergarten and first grade.

She lives in West Point, but this is her fourth year in the Starkville Oktibbeha School District. She also serves as a mentor teacher in her district and on several committees.



**Sandra Elliott**

Sandra has served as a classroom teacher for over twenty-five years for grades two through middle school in OH and in MS. She has also served as an educational program facilitator and a building interventionist. She holds teaching endorsements in elementary education, special education, and English as a second language.

Throughout her career, Sandra has been dedicated to meeting the needs of English Learners and struggling students. In her current work with the MS Department of Education, she serves as the English Learner Support Specialist and as an Academic Interventionist where she provides technical support and professional development to teachers and administrators throughout the state on best practices, instructional guidelines, intervention strategies, and instructional strategies to support English learners as well supports for other students in the Multi-Tiered System of Supports. She also serves as part of the team that works on the MS Seal of Bilingualism.



**Limeul Eubanks**

Limeul is currently with the MS Department of Education, and is a visual artist and art educator that holds the following degrees: Master of Fine Arts (MFA) with studio focus in both two-dimensional and three-dimensional art, Master of Education in Mild/Moderate Special Education with supporting areas in Art Education and Gifted and Talented, and Bachelor of Arts with a concentration in ceramics, painting, dramatic arts, and communications. Eubanks has received training in a wide variety of art mediums and forms with teaching experience in arts integration at the PreK to college levels and has designed and coordinated special arts-in-education projects and programs for teachers and students.



**Kenny Gibson**

Kenny has experience with kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classrooms as a teacher and interventionist. Previously, Kenny has served as a Barksdale Reading Institute instructional coach to improve reading instruction in elementary classrooms. Kenny previously served three years as a Literacy Coach and five years as a Regional Literacy Coordinator for the MS Department of Education. Currently, Kenny serves as a Literacy Coach and provides support to elementary teachers in literacy support schools.



**Valerie Gilbert**

Valerie is a sixth-year Literacy Coach with the MS Department of Education and has ten years prior experience as a general education teacher. She holds a Bachelor of Science in K-8 Education from the University of Memphis, a Master of Science in Instructional Technology from the University of Southern MS, and a Specialist in Educational Leadership from William Carey University.



**Crystal Glenn**

Crystal is an ELA Support Team Member, specializing in test creation and preparation, directing classroom environments, and enhancing student behavior through positive and forward-thinking approaches. Crystal has ten years of classroom experience in both the Upper Elementary and Middle School sector. The majority of this time has been spent teaching ELA at the Upper Elementary School level in grades 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>. In addition, Crystal has served as a PLC Leader, ELA department head, team coordinator, RUES Teacher of the Year 2017-2018, National Junior Beta Club Sponsor 2011-2017, and PBIS grade representative 2017-2019. Crystal earned her BSE in Elementary Education from Alcorn State University in 2011 and her M.S. in Educational Leadership from MS College in 2015.



**Casey Glusenkamp**

Casey is in her eighth year as principal of South Side Elementary, serving 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> grade. She absolutely LOVES teaching and has made it her mission to never lose sight of what it is like to be a teacher. She did not try to become and administrator, the opportunity just presented itself to her, but she never really felt like she was "done" teaching. There have been many times when a long-term sub was needed for her teachers and she ended up taking on the role because she knew it was so important to be done well - plus, she really enjoyed getting back into the classroom. Being an administrator has allowed her to see so much great teaching that she did not see as a teacher. One of her most important jobs is hiring and retaining the BEST teachers in MS! She has received several awards, including Teacher of the Year as a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher in 2010, Administrator of the Year in her district in 2016 and 2019, and People's Choice Administrator in 2015 and 2019.

Casey is thirty-seven years old, has been married for nineteen years, and has two beautiful children, Presley and Brody.

---



**Dr. Gretchen S. Goode**

Dr. Goode is a new assistant professor in the School of Education at the University of Southern MS. She spent fifteen years in K-12 schools in TN and AR as a teacher, instructional coach, and professional development coordinator. Her areas of expertise include systems thinking, disciplinary literacies, and writing instruction.

---



**Quintana Goodloe-Steen**

Quintana obtained her Specialist Degree in Special Education from Jackson State University. She has worked as a kindergarten, first, and third grade teacher. Quintana has been an Assistant Principal where she also served as the MTSS Chairperson and School Testing Coordinator. She is currently a Regional Literacy Coordinator for the MS Department of Education where she provides support to educators in the area of literacy and works collaboratively with teachers, administrators, and colleagues.

---



**Mary Gregg**

Mary graduated from the University of Southern MS with a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education and from William Carey University with a Master's degree in Reading. She has taught for fifteen years, with at least thirteen of those being in grades 4-6 Reading and Language Arts. She was team leader for her grade level for several years and is currently serving on her school's leadership committee. She has recently moved into teaching science and enjoys incorporating the ELA standards through it.



**Elizabeth Hadaway**

Elizabeth is Regional Literacy Coordinator for the MS Department of Education with over twenty years of experience in education. She has experience as an elementary classroom teacher and a Reading First literacy coach. In her current role, she provides support for literacy coaches and K-3<sup>rd</sup> grade teachers through job-embedded professional development, analyzing data, modeling, and co-teaching of best practices in literacy.



**Denise Harrison**

Denise is a Special Education Professional Development Coordinator with the MS Department of Education's Office of Special Education, along with the Office of Professional Development and the University of MS. She has been in the field of education for twenty years. Thirteen of those years, Denise taught students with significant cognitive deficits. Denise earned her Master of Education degree in Special Education from AR State University. She received her National Board Certification in 2011. Denise is pursuing her Doctor of Philosophy degree in Special Education from the University of MS.



**Molly Henderson**

Molly is a Regional Literacy Coordinator at MS Department of Education. She assists in coordinating, developing, and leading literacy support with K-3 teachers. In her twenty-six years in education, she has taught kindergarten, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, and 5<sup>th</sup> grade. In addition to her primary job function, Molly is also a dyslexia therapist.

She is a dog lover and an avid animal rescuer from the MS Delta. Molly enjoys spending time with her two children, grandchildren, practicing yoga, walking, and riding her bicycle.



**Dr. Jeannine Herron**

Dr. Herron is a research neuropsychologist who spent ten years investigating brain and behavioral correlates of dyslexia at UC San Francisco. She received five awards from the National Institute of Child Health and Development (NICHD) to develop and do research with online early literacy curricula. She was co-founder and Program Director of the first Head Start Project in the U.S. in 1965–The Child Development Group of MS.



