

Everyday Heroes: Transforming Schools Through Character Breakout Sessions

Session 1 ♦ 10:15 - 11:30 am

The Cyber Teen: Neurological, Social and Educational Implications

Presenter: Chris Parrot

Audience: Middle/High

Social media is a driving force in the lives of young teens – it is shaping their identities and reworking their social structure. Teachers today need to be informed about how social media is making its impact so that we can not only make positive interventions, but so that we can also connect with students in a language that resonates with them. The more we understand social media, the more we can integrate it into our classrooms with confidence, purpose and wisdom. This workshop will provide strategies to limit the downside and capitalize on the upside!

LACCS- What Is It? What Does It Accomplish?

Presenter: Margee Tackes, Alverno College

Audience: All

Right here, on the Alverno Campus, is the home of the outstanding Character Education professional development program entitled “Leadership Advancing Character and Culture in Schools” (LACCS). It is a school-long program that features nationally known character education leaders who come to share their knowledge and skills with Wisconsin Educators. They spend the entire school day to share their knowledge and more deeply develop depth and understanding. In addition, a variety of after-school sessions provide time with local experts to develop supportive skill development. Also, participants are provided with the time and structure to develop initiatives and plans to improve their school’s influence on the character development of the students under their care.

Character Education Through Mindfulness Integration

Presenter: Leigh Smith, Mindfulness Integration LLC

Audience: All

Mindfulness is a life skill. It means paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, nonjudgmentally. For our students this means self and social awareness. Techniques will be shared to help students learn HOW to focus and self-regulate. We will discuss how stabilizing emotions leads to resilience and better relationship skills. Brain research will be introduced showing that a mindfulness practice allows new pathways to be created in the brain. Finally, we will discuss how kindness, gratitude and compassion grow out of this practice.

Responsible Decision-Making: Practice=Proficiency

Presenter: Patricia Stewart, The Children's Health Market

Audience: Elementary, Middle

This workshop will demonstrate how easy it is to integrate self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making within a health education program from Pre-K through middle school. Students need regular opportunities to practice these concepts to develop SEL competencies. Using The Great Body Shop Comprehensive Health Education Program as an example, participants will leave this workshop with ideas on how to integrate concepts of character education while also addressing key health issues that put children and youth at risk.

Be Your Own Hero: Peace Within Ourselves

Presenter: Marybeth Zuhlke, Peace Learning Circles

Audience: Elementary, Middle, Administration

This session will be interactive. It will be based on activities from www.peacelearningcircles.org and the PEERS Curriculum. Participants will be involved in activities that they can use in their classrooms. They will develop new meaning for the word peers...Peacemakers Encouraging Empathy, Respect, and Social Responsibility.

What Sets a Good School Apart From a Great School?

Presenter: Sheril Morgan, Character.org

Audience: All

Be equipped, inspired, and empowered to amplify the culture development of your school using the *11 Principles of Effective Character Education*. Examine the stories and methods of schools across the country, including Wisconsin, who has become Schools of Character while seeing academic achievement and attendance, go up with discipline referrals go down. Leave learning more about the *11 Principles*, but more importantly gain some getting started tips on some of the most challenging of the principles.

Resilience Can Be Taught: 4 Keys to Creating a Resilient School Climate

Presenter: Christian Moore, WhyTry

Audience: All

Resilience is something we're all born with – from the homeless person on the street to the Harvard business grad. Most of us – including many of our schools' struggling students – just haven't learned how to access what's already inside of them. In this presentation, participants will learn about the vital skills of resilience and their 4 sources. This engaging presentation will empower you to deliver these skills to students of any background and learning style, enabling them to thrive not only in school, but in life.

Session 2 ♦ 1:15 - 2:30 pm

DRIVEN: Creating a Student Led Leadership Program in Schools

Presenters: Matt Nie, Burlington High School

Audience: High School

DRIVEN is a student led leadership program dedicated to improving the school and community, transitioning freshmen to high school life, and developing individual student led community service projects. This program has grown from 40 students to 140 in the last 10 years. It annually raises \$25,000 in goods and services for the local community and is highly effective in teaching the D.R.I.V.E.N. character concepts to students in school and beyond.

Kiddie Lit: How it Enhances Character Education in the Elementary Classroom

Presenter: Margee Tackes, Alverno College

Audience: Elementary

Character Education doesn't add more to the plate, it is the plate. With this in mind, come to see and hear how the stories we tell and books we normally read in elementary school classrooms are part of character education's teaching and learning. The books and stories highlighted are all within our school libraries, classroom book shelves and/or personal kiddie lit collections. There will be two groups within this session. One will focus on literature with early childhood books. The other will focus on literature for primary and intermediate age children.

High Achievement for the Educational Leader

Presenter: Scott Shickler, 7 Mindsets

Audience: Administration

If you'd like your students to pursue their biggest goals and dreams, isn't it worth thinking about how well you accomplish your own? If you've ever had big dreams or important goals that didn't come true, you're not alone. According to Forbes magazine, an astounding 92% of people say that they never achieve the goals and dreams they set for themselves each year. So what makes the 8% who accomplish their goals and dreams unique? They use a specific framework and surprising techniques that just about anyone can learn to implement. If you're ready to improve your perspective on achievement with principles that will empower your students and maximize your personal and professional levels of success and fulfillment, this session is for you.

