



FUTURE-PROOF BRAINS: TEACHING THINKING, FOCUSED, FLEXIBLE, CURIOUS, AND CREATIVE LEARNERS FOR A FUTURE BEYOND AI

APRIL 15-17, 2027, IN NEW YORK, NY

Held at the Sheraton New York Times Square Hotel

FEATURED SPEAKERS INCLUDE:



BARBARA A. OAKLEY, PhD, PE

Distinguished Professor of Engineering, [Oakland University](#); Author, *Mindshifts* (2017) and *A Mind for Numbers* (2014); Co-Author, "The Memory Paradox: Why Our Brains Need Knowledge in an Age of AI" (2025, *arXiv*), *Learn Like a Pro* (2021), *Uncommon Sense Teaching* (2021), and *Learning How to Learn* (2018)



ERIC C. SHENINGER, MEd

CEO, Aspire Change EDU; Author, "Future-Proofing Learning: Preparing Students for an Uncertain Tomorrow" (2025, *A Principal's Reflections*) and *Disruptive Thinking in Our Classroom: Preparing Learners for Their Future* (2021); Co-Author, *Personalize: Meeting the Needs of All Students* (2025)



HANNAH M. CRITCHLOW, PhD

Cognitive Scientist; Fellow, Magdalene College, [University of Cambridge](#); Author, *The 21st Century Brain: How to Future-Proof Your Mind in the Age of AI* (2026), *Joined Up Thinking: The Science of Collective Intelligence and Its Power to Change Our Lives* (2022), and *The Science of Fate* (2019)



ELLEN GALINSKY, MS

President, Families and Work Institute; Elected President, Work and Family Researchers Network; Senior Research Advisor, The School Superintendents Association (AASA); Author, *The Breakthrough Years: A New Scientific Framework for Raising Thriving Teens* (2024) and *Mind in the Making* (2010)



MICHELLE D. MILLER, PhD

Professor of Psychological Science, [Northern Arizona University](#); Author, *The Attention Spectrum: How Attention Really Works and How to Make It Work for You* (Upcoming), *A Teacher's Guide to Learning Student Names* (2024), *Remembering and Forgetting in the Age of Technology* (2022), and *Minds Online* (2016)



DANIEL T. WILLINGHAM, PhD

Professor, [University of Virginia](#); Writer, "Ask the Cognitive Scientist" Column, *American Educator*; Author, "Pay Attention, Kid!" (2025, *Education Next*), *Outsmart Your Brain: Why Learning Is Hard and How You Can Make It Easy* (2023), *Why Don't Students Like School?* (2021, 2nd Edition), and *Cognition: The Thinking Animal* (2019)

See [LearningAndTheBrain.com](#) for more information.

REGISTER NOW FOR OUR 2026-2027 WEBINAR SERIES



LEARNING & the BRAIN® is offering a series of LIVE webinars on Saturday mornings this fall and in 2027 on a variety of topics, such as the science of learning, executive function, engagement, AI, reading, and math.

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For more information, visit LearningAndTheBrain.com/academy or sign up as an individual member when you register for the conference and save.

TEACHING SOCIAL SKILLS TO BOOST SCHOOL SUCCESS

Relationships are essential for success in school and throughout life. Research from the American Psychological Association has found that strong relationships with teachers and peers enhance learning and have long-lasting implications for students' social, emotional, and cognitive development. Yet, many students today struggle with loneliness, social isolation, and underdeveloped social skills. According to the 2024 OECD PISA study, 22% of U.S. students reported feeling lonely at school, while 24% felt like an outsider or left out. **This interdisciplinary conference brings together brain scientists, social psychologists, and leading educators to explore the “social brain” and why relationships matter for development, learning, behavior, and well-being. Discover evidence-based strategies to build belonging, relationships, and trust; strengthen social skills, thinking, and friendships; create prosocial classrooms; improve behavior and emotion regulation in children and teens; support student learning and social health; foster collaboration between science, schools, and communities; and boost reading and math skills through socioemotional learning.**

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

You will gain knowledge about:

- ✓ The science of the social brain, relationships, and friendships
- ✓ Strategies to build a sense of belonging, self-worth, and trust
- ✓ How social skills can boost language, reading, and math learning
- ✓ How teachers, peers, and friends influence achievement motivation
- ✓ Improving behavior and emotion regulation in socially challenged kids
- ✓ Supporting social, emotional, and cultural competencies in schools
- ✓ Fostering prosocial science, school, and community collaborations
- ✓ Helping teens build emotional awareness and navigate social life
- ✓ Strengthening social skills, thinking, and learning in classrooms
- ✓ Creating connected classrooms and healthy school cultures



**This hybrid conference will include both a live, in-person audience as well as a virtual option using Zoom. You can choose to travel and see the sights of San Francisco or watch the sessions comfortably from your home or hotel room. All talks will be recorded and made available to stream for 45 days afterward. For more information, visit LearningAndTheBrain.com or call 857-444-1500 x1.*