**Sondra Hinton**

Sondra is in her eighteenth year in education, and has taught at various schools and various grade levels. English Language Arts in Middle School is her love. She received her Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education (K-8) from Crichton College in 1999 and Master of Science in Educational Leadership AR State University in 2014. Right out of college, she taught self-contained 3<sup>rd</sup> grade for two years. Since then, she has taught English Language Arts in 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. In addition, she has served as an intervention specialist and ELA coach in grades K-12. Currently, she is teaching regular and AP English at Desoto Central Middle School. Training and mentoring teachers has always been one of her passions.

She is a wife and a mother to three beautiful children. She was born and raised in the great state of MS and is proud to call it her home. Being the youngest of four girls, she quickly learned how to work well with others and generate creativity. In her free time, she enjoys traveling and spending time with her family. She loves going to the beach every summer and visiting her husband's family on the MS Gulf Coast as much as possible.



**Alissa Hobart**

Alissa is an esteemed educator that has worked in a variety of roles from kindergarten to sixth grade math and special education. She began her teaching career in Clarksdale, MS. Her leadership paved the way for scholar success as a founding team member for a rural charter school. This is Alissa's first year working as a Literacy Coach with the MS Department of Education. Her passion for education stems from her love of learning at a young age and the belief that every child deserves a joyful, high-quality education.

Alissa resides in Oxford, MS with her husband and two dogs, Dixie and Doodle.



**Marsha Hodges**

Marsha has been in education for fifteen years, teaching everything from 6<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> grade ELA and social studies. She is set to receive her Masters in Educational Leadership degree this year and was recently appointed as the academic interventionist/MTSS coordinator for Leake Central High School.

She lives in Carthage, MS, with her husband of twenty-five years. Together, they have three children: a daughter with dyslexia and two sons with high functioning autism.



**Sarah Horn**

Sarah graduated from Auburn University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Communication Disorders, but she has spent most of her career in education. She taught preschool and first grade in North MS as well as being an elementary school principal for three years with the MS Association of Independent Schools. She also taught abroad for seven years in the UK, working with various grade levels and teaching in a variety of subject areas. For the past ten years she has happily taught in Biloxi Public Schools.



**Nicole Hunter**

Nicole is a resident of Greenville, MS. She received her bachelor's and master's degrees from Delta State University where she majored in Elementary Education. She also received a second master's degree in Early Literacy Instruction and a specialist in Curriculum and Instruction Management and Administration (CIMA) from Nova Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale, FL.

Nicole is a fifteen-year educator who has previously served as an elementary ELA teacher, a reading interventionist, and an elementary library media specialist. Over the past six years, Nicole has served as a Literacy Coach for the MS Department of Education, where she continuously supports administrators and teachers during their efforts and implementation of best practices to support the Literacy Based Promotion Act.

---



**Dr. Tameka Hyland**

Dr. Hyland is an innovative educational leader who has transformed two schools. She started her principal career in the Vicksburg-Warren School District at Sherman Avenue Elementary School where she improved the letter grade from a D to C, and achieved the second highest MKAS reading scores in the state of MS. Dr. Hyland is currently the executive principal at Vicksburg High School, where she has achieved the highest graduation rate in the school's history at 88% and the third highest number of students taking dual enrollment classes in the state of MS. Dr. Hyland has structured the school so that students have the opportunity to explore the career academies and exit high school using one of the four E's (entrepreneurship, enrollment, employment, and enlistment). Dr. Hyland is an expert in school reform and is the author of, "The Reality of Teaching," where she enlightens school leaders and stakeholders about the educational challenges that teachers face in their classrooms. In her second publication entitled, "U-Turn: A Recipe for School Reform," she shares how she uses research-based strategies and various instructional and intervention methods to take schools from failing to successful. She is also an expert on social emotional learning and providing structures to maximize student achievement in high poverty schools.

Dr. Hyland has an Associate Degree of Applied Science in Child Development, Bachelor of Science Degree in Early Childhood Education, a Master's Degree in Teaching Arts, and a Specialist and Doctorate Degree in Educational Leadership and Administration. Dr. Hyland is an expert in school reform and has a thorough knowledge of the Common Core State Standards, the Career Academies, the effects of poor literacy skills among students, especially African American students, and ways to strategically help organizations maximize student achievement and raise test scores.

---



**Demetras A. Jones**

Demetras has been in education for eighteen years. She taught 4<sup>th</sup> grade for three years, 1<sup>st</sup> grade for ten years, served on the MTSS team for twelve years, and currently serve as a Literacy Coach for the MS Department of Education for the past four years.

She is the proud aunt of Alex, Mia, and Jaden. She loves to learn new things, help teachers be the BEST they can be, shopping, and traveling.



**Chelsea Kilgore**

Chelsea has been in the field of education for ten years. She attended MS State University, where she received a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education and a master's degree in Educational Leadership and School Administration. She has taught 4<sup>th</sup> grade English Language Arts, kindergarten, and served as an Interventionist for grades K-5. Chelsea is currently serving her fifth year with the MS Department of Education as a Literacy Coach.



**Kristi Kirkwood**

Kristi is currently in her sixteenth year in Early Childhood Education. She is a graduate of the University of South AL where she earned her Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education. She is also a graduate of William Carey University where she earned her Master's degree in Educational Leadership and her Specialist degree in Instructional Leadership. She is currently completing her Doctorate degree with William Carey University in the area of Educational Leadership while serving as the Early Learning Coordinator for George County School District. She is the George Early Learning Collaborative Coordinator through the state of MS.



**Dr. Laurie Lee**

Laurie serves as an Associate in Research at the FL Center for Reading Research, where she works with states in the Southeast to support their literacy initiatives. She is a former elementary and middle school teacher, worked in the literacy offices in IL and FL, and recently completed her Ed.D. in Educational Leadership and Policy. She has served as a lead author and co-author on a number of publications designed to help improve literacy instruction for students in grades K-12 and in adult education.



**Mandy Logue**

Mandy was a classroom teacher in the Alcorn School District in grades ranging from first to third for fifteen years, and is now serving her seventh year as a MS Department of Education Literacy Coach.

She lives in Corinth, MS with her husband of twenty-one years and her two teenage daughters. She enjoys reading, tending her flower beds, crafting, and spending time with family.