Building Relationships with Youth

Presenter: Santo Carfora, S & J Consulting, LLC

Audience: All

This is an interactive session that will give participants tools to develop positive relationships with youth. Participants will have an opportunity to engage in activities, watch a video and take home ideas they can use.

Addressing Adult Toxic Behavior to Transform School Culture

Presenter: Jeff Jones, Sheridan College

Audience: All

Unfortunately just a small dose of adult toxic behavior can literally suck the positive energy right out of the building. Reclaim your school culture utilizing a unique, research-supported approach developed by Jeff Jones. He has led this courageous type of work in the trenches as a school principal and has consulted with schools across the country helping them revamp and revitalize their school culture. Ultimately, Jeff shows schools how to leverage the power of the positive majority to spark a lasting transformation. Jeff's presentations are "inspiring and truly entertaining" as he shares tons of creative strategies and even sings his original music! In the words of one audience member, "I have waited 27 years to hear that message. Thank you!!"

Kind and Caring Kids Make a Close and Caring Class

Presenter: Sister Kieran Sawyer, Inspirio Youth Center (TYME OUT)

Audience: Elementary, Middle

Kieran Sawyer shows how to help your students to create classroom and school environments that promote positive behavior. The session includes practical techniques for guiding the minds and hearts of today's young people and for teaching them to be responsible for their own character growth and for the climate of their school, family, and friendship groups.

2016 Promising Practices Showcase

Presenter: Pamela Woodard, WCEP

Audience: All

This is an informal sharing session with representatives from each school with a 2016 WCEP Promising Practice Award. Attendees will hear a brief presentation explaining each school's practice, how it works and its impact. There will be opportunities for questions, and this is a great opportunity for networking. Join the session to learn about effective programs and activities that could work at your school!

Session 3 ♦ 2:45 - 4:00 pm

The Power Play

Presenter: Deborah Lukovich, Playworks Wisconsin

Audience: Elementary

Learn the basics of the Playworks philosophy and systems, and leave inspired and able to apply a variety of specific tools in order to improve the social, emotional, and physical well-being of children, critical drivers of academic success. Starting with the belief that play can bring out the best in every child, learn how the four core values of Playworks programming (respect, inclusion, healthy play, and healthy community) and the three major components of the approach (recess, class game time, and junior coach leadership program) are the building blocks of increasing positive interactions between and among children and adults, resulting in a complete transformation of school climate. Learn how the philosophy and researched and evidence-based systems can be used to address all but one of the 11 Principles of Effective Character Education.

Character Education in Action

Presenters: Suzanne Breslow, Tony Gonzalez, Milwaukee College Prep

Audience: Elementary, Middle

We will provide an overview of MCP value words of Trust, Respect, Excellence, Courage and Knowledge as taught through lesson plans. We will show fun, engaging, and differentiated lesson plans for elementary and middle school students. By using positive praise, proverbs, poems and proactive language we will demonstrate our best practices of character education. At Milwaukee College Prep (MCP), mission statements are written by all staff and scholars (K4-8th) to help identify and reflect upon goals and actions. This presentation will walk you through creating a mission statement as well as share our best mission statement templates and resources.

How Does Character Education Intersect with Adolescent Digital Citizenship?

Presenter: Mae Hingtgen, Dubuque Community School District

Audience: Middle, High School, Administration

In this session, we'll explore adolescent behaviors on cell phones (most notably teen sexting behaviors) and how the concepts of values and Character Education have a bigger impact than monitoring the technology.

Set Clear Boundaries Based on Virtues and Restorative Justice

Presenters: Terry Rahn & Valerie Hess, Virtues Village

Audience: All

Setting clear boundaries based on respect and restorative justice creates a climate of peace, cooperation and safety in our homes, schools and communities. This is an interactive session that will provide tools for participants to use personally and professionally.

Character is Our SuperPower

Presenter: Barbara Gruener

Audience: Elementary, Middle

Imagine a school culture so warm and welcoming that your superheroes are soaring to success not only academically, but socially and emotionally as well. Cape up and fly on in for engaging ideas and practical strategies on how to weave values like integrity, respect, grit, responsibility, empathy & charity into the very fabric of your character building. Prepare to sing, dance, laugh, and connect as we take our superheroes to new heights. Whether you're just getting started or you're ready to supercharge your existing character education initiative, this interactive, high-energy session is sure to help you unleash the power within.

Tips for Applying for WI State School of Character Designation

Presenter: Elaine Gehring, WCEP

Audience: Administration

This session is intended for schools/districts with established character education programs and will provide information for school teams that are considering applying for State School of Character designation. The application process is based on CEP's Eleven Principles of Effective Character Education and can serve as a valuable learning tool for school teams. This session will provide tips on the "ins and outs" of the application process as well as ideas and strategies for how to proceed.

Teaching with Character-Based Decision Making

Presenter: David B. Wangaard, The School for Ethical Education

Audience: All

Participants will be introduced to a character-based decision making process that can be applied to ethical/social dilemmas along with analysis and evaluation of characters in literature, history and current events. The four-step process includes strategies that support the development of student social skills, moral reasoning (as described by Kohlberg's model of moral stages) and higher-order thinking as described in Bloom's taxonomy. Higher order reasoning is an oft cited goal of Common Core standards and this can be practiced by using core values as the lens of analysis. Core values will be identified and defined in the session. Participants will practice applying the model with at least one ethical/social case and one case from US history.