CO-SPONSORS

- Graduate School of Education, **Stanford University**
Greater Good Science Center, **University of California, Berkeley**
American Psychological Association
School Development Program, **Yale University**
The Neuro-Education Initiative, **Johns Hopkins School of Education**
Mindful Education Laboratory, **New York University**
National Association of Elementary School Principals (**NAESP**)
National Principals Association (**NPA**)
LEARNING & the BRAIN® Foundation

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

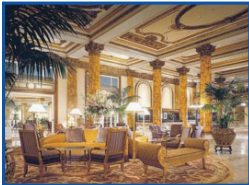
- Curriculum, Staff Developers
Speech-Language Pathologists
PreK-12 Teachers, Administrators
Psychologists, School Psychologists
Learning Specialists, Special Educators
Early Childhood Educators, Professionals
Social Workers, Neurodivergent Specialists
Superintendents, Principals, School Heads
Reading, SEL, Math, Science Teachers
College, University Professors

EARN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CREDIT

- Professional Development Credit:** Earn 15-18 hours toward professional development credit for educators, psychologists, speech-language professionals, and others by attending in-person or virtually. Visit our website at LearningAndTheBrain.com for more information on the availability of CEUs, PDPs, CEs, and other professional development credit, or call 857-444-1500 x1.
- Speech-Language Pathologist Credit:** Visit LearningAndTheBrain.com for more information on courses registered to offer ASHA CEUs.



STAY AT THE HISTORIC FAIRMONT SAN FRANCISCO – SPECIAL RATES



Save on hotel costs by booking a room at a discounted conference rate. LEARNING & the BRAIN® has negotiated discounted rates of \$271 per night (plus tax) at the Fairmont Hotel, the site of the conference, and discounts at several nearby hotels. **Please visit LearningAndTheBrain.com for information on how to make reservations and room availability.** If you have trouble making reservations, please call the L&B information line at 857-444-1500 x1 for additional hotel options. LEARNING & the BRAIN® conference hotels are conveniently located atop Nob Hill and in the Union Square area close to cable car routes, shopping, and the sights of San Francisco.



HYBRID LEARNING & the BRAIN® CONFERENCE

76TH International Conference for PreK Through University Educators, Clinicians, and Parents

February 12-14, 2027 • At the Historic Fairmont Hotel, **San Francisco, CA** • Or Virtually From Your Home

Presented by:
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FEATURED SPEAKER:

Geoffrey L. Cohen, PhD
Professor of Psychology, *Stanford University*; Professor of Education, *Stanford Graduate School of Education*; Author, *Belonging: The Science of Creating Connection and Bridging Divides* (2022)

TEACHING SOCIAL BRAINS: APPLYING BRAIN SCIENCE TO IMPROVE SOCIAL SKILLS, BELONGING, BEHAVIOR, REGULATION, AND LEARNING

Explore the latest research on:

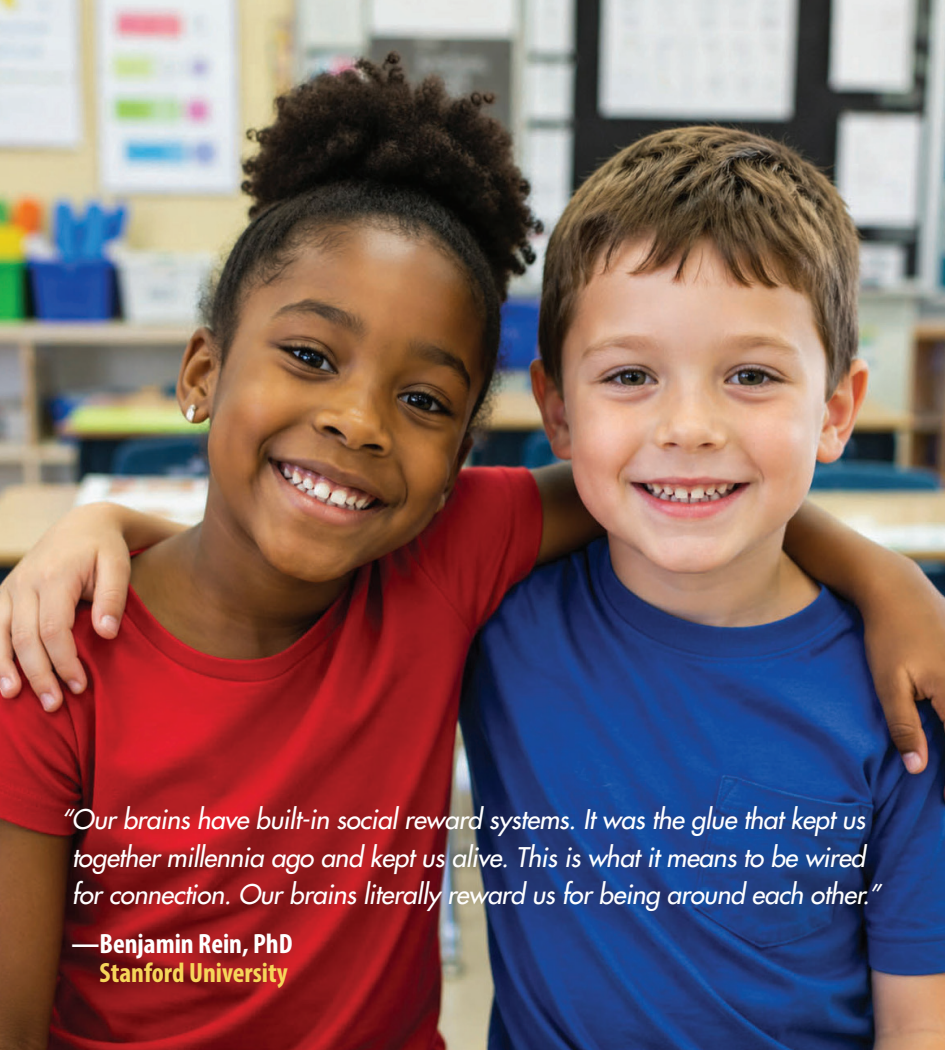
The Science of Social Brains	Peer Influences on Motivation
Building a Sense of Belonging	Fostering Collaborative Learning
Improving Emotion Regulation	Boosting Learning and Social Health
Social Brains, Language, and Math	Strengthening Social Skills and Thinking
Helping Socially Challenged Kids	Connections and Executive Function
The Science of Making Friends	Empowering Community Changers
Creating Prosocial Classrooms	Helping Teens Build Skills for Life