Logan has been an educator and coach going on four years. She is originally from Lubbock, TX. She graduated from Lubbock Christian University in 2018 with her degree in Interdisciplinary Studies and Secondary Education. She taught English I and English II at a Title-I school in West TX for two and a half years and moved to MS mid-school year in January of 2021 to continue teaching on the coast.

While in TX after her first-year teaching, she was given the title of English Department lead at our high school. Her time in this role provided her the opportunity to grow from her colleagues, collaborate, and discuss student data and literacy. She had noticed the consistent decline in student reading levels and a deeply-seated lack of motivation for students to read even the smallest of passages, let alone a novel. She had students entering high school at a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading level. After looking into possibilities that caused this decline, she noticed right away that students were no longer carrying library books. In a society that is so invested in social media and technology, the page-turning of a book has become a foreign practice. She realized that she needed to help her students establish a love for reading that would soon create a societal “norm” where reading is not only normalized but also encouraged. She knew she had to dive deep into figuring out a system to help raise the bar when it comes to independent reading.



**Logan Lockard**

When she moved to the MS Gulf Coast in January of 2021, she noticed the same need for encouraging students to read and the same trend of low Lexile levels in the majority of students. She has incorporated a reading philosophy in her classroom that has accelerated independent reading and promoted a love for reading. After applying this system in her classroom, she has seen wonderful growth in student confidence. She has student testimonials talking about how they never knew they could finish a book on their own, how they have finished a book in two days, and how never once in their life thought they could ever do that. Although she is only in her early stages of teaching and at the beginning of a life-long career, she believes that she has a great number of tools in her tool belt to help provide encouragement and inspiration for students. She hopes to be able to share her passion for reading and her independent reading system so that all of our students can improve in the classroom, on state testing, and find a joy for reading that carries on throughout their lives.



**Dr. Ethan Lynn**

Dr. Lynn graduated from BYU with a M.S. degree in TESOL in 2016 and from Northern AZ with a Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics in April of 2021. Prior to joining Reading Horizons, Ethan held the position of Reading Skill Supervisor at his college’s English Language Center. Ethan’s current research interests include reading, writing, fluency, motivation, classroom engagement, corpus linguistics, and student metacognitive awareness.



**Amanda Malone**

Amanda is a Literacy Coach with the MS Department of Education. She earned her Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education from The University of Southern MS and an MBA from MS State University. She is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration at William Carey University and holds National Board Certification with sixteen years of experience in education.

Amanda is married to Jonathan Malone and they have one son, Matthew. She is a licensed and ordained minister through IGO Ministries, and she and her husband are active in ministry at their local church as the women's and men's ministry leaders.



**Shirley Massey**

Shirley has worked in the private and public educational setting for thirty years in the states of IL and MS. She has provided for the needs, interests, abilities, and talents of each student in our multicultural society in order for them to develop into productive citizens. As a parent, community helper, foster parent liaison, secretary, junior accountant, elementary education teacher, lead teacher, and district Teacher of the Year, she has had numerous opportunities to work with various populations whose central focus has been on educating our society.

During the past six years, Shirley has assisted teachers, school administrators, and district leaders in supporting all aspects of the Literacy Based Promotion Act. In this role, she consistently supports kindergarten through third grade teachers in developing effective literacy focused instruction, the development of operative schedules, effective classroom management strategies, and data analysis.



**Dr. Candace McClendon**

Dr. McClendon, Founder of Schoolworq, is a performance-driven, Senior Education Executive, with over fifteen years of success in leading the development and deployment of innovative instructional strategies and learning solutions.

As an Educational Specialist, Candace's experience spans from urban and rural school districts, with an emphasis on low-performing schools in need of immediate results. As a Data Coach in partnership with the MS Department of Education, and as an Education Consultant, Candace has worked with school districts across the state to analyze data, improve instructional delivery, and incorporate professional learning communities to improve statewide school performance ratings from "F" to "C", "F" to "B", and "D" to "B" in one academic year.

She has also served as the Code.org Director for the state of MS and has been a Google and Apple certified instructional leader since 2015 with a talent for leveraging emerging technologies to drive asynchronous and synchronous instruction.

Her work is rooted in the ability to promote growth and foster a community of trust, innovation, and collaboration using Instructional Leadership to make academic gains in every classroom, every day.



**Stephanie Mollett**

Stephanie is a Literacy Coach with the Office of Elementary Education and Reading at the MS Department of Education. She received her Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education from MS State University, her Master's Degree in Gifted Education from the University of Southern MS, and her Specialist Degree in Educational Technology and Workforce Development from MS State University. Stephanie has served in public education for over twenty-five years, starting as a regular classroom teacher and gifted education teacher, before moving into interventionist and instructional facilitator positions. Stephanie transitioned to the MDE Literacy coach position eight years ago and is currently working with two schools in south MS.



**Julie Anne Moore Hall**

Julie Anne, a graduate of the University of Southern MS, received her BS Degree in Elementary Education. She has twelve years of experience in an educational setting, including teaching in kindergarten, first, and second grade. Julie Anne is currently working for the MS Department of Education as a K-3 Literacy Coach. As a Literacy Coach, she holds collaborative work relationships with district-level school personnel, school-based literacy coaches, principals, and teachers to provide them with support and professional development in the area of structured literacy so that students in assigned schools achieve grade level reading by the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.



**Dr. Phelton Cortez Moss**

Dr. Moss is a tenure-track professor of teacher education at the historic Tougaloo College, school leadership consultant, and Executive Director of Innovative Strategy for Jackson Public Schools. He has served as a Policy Fellow for Education Leaders of Color and provided strategic and policy advice across a range of national education issues for members, including early childhood, K-12, postsecondary, career, and technical education, teacher diversity, and workforce development.

He has nine years of experience working in education and education policy from English teacher, policy maker, and principal. In one year, his school doubled ELA proficiency and saw continued gains. As the youngest serving principal in MS, his work in moving an underperforming middle school from an F to C in two years led him to become the Bureau Director of Educator Effectiveness and Talent Acquisition at the MS Department of Education working on K-12 education policy issues, including teacher diversity, teacher/leader evaluations, teacher recruitment and retention, educator licensure, and issues of inequity in the distribution of effective teachers.

Most notably, he led the design and launch of the nation's first state-run teacher residency program with a \$4.5M Kellogg Foundation Grant to address the state's teacher shortage and increase the diversity of the educator workforce in MS. While serving at the MS Department of Education, he completed the year-long national School Systems Leaders Fellowship along with twenty senior education leaders from across the country and received training to become a school systems leader.