EARN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CREDIT AT THIS HYBRID CONFERENCE

UPCOMING SPRING 2027 L&B CONFERENCE:

New York, NY • April 15-17, 2027

For information on Conferences, Webinars, Summer Institutes, and Evidence-Based Onsite PD, see inside or visit [LearningAndTheBrain.com](https://www.learningandthebrain.com)



"Our brains have built-in social reward systems. It was the glue that kept us together millennia ago and kept us alive. This is what it means to be wired for connection. Our brains literally reward us for being around each other."

—Benjamin Rein, PhD
Stanford University

TEACHING SOCIAL BRAINS: APPLYING BRAIN SCIENCE TO IMPROVE SOCIAL SKILLS, BELONGING, BEHAVIOR, REGULATION, AND LEARNING

AT THE HISTORIC FAIRMONT HOTEL ATOP NOB HILL IN
SAN FRANCISCO, CA, OR VIRTUALLY FROM YOUR HOME

FEBRUARY 12-14, 2027

Pre-Conference Workshops: February 12

Early Registration Deadline: December 4, 2026



WINTER HYBRID LEARNING & the BRAIN® CONFERENCE

CONFERENCE PROGRAM TOPICS

WITH A DISTINGUISHED FACULTY

1) SOCIAL BRAINS: STRENGTHENING SOCIAL SKILLS & FRIENDSHIPS



Featured: **Rethinking Social Skills: Teaching Social Thinking to All Learners**

Michelle Garcia Winner, MA, CCC-SLP, Founder and CEO, The Social Thinking Center; Author, *Why Teach Social Thinking?* (2014), *Thinking About You, Thinking About Me* (2007), and *Think Social* (2006); Co-Author, *Social Situation Mapping: Making Sense of the Social World* (2023) and *You Are a Social Detective! Explaining Social Thinking to Kids* (2020, 2nd Edition)



Featured: **Why Brains Need Friends: The Neuroscience of Social Connection**

Benjamin A. Rein, PhD, Adjunct Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, **Stanford University**; Clinical Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry, **State University of New York (SUNY) Buffalo**; Chief Science Officer, Mind Science Foundation; Author, *Why Brains Need Friends: The Neuroscience of Social Connection* (2025)

Social Motivation: How Teachers, Peers, and Friendships Influence Academic Performance

Kathryn R. Wentzel, PhD, Professor of Human Development, Emerita, **University of Maryland**; Editor, *Educational Psychologist*; Author, *Social and Emotional Learning* (2025) and *Motivating Students to Learn* (2020, 4th Edition); Co-Author, "Peer and Teacher Supports in Relation to Motivation and Effort: A Multi-Level Study" (2017, *Contemporary Educational Psychology*), *Social Influences on Social-Emotional, Motivation, and Cognitive Outcomes in School Contexts* (2016), and *Handbook of Motivation at School* (2016, 2nd Edition)

Mysteries of the Social Brain: Understanding Human Behavior Through Science

Virginia E. Sturm, PhD, Director, Clinical Affective Neuroscience Laboratory; Professor, Department of Neurology, Psychiatry, and Behavioral Sciences; John Douglas French Alzheimer's Foundation Endowed Professor, Weill Institute for Neurosciences, **University of California, San Francisco**; Co-Author, *Mysteries of the Social Brain: Understanding Human Behavior Through Science* (2025)

Designing for Social Minds: Rethinking Executive Function Demands in the Classroom