Phelton began his career in education as a high school English teacher in Greenwood, MS, where he was Teacher of the Year for two consecutive years, and corps member of Teach for America. He holds a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership from the University of MS and a BA in Public Policy Leadership and English from the University of MS. He holds a certificate in Education Finance from Georgetown University. Phelton is a member of The

Reading League National Board of Directors. He is also a member of MS Business Journal 2020 Top 50 Under 40 Class of Business Leaders.

---

**Elizabeth Murray**

Elizabeth has been an early literacy educator for twenty years. She is currently a literacy coach, but has also taught kindergarten, first grade, and second grade. She is a trained LETRS facilitator in both Third Education and Early Childhood. She is currently pursuing CALT certification and works with students who have learning difficulties including dyslexia.

---



**Dr. LaQuanta M. Nelson**

Dr. Nelson has served in education as a mentor, motivational speaker, teacher, assistant principal, and principal over the last sixteen years. She currently serves as Principal of Magnolia Middle School. She has found a true passion in working with turn-around schools. Dr. Nelson holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from Tougaloo College. She earned a Masters of Education degree in Elementary Education from MS College. She continued her studies at MS College to obtain an Educational Specialist degree in Educational Administration. In 2012, Dr. Nelson obtained her Doctorate of Philosophy degree from the University of Southern MS in the area of Educational Leadership with an emphasis in Administration. Dr. Nelson has presented and keynoted at conferences/events on the state, regional, and national level. She has served on boards such as the MS Department of Education (MDE) Principals' Advisory Group, MDE Middle School Task Force, and Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation. She is the current Executive Director of the MS Association of Middle Level Education and serves on the Pascagoula River Audubon Center Advisory Committee. She believes in the power of team and supporting others in their journey to greatness.

---



**Summeral Newman**

Summeral is a Literacy Coach with the MS Department of Education. She has been an educator for sixteen years. She has taught first, second, and third grade elementary students. Her mission is to support and serve students in MS.

---



**Tiffany Nickleberry**

Tiffany is a Literacy Coach for the MS Department of Education. She is a graduate of Jackson State University, where she received her Bachelor's of Science in Education (K-8), and Belhaven University, where she obtained a Master of Education. She brings to the literacy program her passion for teaching children. Tiffany has served in multiple roles in education and brings a multitude of knowledge and strategies to increase student and teacher success in and outside the classroom.



**Emily Noble**

Emily served as teacher consultant, associate director, and then director of the MSU Writing Project from 2004 until retiring in August, 2021. Prior to working with the Writing Project, she taught middle and high school English in Rankin County Schools. With the Writing Project, she has partnered with numerous school districts with service based on literacy improvement with an emphasis on reading and writing instruction, research and standards-based lessons, and unit and lesson planning. She has also led multiple summer workshops in Starkville, MS and Meridian, MS. Emily participated in the Reading Initiative team for the MSU Writing/Thinking Project as well as served as a developer for Writing Assessment 101. She assisted in the development and delivery of the MCCRS programs in the partnership between MWTI and the MS Department of Education. Over the past four years, she led the site in service to districts participating in the College, Career, and Community Writers Program (C3WP) as part of a federally funded grant through the National Writing Project. She is looking forward to returning to the service of teachers and schools in the coming months.



**Dr. Ashley Parker Sheils**

Dr. Parker Sheils has sixteen years of experience in literacy education as a teacher and an evidence-based, job-embedded literacy coach, which requires designing, delivering, and evaluating professional learning opportunities to improve literacy instruction and ultimately literacy achievement among PreK-12 learners. Ashley has served as director of the MS Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, as well as a project coordinator for a federal research study at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, TX, and a literacy consultant for national organizations, state-level organizations, school districts, and non-profit agencies, specifically related to planning, implementing, and scaling evidence-based literacy practices and interventions. Ashley is passionate about designing and delivering quality learning experiences in the field of literacy instruction and was recognized for her dissertation work by receiving the *Council for Learning Disabilities Outstanding Researcher Award*.



**Stephanie Parkinson**

Stephanie is the Associate Director, Professional Development Partnerships - Coaching at Amplify. In this role, Stephanie leads a state-wide data coaching program in MS focused on building capacity in leaders and teachers around data-driven instruction. She also works with a professional development program that coaches kindergarten through third grade teachers on data-driven instruction specific to early literacy data. Prior to joining Amplify, Stephanie served as the regional designer for Teach For America - MS where she designed and executed large scale professional development events for novice teachers. She started her education career as a high school math teacher.

Stephanie resides in Jackson, MS with her husband and three children.



**Shakinna Patterson**

Shakinna serves as the Director of School Improvement Programs at the MS Department of Education. In this position, she supports the systemic improvement of the lowest performing schools and districts in the State of MS, as well as turnaround efforts in the state. Ms. Patterson guides the work of school improvement coaches who support district and school leaders in building their capacity to support school reform. In addition, she provides support for CSI, TSI, and ATSI designated schools. Ms. Patterson has served in education for twenty-one years as a teacher, school counselor, district administrator, and middle and high school principal.



**Courtney Prather**

Courtney is currently in her ninth year of teaching. She has her Bachelor's degree in elementary education (2013) and her Master's in early literacy (2016). Recently, she certified as a National Board-Certified Teacher. Courtney spent the first eight years of her teaching career in the kindergarten and first grade settings; presently, she teaches third grade at South Side Elementary. Of all the achievements earned, her favorite is connecting with students and watching them grow as learners.

Courtney is a small-town enthusiast who is always eager to learn more about the world around her. She enjoys exploring her new town of West Point, MS, especially the small, family-owned businesses. On Saturdays, or any other time when she is free, Courtney can be found having a latte at a local coffee shop, hunting in the woods with her husband, watching baseball or football at MS State University, shopping at a thrift store, having brunch with a friend, or exploring a nearby small town. Most of all, Courtney enjoys fall mornings and the smells and feels that fill her home during the holidays. She and Nate, her husband, have two dogs, Jasmine and Ella, and two cats, Harriet and Sally.



**Dr. Eugene Pringle, Jr.**

Dr. Pringle believes in the power of education and the prime need of sound educational practices and outcomes for students. With a passion for literacy, leadership, and varied professional development methodologies, his educational tenure has been shaped by and has encompassed each.