Sarah Oberle, EdD, Teacher, Red Clay Consolidated School District; Instruction Team, Evidence Advocacy Center; Advisory Board Member, Learner Variability Navigator, Digital Promise; Committee Member, Professional Development and Associated Compensation, Delaware Department of Education; Co-Author, *Executive Functions for Every K-3 Classroom* (2026)

2) CONNECTED CLASSROOMS: BUILDING BELONGING & RELATIONSHIPS



Featured: **BELONGING: The Science of Creating Connection**

Geoffrey L. Cohen, PhD, Professor of Psychology, **Stanford University**; Professor of Education, **Stanford Graduate School of Education**; Author, *Belonging: The Science of Creating Connection and Bridging Divides* (2022); Co-Author, "A Brief Social-Belonging Intervention in College Improves Adult Outcomes for Black Americans" (2020, *Science Advances*)



Featured: **Worth and Belonging: How to Build Self-Worth to Finally Feel Like You Belong**

Marisa G. Franco, PhD, Assistant Clinical Professor, **University of Maryland**; Science and Technology Policy Fellow, American Association for the Advancement of Science; Author, *Worth: The New Science of Self-Esteem and Secure Attachment* (2026), "The Trait That 'Super Friends' Have in Common" (2022, *The Atlantic*), and *Platonic: How the Science of Attachment Can Help You Make—and Keep—Friends* (2022)

Cultures of Connection: Building Positive Reciprocal Relationships, Engagement, and Belonging

Denise C. Pope, PhD, Senior Lecturer, **Stanford Graduate School of Education**; Co-Founder and Strategic Advisor, Challenge Success; Co-Host, "School's In" Podcast; Author, *"Doing School": How We Are Creating a Generation of Stressed Out, Materialistic, and Miseducated Students* (2001); Co-Author, "What Students and Teachers Do to Build Positive Reciprocal Relationships: A Study Co-Led by Youth and Adult Researchers" (2023, *American Journal of Education*), "A Caring Climate That Promotes Belonging and Engagement" (2022, *Phi Delta Kappa*), and *Overloaded and Underprepared: Strategies for Stronger Schools and Healthy, Successful Kids* (2015)

Building Connected Classrooms:

How Prosocial Education Can Unlock Students' Belonging and Re-Energize Teachers

Christi C. Bergin, PhD, Director, Prosocial Development and Education Research Laboratory; Research Professor Emerita, Department of Educational, School, and Counseling Psychology, **University of Missouri**; Chief Scientific Officer, Prosocial Education Collaborative; Author, *Designing a Prosocial Classroom: Fostering Collaboration in Students From PreK-12 With the Curriculum You Already Use* (2018); Co-Author, "Student's and Classmates' Prosocial Behavior Predict Academic Engagement in Middle School" (2024, *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*)

The Science of Connection: Happiness Habits That Build Belonging, Resilience, and Lifelong Well-Being

Caren Baruch-Feldman, PhD, Clinical Psychologist; School Psychologist; Fellow and Supervisor, Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy; Author, *Happiness Habits for Kids: Building Connection, Confidence, and Resilience* (Forthcoming), *The Resilience Workbook for Kids: Fun CBT Activities to Help You Bounce Back From Stress and Grow From Challenges* (2022), and *The Grit Guide for Teens* (2017)

Raising Attendance: Strategies to Improve Belonging, School Climate, and Adult-Student Relationships

Douglas B. Fisher, PhD, Chair, Department of Educational Leadership, **San Diego State University**; Classroom Teacher, Health Sciences High and Middle College; Co-Author, *Improving Attendance in Your School and Classroom: Getting Them There, Keeping Them There* (2026) and *Belonging in School: Creating a Place Where Kids Want to Learn and Teachers Want to Stay – An Illustrated Playbook* (2026, Revised Edition)

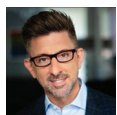


CONFERENCE BEGINS AT 12:00 PM ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 12

All times are Pacific Standard Time



3) REGULATED BRAINS: IMPROVING BEHAVIOR & EMOTION REGULATION



Featured: **Dealing With Feeling:**

The Power of Emotion Regulation to Transform Relationships, Health, and Learning

Marc A. Brackett, PhD, Founding Director, Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence; Professor, Child Study Center, **Yale University**; Co-Creator, The RULER Approach to Social and Emotional Learning; Host, "Dealing With Feeling" YouTube Channel; Author, *Dealing With Feeling: Use Your Emotions to Create the Life You Want* (2025) and *Permission to Feel* (2019)



Featured: **The Kids Who Aren't Okay:**

The Urgent Case for Reimagining Support, Belonging, and Hope in Schools

Ross W. Greene, PhD, Adjunct Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, **Virginia Tech**; Adjunct Professor, Faculty of Science, **University of Technology**, Australia; Founder/Director, *Lives in the Balance*; Host, "Lives in the Balance" Podcast; Author, *The Kids Who Aren't Okay: The Urgent Case for Reimagining Support, Belonging, and Hope in Schools* (2026)