Dr. Pringle currently serves in the capacity of Chair of the School of Education in the School of Education at Bethune-Cookman University. As a teacher education practitioner and researcher, he merges theory, research, and application to prepare students for careers and the K-12 setting. He also serves as the department chair for elementary education, reading instructor, teaches introductory education courses, and facilitates senior research projects. Prior to this appointment, Dr. Pringle served in multiple capacities in Orange County Public Schools spanning different schools within the urban school setting. He has served as an English language arts teacher, literacy instructional coach, and assistant principal. As a literacy advocate, each role presented intersections between theory, research-based strategies, and application to increase student achievement outcomes. These roles were defined by the necessity to assist in the implementation of reading intervention programs, support the implementation of school-wide literacy programs, build capacity among teachers through instructional coaching methodologies, and provide instructional leadership to increase student achievement and teacher practice.

Additionally, Dr. Pringle has delivered professional development and participated in collaborative team efforts to support the implementation of standards-based instruction at the school and district level, develop secondary curriculum, develop district-wide progress monitoring assessments, and provide support to teams of teachers as a Springboard trainer through The College Board.

Dr. Pringle's awards and recognitions include: Bethune-Cookman University Top 40 Under 40, University of Central Florida 2018 30 Under 30 Class, and the International Literacy Association 30 Under 30."



**Hillary Sapanski**

Hillary is a K-3 Regional Literacy Coordinator with the MS Department of Education, where she works alongside teachers, administrators, district leaders, and literacy coaches to increase reading proficiency across the state. Hillary is also the founder of EPIC MS, a free text messaging service for parents that provides tips on an array of topics. She has a Masters in Community Development from Delta State University, and a Masters in Elementary Education from Johns Hopkins University.

She has two dogs, and in her spare time loves to run in half and full marathons

---



**Candy Savage**

Candice, B.S., Ed., has served as a teacher and as an Interventionist at a K-6 school with a focus on remedial reading. She has had extensive training in working with children with reading difficulties, including the use of multisensory methods, such as the Orton-Gillingham methodology and the Association Method through DuBard. Candice currently serves as a Literacy Coach with the MS Department of Education.

---



**Dr. Marisa Ramirez Stukey**

Dr. Ramirez Stukey is the Senior Director of Field Team Learning with the Center for the Collaborative Classroom. She received her Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis in teacher education and professional learning and a Master's Degree in Reading Education, both from the University of FL. She is a Nationally Board-Certified Teacher with over fifteen years of experience teaching in both elementary and higher education contexts, instructional coaching, and professional learning systems development. Her research interests focus on reading comprehension instruction and designing literacy professional learning. She has consulted with numerous school districts in developing change models and collaborative professional learning structures, particularly to shift literacy instruction. Marisa is the co-author of the book *Professional Learning Redefined* published by Corwin Press.

She lives in Gainesville, FL with her husband and young daughter.

---



**Kasey Rather**

Kasey is in her sixth year as a Literacy Coach for the MS Department of Education and currently serves in two schools in North MS. Mrs. Rathers currently serves as a Literacy Coach for the MS Department of Education. She holds a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from MS College. Kasey has seven years of experience teaching in the general education classroom.

Kasey has been married for eleven years to her husband, Eric, and they have one son, McCoy.

Amy has considered herself an educator for the last thirty-nine years. Since the birth of her oldest child, she saw the impact of reading to her baby, toddler, then child. Witnessing her develop and foster her love of reading inspired her to become an educator. She began substituting at her school, then became a teacher's assistant while in college to obtain her licensure. She was an assistant in kindergarten through the third grade, then moved to the position of assistant teacher in a life skills class for sixth through eighth grade. Upon completing her schooling for her degree, she was hired as a reading/ELA teacher for the seventh grade.



**Amy Richardson**

In 2006, she moved to the high school to teach 9<sup>th</sup> grade English. Her principal came to her six days before the English II state test and informed her that she would be doing a boot camp with a class of tenth graders to prepare them for the test. After the first ten minutes of her review, a student raised her hand to tell her that they had learned more during those ten minutes with her than they had all year, and so, her principal moved her to the tenth grade where she has been ever since! This is her twenty-fourth year in the Bay-Waveland district.

She has served on many committees, attended numerous conferences, and received a few awards. In 2011, she was selected as Bay High School's Teacher of the Year. In 2016-2017, she was nominated for the Life Changer of the Year award, and in 2019, she received the Yale Educator Award.

She loves helping students reach their potential to become successful. She believes fostering a love of reading is an invaluable gift. Some of her high school students come to her without that thirst for learning and/or reading. She tries her very best to assist them in achieving an excitement for learning.

She has been married to her high-school sweetheart for forty-one years. They have three children, four grandchildren, and four cats. She enjoys crafting, photography, traveling, and of course, reading.



**Dr. LaTondra Robinson**

Dr. Robinson has been in the field of education for ten years. She has had the opportunity to teach kindergarten and first grade, served as an interventionist for kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade students, and currently serves as a Literacy Coach with the MS Department of Education.



**Sarah Rollins**

Sarah is a Literacy Coach with the MS Department of Education with a passion for teaching and building teacher capacity in foundational skills. With fourteen years in education, Sarah has had experience teaching preschool, kindergarten, and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, and has been an ELA instructional coach with MDE for four years. Her current role includes opportunities to train teachers across the state on best classroom practices and collaborate with teachers, coaches, and educational leaders.

Sarah is a native of Gulfport, MS and lives there with her husband and two children. She is active in her church and community and is a past president of the Gulfport chapter of the Junior Auxiliary. Sarah's favorite part of being a

Literacy Coach is building relationships across the state and continuing to be a lifelong learner.

---



**Dr. Allison Ruhl**

Dr. Ruhl currently serves as the Assistant Curriculum Coordinator/District Intervention Support Specialist in the Pearl Public School District. She earned a Bachelor of Arts from Duke University ('96), a Masters of Elementary Education from MS College (2001), an Education Specialist (2018) and a Doctorate of Education (2020) degree from William Carey University. She previously served as a Literacy Specialist in Madison County and as a classroom teacher for thirteen years. Dr. Ruhl is a National Board-Certified Teacher as well as a 2016 Milken recipient. Her passion is to make reading instruction easier for teachers and to make learning to read easier for students. She views her greatest achievements as helping approximately 300 kids learn to read as well as raising three great daughters and two bad dogs.

---



**Dr. Angela Rutherford**

Dr. Rutherford currently serves as a professor at the University of MS (UM), as well as Director of the Center for Excellence in Literacy Instruction (CELI). She received a bachelor's degree in elementary education, as well as a master's degree in educational administration, from the University of Southern MS. In 2003, she received a doctoral degree in Reading Education from Auburn University. Having taught most grades from kindergarten through grade twelve in her career, she has a unique perspective of literacy education. Serving as Director of the early childhood center on the UM campus also added to that perspective.

---



**Dr. Richard Schroeder**

Dr. Schroeder is an Associate Partner at the International Center for Leadership in Education. He has served as Executive Leader in Urban and Suburban School Systems, and is a National Board-Certified Administrator and Teacher, Association Vice-President, School Board Member, and Education Foundation Founder/President. He has a Doctorate in Educational Policy and Organizational Leadership with emphasis in school finance and strategic planning from the University of IL, Master's degree in Education and Leadership Change and U.S. History, and has extensive experience in curriculum development, strategic planning, leader development/mentoring, and the school turnaround process. Dr. Schroeder's specialist are related to assessment analysis, resource allocation, and professional development of leaders

---



**Courtney Sheriff**

Courtney has over twenty-three years of experience in the educational field. Her goal is to help children fulfill their potential through obtaining a quality education. Mrs. Sheriff has served in several roles during her educational career. She has been a classroom teacher, Instructional Specialist, Director of Literacy, Principal, and currently serves as a Regional Literacy Coordinator for the MS Department of Education.

Mrs. Sheriff is married to Mathis Sheriff, Academic Intervention and Gifted Specialist also with the MS Department of Education. They have two children, Joshua and Brooke.



**Mathis "Mat" Sheriff**

Mat has over twenty years of educational experience as a teacher, assessment specialist, assistant principal, and principal at the elementary and middle school level. He currently serves as an academic intervention and gifted specialists for the MS Department of Education.

Mat is married to Courtney Sheriff, a Regional Literacy Coordinator with the agency. They have two children, Joshua and Brooke.



**Candy Shipp**

Candy serves as a Literacy Coach with the MS Department of Education's Office of Elementary Education and Reading. Prior to her duties as a Literacy Coach, Candy was a classroom teacher for twenty-six years. While she taught second through sixth grades, the majority of her time was spent in third grade. Candy considers third grade to be the best kept secret in teaching!

Candy is a graduate of the University of MS. She is married to her husband, David, and they have one adult son.



**Elizabeth Simmons**

Elizabeth received an Ed.S. in Secondary Administration from Delta State and M.S. in Library and Information Science from the University of Southern MS. Currently, Elizabeth is completing a doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction at the University of LA at Monroe. She is the School Library Specialist at the MS Department of Education. Elizabeth is a strong advocate in bridging the information literacy gap, she works with teachers, librarians, and administrators to bring the library to the forefront of the curriculum.

She is a member of Phi Kappa Phi.



**Christine Spell**

Christine has been in education for fifteen years. She holds a bachelors in Elementary Education and a master's in Educational Administration from William Carey University. She spent most of her teaching years in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade but has also taught 5<sup>th</sup> grade ELA. She is currently working as a MS Department of Education Regional Literacy Coordinator.



**Kevin Smith**

Kevin is a Senior Research Associate at the FL Center for Reading Research, supporting training, coaching, and technical support projects across several Southeastern states. He has authored several tools and co-authored several research reports and has extensive experience providing technical support to states, districts, and schools in the areas of literacy, career readiness, and adult education.



**Laura Stewart**

Laura is an educator and organizational leader. She has served as a teacher, administrator, adjunct professor, and director of numerous professional development initiatives around the country. She was the VP of Professional Development for the Rowland Reading Foundation, and was the Chief Academic Officer for Professional Development at Highlights for Children. She presents nationally and internationally, and is a published author.

Laura's current role is as the National Director of The Reading League fits her perfectly, as her passion is empowering educators to positively impact ALL students and ultimately change the course of literacy achievement in this country.



**Dr. LeKeisha Sutton**

Dr. Sutton serves as a Leadership Coach with the Office of School Improvement at the MS Department of Education. In this position, she supports the systemic improvement of the lowest performing schools and districts in the State of MS by providing face-to-face leadership coaching and support to assist with school and district turnaround efforts. Dr. Sutton has served in education for twenty-one years as a teacher, district administrator, elementary assistant principal, and turnaround elementary principal.



**Dr. Carl W. Swartz**

Dr. Swartz has co-authored articles about approaches to estimate text complexity, assessment and instruction of reading and writing abilities, and use of technology as a component of educational programs to enhance personalized learning for students with learning, attention, and language differences. He has co-authored book chapters as well as peer-reviewed articles in a wide range of journals including, *The Journal of Learning Disabilities*, *Developmental Neuropsychology*, *Educational Psychologist*, and *Educational and Psychological Measurement*. Dr. Swartz has been the co-principle investigator on research and curriculum development projects funded by The U.S. Department of Education and private foundations. Most recently, Dr. Swartz was the co-principal investigator and project lead on Literacy by Technology, a three-year technology development project funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (three years, \$3,200,000). This technology is currently being scaled across the United States. He was also co-project director leading the development, testing, and scaling of EdSphere in sites across the United States, Australia, Denmark, and Hong Kong.

In addition to his work at MetaMetrics, Dr. Swartz has served in higher education as a research scientist in the School of Medicine and clinical assistant professor in the School of Education at The University of NC at

Chapel Hill. Currently, Dr. Swartz is a Research Professor in the Department of Early Childhood, Special Education, and Literacy in the School of Education at UNC-CH. He received his undergraduate degree in education from IN University and his master's and doctorate degrees in education from The University of NC at Chapel Hill. Dr. Swartz taught early adolescents with severe emotional disturbances and behavior disorders at a middle school in Greenville, SC (1983-1986).

---



**Dr. Sarah L. Swauger**

Dr. Swauger is Director of Mind in the Making, MS. She received her Ph.D. in Literacy Education from the University of TN in 2014. Prior to her work with The Center for Excellence in Literacy Instruction, Dr. Swauger worked for six years as District Literacy Instructional Coach for Quitman County Public Schools in MS. She has fourteen years of K-12 experience in MS and TN where she has coached and provided literacy interventions for every grade.