Social Brains, Social Impairments, and Autism

Karen J. Parker, PhD, Director, Social Neurosciences Research Program; Associate Chair for Research Strategy and Oversight, Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, **Stanford School of Medicine**; Professor of Comparative Medicine, **Stanford University**; Co-Author, "Characterizing Emotion Recognition and Theory of Mind Performance Profiles in Unaffected Siblings of Autistic Children" (2022, *Frontiers in Psychology*)

Helping Kids Become Social Detectives for Social and Academic Gains

Michelle Garcia Winner, MA, CCC-SLP, Founder and CEO, The Social Thinking Center; Author, *Why Teach Social Thinking?* (2014), *Thinking About You, Thinking About Me* (2007), and *Think Social* (2006); Co-Author, *Social Situation Mapping: Making Sense of the Social World* (2023), *You Are a Social Detective! Explaining Social Thinking to Kids* (2020, 2nd Edition), and *Socially Curious and Curiously Social* (2011)

Leveraging Prosocial Education to Build the Social Brain for Self-Control and Kindness

Christi C. Bergin, PhD, Director, Prosocial Development and Education Research Lab.; Research Professor Emerita, Department of Educational, School, and Counseling Psychology, **University of Missouri**; Chief Scientific Officer, Prosocial Education Collaborative; Author, *Designing a Prosocial Classroom: Fostering Collaboration in Students From PreK-12 With the Curriculum You Already Use* (2018)

The Science of Making Friends for Socially Challenged Teens and Youth

Elizabeth A. Laugeson, PsyD, Assistant Clinical Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences; Founder and Director, UCLA PEERS Clinic, **University of California, Los Angeles**; Author, *The Science of Making Friends: Helping Socially Challenged Teens and Young Adults* (2013); Co-Author, *Peers® for Preschoolers: Friendship Skills for Autistic and Neurodivergent Children* (2025)

4) ACADEMIC BRAINS: BOOSTING LANGUAGE, READING, & MATH SKILLS



Featured: **The Social Brain, Language, and Learning**

Patricia K. Kuhl, PhD, Co-Director, Institute for Learning and Brain Sciences; Professor, Speech and Hearing Sciences, **University of Washington**; Co-Author, "Early Language Learning and the Social Brain" (2014, *Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press*), *How Babies Think: The Science of Childhood* (2001), and *The Scientist in the Crib* (2000)

The Road Not Taken: Socioemotional Learning and Academic Rigor in Math Learning

Eric P. Bettinger, PhD, Conley DeAngelis Family Professor of Education, **Stanford Graduate School of Education**; Senior Fellow, Institute for Economic Policy Research, **Stanford University**; Senior Fellow, Hoover Institution; Director, Center for Educational Policy Analysis; Co-Author, "The Road Not Taken: Socioemotional Learning and Academic Rigor" (2026, *European Economic Review*)

What We Say Matters: Building a Positive, Healthy School Climate

Sauna F. King, MEd, EdS, Educational Consultant, King Professional Development Services; Adjunct Faculty, The Regional Training Center, **La Salle University**; Author, *Children Are Listening: What We Say Matters* (2022); Co-Author, *High Impact Relationships* (2025)

Teaching Foundational Skills to Adolescent Readers: Using Equity, Empathy, and Research

Nancy Frey, PhD, Curriculum Developer; Instructional Leader; Professor of Literacy, Educational Leadership, College of Education, **San Diego State University**; Co-Founder, Health Sciences High and Middle College; Co-Author, *Teaching Foundational Skills to Adolescent Readers* (2025)

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE:

Pre-Conference Workshops

Conference Day 1

Conference Day 2

Conference Day 3

Friday, February 12

Friday, February 12

Saturday, February 13

Sunday, February 14

8:00 AM – 11:00 AM

12:00 PM – 5:00 PM

8:00 AM – 5:30 PM

8:30 AM – 12:30 PM

5) PROSOCIAL BRAINS: FOSTERING SCIENCE & SCHOOL COLLABORATIONS



Featured: The Crisis of Connection: Roots, Consequences, and Solutions

Niobe Way, EdD, Co-Founder, Social Health Institute; Director, Science of Human Connection Lab.; Professor, Developmental Psychology Program, Department of Applied Psychology, **New York University**; Co-Founder, Agapi; Author, *Rebels With a Cause: Reimagining Boys, Ourselves, and Our Culture* (2024); Co-Author, *The Crisis of Connection: Its Roots, Consequences, and Solutions* (2018)

Empowering Community Changers in Elementary Schools:

Connecting Science, Social Engagement, and Making a Difference

Sara E. Rimm-Kaufman, PhD, Director, Social Development Lab.; Chair, Department of Education Leadership, Foundations, and Policy; Commonwealth Professor of Education, School of Education and Human Development, **University of Virginia**; Author, *SEL From the Start: Building Skills in K-5* (2020); Co-Author, "Empowering Community-Changers: Developing Civic Efficacy in Elementary Classrooms" (2024, *Applied Developmental Science*); Co-Editor, *Social and Emotional Learning in Action: Creating Systemic Change in Schools* (2023)

The Symbiotic Curriculum: Where "Real Life" and School Meet

Jennifer Gonzalez, MA, Founder and Editor-in-Chief, Cult of Pedagogy; Host of the popular "Cult of Pedagogy" Podcast; National Board Certified Teacher in Early Adolescence/English Language Arts; Former Adjunct Instructor, **Western Kentucky University**; Co-Author, *Hacking Education: 10 Quick Fixes for Every School* (2015)

Collaboration and Collective Efficacy: Ensuring That Teachers and Students Succeed

Douglas B. Fisher, PhD, Chair, Department of Educational Leadership, **San Diego State University**; Classroom Teacher, Health Sciences High and Middle College; Co-Author, *Collaborating Through Collective Efficacy Cycles: Ensuring All Students and Teachers Succeed* (2022), *Collective Student Efficacy: Developing Independent and Inter-Dependent Learners* (2021), and *The Teacher Credibility and Collective Efficacy Playbook* (2020)

How Leaders Can Create Schools Where Every Student Belongs: Including Students With Disabilities

Kate MacLeod, PhD, Associate Professor of Special Education, **University of Maine, Farmington**; Co-Founder/Consultant, Inclusive Schooling; Founding Member of the Maine Coalition for Inclusive Education; Co-Author, *The Way to Inclusion: How Leaders Create Schools Where Every Student Belongs* (2023) and *From Behaving to Belonging: The Inclusive Art of Supporting Students Who Challenge Us* (2022)

6) LEARNING BRAINS: SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS & SOCIAL HEALTH



Featured: Applying the Science of Learning to Promote Successful Student Learning

Richard E. Mayer, PhD, Distinguished Professor of Psychology, **University of California, Santa Barbara**; Fellow, American Association for the Advancement of Science; Charter Fellow, American Educational Research Association; Author, *Applying the Science of Learning* (2011); Co-Author, *Handbook of Research on Learning and Instruction* (2017, 2nd Edition)

Supporting Social, Emotional, and Cultural Competencies in Schools

Kathryn R. Wentzel, PhD, Professor of Human Development, Emerita, **University of Maryland**; Editor, *Educational Psychologist*; Author, *Social and Emotional Learning* (2025) and *Motivating Students to Learn* (2020, 4th Edition); Co-Author, "Peer and Teacher Supports in Relation to Motivation and Effort: A Multi-Level Study" (2017, *Contemporary Educational Psychology*), *Social Influences on Social-Emotional, Motivation, and Cognitive Outcomes in School Contexts* (2016), and *Handbook of Motivation at School* (2016, 2nd Edition)

Promoting Social Health in the Classroom

Niobe Way, EdD, Co-Founder, Social Health Institute; Director, Science of Human Connection Lab.; Professor, Developmental Psychology Program, Department of Applied Psychology, **New York University**; Co-Founder, Agapi; Founder, the Project for the Advancement of Our Common Humanity (PACH; pach.org); Co-Author, "The Listening With Curiosity Project: A New Approach to SEL" (2026, *Social and Emotional Learning: Research, Practice, and Policy*) and *The Crisis of Connection: Its Roots, Consequences, and Solutions* (2018)

Cultivating a Healthy Classroom Climate

Jennifer Gonzalez, MA, Founder and Editor-in-Chief, Cult of Pedagogy; Host of the popular "Cult of Pedagogy" Podcast; National Board Certified Teacher in Early Adolescence/English Language Arts; Former Adjunct Instructor, **Western Kentucky University**; Co-Author, *Hacking Education: 10 Quick Fixes for Every School* (2015)

Helping Adolescents Make Sense of Themselves:

Building Emotional Awareness, Identity, and the Skills to Navigate Life

Erica Battle, MA, Interim Head of School, All Saints Cathedral School; Founding Consultant and Leadership Coach, Life Changes in Progress Educational Consulting; Author, *The Trusted Teacher: A Reflective Guide for Impactful Relationships With Secondary Students* (2024), *Who Are You Beyond Your Name* (2022), and *Who Are You? A Guide to Help Adolescents Navigate Through the Social and Emotional Issues of Life* (2016)

How Predictable Routines Support Social Connection, Belonging, and Executive Function

Mitch J. Weathers, BA, CEO/President, Organized Binder; Former High School Science Teacher and Chair; Former Adjunct Professor, **Dominican University of California**; Advisor, TeachBoost; Advisor, The Odyssey Initiative; Author, *Executive Functions for Every Classroom, Grades 3-12* (2024); Co-Author, *Executive Functions for Every K-3 Classroom* (2026)

For a complete list of speakers, go to LearningAndTheBrain.com. Follow us on X, Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS (More In-Depth and Hands-on)

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 12 8:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Cost per person: \$169. By advance registration only. Select one of five. (Add \$30 if not also attending the conference.)