---



**Kristi Tanner**

Kristi received her Associate of Arts degree from Jones County Junior College in 1999 and her Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education with a special emphasis in Reading from MS State University in 2001. Her first years in education were spent teaching kindergarten, first grade, and third grade before obtaining her Masters Degree in Dyslexia Therapy from William Carey University in 2016. She obtained her national certification as a Certified Academic Language Therapist (CALT) in 2016. She has served as a dyslexia therapist and reading teacher for students with dyslexia and was the Director of LEAD Academy, George County School District's innovative dyslexia program and the first of its kind in the state of MS. Mrs. Tanner received her Specialist Degree in Educational Leadership in 2019 from William Carey University. She currently serves as the Dyslexia Coordinator for George County School District and oversees dyslexia screening and dyslexia therapy intervention at all elementary schools in the district.

---



**Dr. Katie Tonore**

Dr. Tonore has over thirty years of classroom experience and has benefited from a variety of educational opportunities, such as serving as Literacy Coach for the MS Department of Education, Director of Implementation for the Barksdale Reading Institute, graduate and undergraduate coordinator at the University of Southern MS, educational consultant for the MS Center for Education Innovation, Bailey Education Group, CORE and Millennium Educational Systems. Katie is a member of MLA, MsECA, IDA, MPE, DKG and PDK.

Katie and her husband, Bobby, have three daughters and seven grandchildren.



**Michelle Walker Talley**

Michelle is an Instructional Technology Specialist with the MS Department of Education. She has a passion for technology integration and learning new technology. Her twenty-four years of classroom experience has been in elementary and middle school. Michelle has several technology credentials that include Google Certification Level 1 and 2 and Microsoft Innovative Educator Trainer.



**Melanie Watkins**

Melanie is an elementary ELA Professional Development Coordinator for both the University of MS and the MS Department of Education. Throughout her seventeen years in education, she taught both elementary and junior high school students, facilitated professional development, served as an ambassador with the National Writing Project, received recognition for her students' standardized test scores, and was elected Teacher of the Year by her peers. She is a National Board-Certified Teacher in Early and Middle Childhood Literacy and earned her Master's of Education degree in Curriculum and Instruction from MS College.



**Laurie Weathersby**

Laurie, M.Ed., CALT, is the Director of Intervention Services in the Office of Elementary Education and Reading at the MS Department of Education. She received her Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education from MS State University, her Master's Degree from MS College in Dyslexia Therapy, and her Specialist Degree in Educational Leadership from MS College. Laurie served as an elementary teacher and school interventionist, where she was selected as Teacher of the Year.

Mrs. Weathersby worked as the District Interventionist and Dyslexia Coordinator at the district level before transitioning to the MS Department of Education. Laurie is a Certified Academic Language Therapist and a Licensed Dyslexia Therapist.



**Bethani Welch**

Bethani currently serves as a Regional Literacy Coordinator with the MS Department of Education. She provides ongoing literacy support to teachers, administrators, and literacy coaches in MS through professional development and instructional coaching. Bethani has her M.Ed. and has fifteen years of experience in education.



**Dr. Jennifer West**

Dr. West, CCC-SLP, began her career as a speech-language pathologist and transitioned to a Reading First Literacy Coach, TST Chairperson/ Interventionist, and PreK-5th Grade Curriculum Coordinator. Jennifer currently serves as a Regional Literacy Coordinator and Literacy Coach for the MS Department of Education.

She is a wife and mother of twins and two stepchildren.



**Casey Wilberding**

Casey is an ELA and SEL Support Team Member for Kids First Education, specializing in training, co-teaching, and modeling effective classroom practices and management strategies to ensure growth in both students and teachers. Casey spent six years as a Literacy Coach with the MS Department of Education, focusing on literacy in kindergarten through third grade. Casey also spent six years in the classroom as a kindergarten and second-grade teacher. She received her B.S. in Elementary Education from FL State University and her M. Ed in Educational Leadership from William Carey University.



**Delphony Shenel Williams**

Delphony is a native of Greenville, MS. She is a Literacy Coach for the MS Department of Education. She has graciously served as an elementary school teacher for the Greenville Public School District for twenty-five wonderful years. She is currently serving her third year as a Literacy Coach, supporting the teachers of MS. She is a graduate of Delta State University. Her greatest achievement is being a Literacy Coach and being able to support the profession she loves, teaching.

She is passionate about spending quality time with her family.



**Zachary Williams**

Zachary has been serving the students of his home state of MS for sixteen years. After teaching his own self-contained, third-grade class for nearly a decade, Zachary joined the MS Department of Education as a Literacy Coach where he has worked for six years. Zach recently earned his M. Ed. from the University of Southern MS and works with teachers around the state to assist with the implementation of best practices in early literacy instruction.



**Katie Williamson**

Katie currently serves as a Literacy Coach for the MS Department of Education. Katie enjoys supporting teachers across the state and providing strategies to help make literacy instruction engaging and fun for scholars. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education from the University of Southern MS, a Master's Degree in Mild to Moderate Disabilities from William Carey University, and a Specialist Degree in Educational Leadership from MS College.

Katie enjoys spending time with her family and most of all being a mom to her four-year-old twins.

---



**Kathi Wilson**

Kathi is a detail-oriented educational administrator with broad and deep experience in teaching and leading. She has been a classroom teacher, an assistant principal, principal of several schools, an assistant superintendent, a deputy superintendent, and a director of school improvement. She has worked in rural schools, small schools, and large schools. Interestingly enough, those schools and students for which Ms. Wilson was directly responsible experienced great academic improvement/achievement. With more than twenty years' experience in education, Ms. Wilson has provided leadership training, teacher training, instructional design, and teaching/learning/assessment strategies. A MS Education Policies Fellow, Ms. Wilson has received several awards and has presented/facilitated numerous sessions. Ms. Wilson holds advanced degrees from MS State University and the University of West AL.

---



**Joshua Yeager**

Joshua is currently an administrator with the Lawrence County School District and resides in Brookhaven, MS. Joshua holds degrees from MS State University and the University of AR. His current research project is Literacy Leadership: Secondary School Principals and Teachers in MS and their ability to implement and integrate Literacy Leadership Across the Curriculum. Joshua is an advocate for School Leaders to be Instructional Leaders at a higher level in order to contribute to the field of education and leadership.

---



**Dr. Dina Zoleo**

Dr. Zoleo was previously the Assistant Principal of Social Studies at New Dorp High School in Staten Island, NY where she co-led the effort to bring the Hochman Writing Method to New Dorp by seeding and developing it in her department, and then supporting its adoption school-wide.

She has developed content for textbooks and materials for The Writing Revolution and has presented at The Aspen Institute, South by Southwest and The College Board Foundation, as well as many other venues, on the topic of writing. Dr. Zoleo trains educators and supports schools and districts in implementing the Hochman Method. Since 2018, she has managed TWR's partnership in Monroe City Schools, LA. Dr. Zoleo is committed to combating educational inequity by empowering teachers to help students, particularly in underserved communities, to advance their thinking through writing.

# Our Wonderful Hosts



**Mississippi Literacy Association**  
Post Office Box 844  
Clarksdale, MS 38614  
[msliteracy.org](http://msliteracy.org)

---

## Current Board Members

---

### Executive Committee

Chair	Missaha Thompson	Tupelo, MS
Chair-Elect	Stephanie Schepens	Gulfport, MS
Immediate Past President	Cortez Moss	Jackson, MS

### Finance

Treasurer	Brenda Stapleton-Brown	Lyon, MS
-----------	------------------------	----------

### Long Range Planning/Organization

ILA State Coordinator	Janice Cate	Jackson, MS
Secretary	Ashley Kazery	Jackson, MS

### Membership

Misty Pitts	Madison, MS
-------------	-------------

### Legislative Chair

Open

### Vice Chair of Social Media

Ashanti Barnes	Jackson, MS
----------------	-------------

### At Large Members

Betsy Bess	Olive Branch, MS
LaKenya Evans	Cleveland, MS
Jasmine Hayes	Hattiesburg, MS
Misty Pitts	Madison, MS
Angel Rogers	Louisville, MS
Pat Bradshaw Ross	Mound Bayou, MS

## Current and Former Presidents

Missaha Thompson	2020-2022	Evelyn Thompson	1987-1988
Cortez Moss	2019-2020	Mary Ann Stevens	1986-1987
Murray Collum	2018-2019	Barbara Singleton	1985-1986
Stephanie Peets	2017-2018	Patricia Irby	1984-1985
Sherry Shepard	2016-2017	Tommy King	1983-1984
LeAnn Carter	2015-2016	Susan Hunt	1982-1983
Janice Cate	2014-2015	Jean Moody	1981-1982
Suzanne Hawley	2013-2014	Eleanor Noble	1980-1981
Anne Matheny	2012-2013	James Cliff	1979-1980
Stacy Reeves	2011-2012	Juanita Miles	1976-1979
Patricia B. Ross	2010-2011	Minnie Peaster	1974-1976
Erin Parker	2009-2010	Alma McCollough	1972-1974
Loretta Golf	2008-2009	Mary V. Potts	1971-1972
Claudette Miller	2007-2008	Mary Whitemore	1970-1971
Linda Brooks	2006-2007	James Cliff	1969-1970
Bobbie Clifton	2004-2006	Mary L. Mitchell	1968-1969
Peggie Peterson	2002-2004	Troy White	1967-1968
Loretta Golf	2001-2002	Maude Walker	1966-1967
Sheila Taylor	2000-2001	Alice M. Borgoyne	1965-1966
Linda Brooks	1999-2000	Calvina Switzer	1964-1965
Janie Allen-Bradley	1998-1999	Vera Rhodes	1963-1964
Beth Moffett	1997-1998	Grace Hensarling	1962-1963
Jo Prather	1996-1997	E. Harold Fisher	1961-1962
Dana Thomas	1994-1996	Clara Bagley	1960-1961
Marc A. DeVenney	1993-1994	Verna Vickery	1959-1960
Cathy Bishop	1992-1993	Katie Martin	1958-1959
Wanda Smithie	1991-1992	Grace Hensarling	1957-1958
Carolyn Williams	1990-1991	Adair James	1956-1957
Nell LaFrance	1989-1990	Ruth Faulk	1955-1956
Mark Richmond	1988-1089		

# Our Wonderful Hosts



**Mississippi Department of Education's  
Office of Elementary Education and  
Reading: Division of Literacy**

Post Office Box 771  
Jackson, MS 39205  
[strongreadersms.com](http://strongreadersms.com)



*from left to right: Kelli Crain, Lori Stringer, Kristen Wynn, Melissa Beck, and Jill Hoda*

Kristen Wynn	State Literacy Director	<a href="mailto:kwells@mdek12.org">kwells@mdek12.org</a>
Melissa Beck	K-3 Assessment Coordinator	<a href="mailto:mbeck@mdek12.org">mbeck@mdek12.org</a>
Kelli Crain	K-3 Assistant State Literacy Coordinator, Central Region	<a href="mailto:kcrain@mdek12.org">kcrain@mdek12.org</a>
Jill Hoda	K-3 Assistant State Literacy Coordinator, Southern Region	<a href="mailto:jhoda@mdek12.org">jhoda@mdek12.org</a>
Lori Stringer	K-3 Assistant State Literacy Coordinator, Northern/Delta Region	<a href="mailto:lstringer@mdek12.org">lstringer@mdek12.org</a>

# Our Wonderful Hosts



**North Mississippi  
Education Consortium**  
850 Insight Park Avenue, Suite 253C  
University, MS 38677  
*northmsec.com*

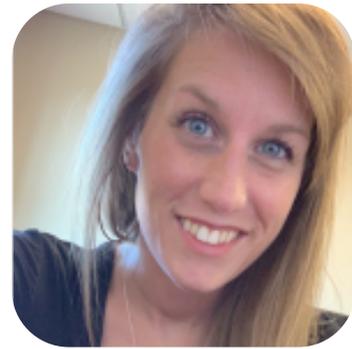
North MS Education Consortium (NMEC) operates under the governance of a board of directors made up of superintendents from member districts, the three community college presidents, and the Dean of the School of Education at the University of MS. Our purpose is to provide a means whereby participating members can assure quality educational programs through cooperative efforts and shared resources, for the benefit of students and communities being served. These efforts include: pooling local resources for special projects; professional development; sharing of expertise among members; identifying and securing revenues for cooperative projects. NMEC works with renowned educators from our state and across the country to develop content and bring it directly to teachers and administrators. We're proud to offer some of the best professional development workshops in the south.



**Dr. Jimmy Weeks**  
Director  
jweeks@olemiss.edu



**Susan Scott**  
Project Coordinator  
sscott@olemiss.edu



**Briana Stewart**  
Program Coordinator  
bstew@olemiss.edu



**Anna Gillentine**  
Educational Outreach Specialist  
agillen@olemiss.edu



**Dr. Kristina Livingston**  
Literacy Consultant  
kdard@olemiss.edu