1. Belonging in Schools: Creating a Place Where Children Want to Learn

Belonging is at the heart of learning—and an essential factor in improving attendance. This workshop will explore how educators can intentionally create schools and classrooms where every student feels welcome, known, valued, heard, supported, and needed. You will examine the connections among belonging, well-being, engagement, and academic learning and identify the everyday experiences that communicate belonging. Through reflection, discussion, and practical application, you will discover evidence-informed ways to strengthen relationships, increase meaningful student participation, build productive peer connections, and create conditions that encourage academic risk-taking. You will leave with practical strategies you can use immediately. **Nancy Frey, PhD**, Professor of Literacy, Educational Leadership, College of Education, [San Diego State University](#); Teacher, Co-Founder, Health Sciences High and Middle College; Co-Author, *Belonging in School: Creating a Place Where Kids Want to Learn and Teachers Want to Stay – An Illustrated Playbook* (2026, Revised Edition)

2. High Impact Relationships: Strategies to Build Connection and Spark Learning

Effective student-teacher relationships produce measurable outcomes: greater motivation, stronger academic achievement, increased resilience, and improved behavior. This workshop explores what happens in the brain when connection is present—and when it is missing—before turning to the practical work of building strong relationships, reconnecting with students who have disengaged, and sustaining these connections while keeping instruction at the center. The same science that helps explain why students disengage also reveals why staff disengage, and school leaders will discover practices that work in both directions. Leave with a research-backed set of practical strategies you can use in your schools and classrooms. **Shauna F. King, MEd, EdS**, Educational Consultant, King Professional Development Services; Adjunct Faculty, The Regional Training Center, [La Salle University](#); Co-Author, *High Impact Relationships: 37 Simple Strategies to Build Connection and Spark Learning* (2025)

3. Mindsets That Matter: Aligning Expectations, Learning Science, and School Culture

What students learn is shaped not only by instruction, but also by the beliefs, expectations, and environments that surround them. In this interactive workshop, you will explore how teacher thinking and expectations influence student motivation, engagement, achievement, and identity. Drawing on the science of learning, you will examine how expectations become embedded in everyday classroom practices and how students' expectations of themselves and others shape learning outcomes. You will connect research on cognition, belonging, and motivation with the development of positive school culture and classroom climate, leaving with practical strategies for fostering high expectations and creating supportive, learning-centered environments. **John T. Almarode, PhD**, Professor of Education, [James Madison University](#); Co-Editor, *Journal of Belonging*; Co-Author, *The Teacher Clarity Playbook, Grades K-12* (2024) and *How Scaffolding Works* (2023)

4. From Behaving to Belonging: Supporting Students Who Challenge Us

This interactive pre-conference workshop will give educators, leaders, and support staff the opportunity to learn more about the neuroscience behind behavior, brain-based strategies to reduce challenging behavior, and actionable structures and practices to help students feel safe, supported, valued, and ready to learn. This workshop draws from Dr. MacLeod's work as an educator, leader, and inclusive change expert, as well as her book, *From Behaving to Belonging: The Inclusive Art of Supporting Students Who Challenge Us*. Take a dive into the inclusive mindset, heartset, and skillsets needed to move from behavior to belonging. **Kate MacLeod, PhD**, Associate Professor of Special Education, [University of Maine, Farmington](#); Chair of Diversity and Inclusion; Co-Founder/Consultant, Inclusive Schooling; Founding Member of the Maine Coalition for Inclusive Education; Co-Author, *The Way to Inclusion: How Leaders Create Schools Where Every Student Belongs* (2023), *From Behaving to Belonging: The Inclusive Art of Supporting Students Who Challenge Us* (2022), and *Building a Positive and Supportive Classroom* (2020)

5. Bridging for Belonging and Dialogue: Exploring Curiosity, Intellectual Humility, and Empathy for the Greater Good

How can we teach the skills of bridging and dialogue in our classrooms and schools? What strengths and qualities can we draw upon to communicate across differences? What protocols and practices best support constructive dialogue—and kinder, happier schools where everyone belongs? This workshop will explore aspirational ways of bringing people together in a spirit of connection, authentic listening, and healing. Together, you will reflect on three essential qualities and put them into practice: curiosity ("Tell me more; I want to understand"), intellectual humility ("I may be wrong, and I'm open to changing my thinking"), and empathy ("I feel with you—and your perspective"). **Amy L. Eva, PhD**, Associate Education Director; Education Content Specialist, Greater Good Science Center, [University of California, Berkeley](#); Former Teacher; Author, *Teaching With Hope: Reduce Burnout and Deepen Your Well-Being* (2024); Co-Author, *Surviving Teacher Burnout: A Weekly Guide to Build Resilience, Deal With Emotional Exhaustion, and Stay Inspired in the Classroom* (2022)

SPECIAL EVENTS

MEETING OF THE MINDS RECEPTION

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 12 from 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM — Free and Open to All Attendees

Take this opportunity to meet other attendees and some of the nation's brightest minds and enjoy complimentary wine and cheese.

Advance registration required on the registration form.

PRESENT A POSTER SESSION AT THE FEBRUARY CONFERENCE

Share and present your scientific research or successful programs you implement in your classrooms or schools to improve student-teacher relationships; social skills in neurodivergent students; positive connections and friendships; emotion regulation; classroom/community collaborations; or socioemotional learning. Submit a summary of your proposed poster session for review to info@LearningAndTheBrain.com.

Proposal deadline is January 22, 2027. For more information, visit [LearningAndTheBrain.com](https://www.LearningAndTheBrain.com) or call 857-444-1500 x1.

FEBRUARY CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM

Five ways to register: | **Phone:** (857) 444-1500 x1 **Email:** registration@LearningAndTheBrain.com **Fax:** (857) 357-7011
Postal mail: ERI • 78 Brooks Road, New Canaan, CT 06840 **Web:** LearningAndTheBrain.com

PLEASE PHOTOCOPY THIS FORM FOR EACH APPLICANT.

Name	Position
Organization	
Address	
City	State/Province
ZIP/Postal Code	Country
Phone	
Email	

DEMAND IS HIGH AND SPACE IS LIMITED. PLEASE REGISTER EARLY.

Register Me for the Conference: \$ _____

Early Registration (THROUGH DECEMBER 4, 2026)	\$679 per person (\$579 per person for groups of 5+)
General Registration (THROUGH FEBRUARY 5, 2027)	\$749 per person (\$649 per person for groups of 5+)
Late Registration (AFTER FEBRUARY 5, 2027)	\$779 per person (\$679 per person for groups of 5+)

Register Me for a Friday, February 12 Pre-Conference Workshop Add \$30 if not attending the Feb. conference \$ _____

Please select one of five:

☐ Belonging in Schools	8:00 am – 11:00 am	\$169 per person
☐ High Impact Relationships	8:00 am – 11:00 am	\$169 per person
☐ Mindsets That Matter	8:00 am – 11:00 am	\$169 per person
☐ From Behaving to Belonging	8:00 am – 11:00 am	\$169 per person
☐ Bridging for Belonging and Dialogue	8:00 am – 11:00 am	\$169 per person

Sign Me Up for Professional Development Credit (FREE)

☐ Please send the certificate via email. For more information on CEUs, visit LearningAndTheBrain.com.

Sign Me Up for Attending Live or Virtually

☐ I plan to attend in San Francisco ☐ I plan to attend virtually

Register Me for the Reception (FREE)

☐ Register me for the February 12 **Meeting of the Minds** Reception.

Register Me for the “Evidence-Based” PD Courses Website \$ _____

☐ Register me for the \$149 Annual Subscription (Save \$50 when registering for the conference).

Sign Me Up for Emails (FREE)

☐ Email me the monthly L&B Newsletter ☐ Email me information about upcoming L&B events

All prices are in U.S. dollars. **GRAND TOTAL: \$ _____**

☐ Please check here if you have any special ADA requirements, and call (857) 444-1500 x1.

The Fairmont San Francisco is ADA compliant.

PAYMENT METHOD ☐ Check enclosed ☐ Purchase Order enclosed ☐ Credit Card (Circle one: VISA MC AMEX)

Credit Card Number: _____ Exp: _____

Cardholder Name: _____

Cardholder Billing Address: _____ ZIP: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Make check or purchase order payable to **Educator Resources, Inc. (ERI)**, and mail it along with your registration form to:
ERI, 78 Brooks Road, New Canaan, CT 06840-6250.

P.O.s will be invoiced if sent without a check prior to conference. **Registrations without payment or purchase order will not be confirmed.**

REGISTRATION POLICIES Registrations are taken and confirmed on a first-come, first-served basis according to receipt of full payment or purchase order.
Unpaid registrations without a purchase order will be canceled after 30 days. If you do not receive a confirmation within three weeks after sending full payment or purchase order, call 857-444-1500 x1. Early conference registration is \$679 (\$579 per person for groups of 5 or more) through December 4, 2026. General conference registration is \$749 per person (\$649 per person for groups of 5 or more when registering together) through February 5, 2027. After February 5, 2027, late registration is \$779 per person (\$679 per person for groups of 5 or more when registering together).

SUBSTITUTIONS AND CANCELLATIONS Substitutions are permissible up to seven days before the conference, but you must notify ERI in writing by fax or mail. Cancellations must be requested no later than February 5, 2027. No cancellations can be accepted after February 5, 2027. Because cancellations incur substantial administrative costs, we regret that it is necessary to charge a cancellation fee of \$75 per person if you cancel by December 4, 2026, or \$150 per person if you cancel after December 4, 2026, but by February 5, 2027.

CONFERENCE PROGRAM CHANGES Educator Resources, Inc. (ERI) reserves the right, without having to refund any monies to participants, to make changes in the conference, its program, schedule, workshops, sessions, events, location, and/or faculty should ERI, in its sole discretion, deem any such changes necessary or advisable. Similarly, ERI further reserves the right to cancel any workshops, sessions, events, credit courses, or the conference entirely, in which case ERI's liability to participants shall be strictly limited to a refund of those fees. ERI, the Cooperating Organizations, and Sponsors are not responsible for (nor do they necessarily endorse) the efficacy, accuracy, or content of any recommendations, statements, research, or other information provided at the conference.