



Neurodiversity Conference

January 31st, 2025 | The Fletcher School, Charlotte

Agenda

8:00 am **Registration and Continental Breakfast**

8:45 am **Welcome and KEYNOTE, Dr. Ryan Kelly, MA, PhD, Healthquest: Innovative Therapeutics Founder, Author, Psychologist | Gym**

This keynote will address the current state and scientific field of neurodiversity as it relates to student-age youth, followed by a Q&A. Dr. Kelly will discuss the objective emergent truth and subjective collective experience of neurodivergence among students within and outside of the classroom. This will include a "booster neuro-psych session," a "day in the life" of the average student experience, a review of the productive and destructive influence of current cultural and technological influences (e.g., screen use, social media, polarity), and implications for intervention specifically for independent schools.

10:15 am **Break**

10:20 am **Breakout Session 1 | Select One**

Executive Function Support Through Grades K-12 | Jenny Rundle, Noble Academy

Audience: K-12

Strand: EF

Location: Gym

Attendees will come away with a better understanding of executive function skills, why they are important skills for students to master, and proven strategies that work. The focus of the talk will be on students who typically struggle with executive functions, such as those with ADHD or ASD. This session is most appropriate for general education teachers wanting to learn more to support their neurodiverse students. It would also be interesting for academic support/special education teachers to discuss executive functioning throughout all grade levels.

Taming Classroom Transitions with Self-Regulation | Chandler McIntyre, The Fletcher School

Audience: K-5

Strand: SEL

Location: Rankin

Transitions during the school day can be challenging, especially for students with learning differences and attention disorders. Stressful academic tasks can lead to frustration or anxiety, causing students to shut down and avoid assignments. Emotional upsets triggered by transitions often disrupt both the student and the classroom environment. Managing these emotions is essential for learning. Success in the classroom depends on emotional regulation, as high levels of anxiety and distractions can impair concentration, memory, and problem-solving. In this session, we will explore self-regulation strategies to help students navigate transitions and build confidence and success in the classroom.

Math Boosters: Effective push-in strategies to bolster math classroom instruction | January Reed, Beth Allen & Lori Myers Covenant Day School

Audience: K-5

Strand: Math

Location: TLC

Attendees will explore integrating push-in support seamlessly into K-5th grade core math instruction. The approach ensures that all students are fully engaged in the learning process at their level of concept understanding while minimizing time lost in the transition to and from outside intervention programs. Attendees will experience and acquire multisensory math activities used at the concrete, representational, and abstract levels that provide scaffolding support for neurodivergent learners. Educators will gain insight and strategies to adapt teaching methods to accommodate various learning styles and needs during math instruction.

Designing Accessibility Technology Support for PK-4 Learners | Ryan James, Senior Digital Facilitator for Carolina Day School

Audience: PK-4

Strand: Technology

Location: Dining Hall

In this session, participants will learn about accessibility tools that are available for students who use iPads. By the end of the session, participants will be able to reflect on the current accessibility tools that their school provides, examine new tools for

their effectiveness, and build a framework for the accessibility tools that their school offers. Participants will be guided through the Backwards Design planning cycle to create a plan for implementing accessibility tools in the classroom. Participants will examine accessibility tools using rubrics and how to score their effectiveness. In addition, participants will understand the transition as learners move from using iPads in the classroom to laptops like Chromebooks.

11:15 am Grab & Go Lunch

11:30 am Lunch & Learn Sessions: Take your lunch and head to one of the following:

diffERentiAtion: Meeting All Your Students' Needs | Kit Verica & Gwen Henshaw, The Fletcher School

Audience: K-12

Strand: Differentiation

Location: Gym

Our classrooms are filled with students of varying needs: language-based learning disabilities, ADHD, anxiety... How can we possibly support each student? Differentiation! Join us to learn how to meet the needs of your students. Develop an understanding of the principles behind differentiation. Explore strategies to customize content, process, product, and environment to meet the diverse needs of your students. Develop strategies to address student readiness, interests, and learning needs, creating a more personalized learning experience for all. Through practical examples and collaborative discussions, educators will discover how to effectively adjust their teaching methods to engage every learner and foster growth.

Make a Hand Plan! Creating Expected Learning Environments for Everyone | Emily Hayes, Lerner Jewish Community Day School

Audience: K-5

Strand: SEL

Location: TLC

A standard school day is eight hours, and teachers are told to introduce more than a typical curriculum. They must also add social-emotional learning and basic interpersonal skills to the mix. Teachers must be more creative, flexible, patient, and resourceful than ever. We will review developmentally appropriate practice with classroom setup and schedule structure during this presentation. We will explore how centers, stations, and rotations allow differentiation for classroom communities of all sizes and help compensate for years of learning lost during the pandemic.

Teach Them Early, Teach Them Often | Anne McGraw, Davidson Day School

Audience: K-8

Strand: EF

Location: Rankin

Research has shown that early introduction of executive functioning skills improves academic performance, classroom environment, social relationships, and mental health. We will explore the benefits of intentionally and consistently teaching executive functioning at an early age. We will evaluate what we offer our students and solicit feedback for improvement. We can cultivate self-aware, active, engaged learners using a variety of activities to target such skills as organization, time management, metacognition, self-regulation, task initiation, and prioritization. The goal is to equip our students with the skills needed to succeed in the classroom and in life.

Forming Alliance Groups for Neurodiverse Students | Janna Miller, Providence Day School

Audience: K-8

Strand: SEL

Location: Dining Hall

In this short session, we will cover how to set up an alliance or club group for ND students, ideally employing ND staff. Building a community, empowering students, and providing a supportive (often joyful) space are emphasized. Takeaways include games, activities, and discussion prompts.

12:15 pm Break

12:30 pm FletchX | Introduction with Paul Atkinson, The Fletcher Academy

Location: Gym

This session features a TED Talk-style format to share impactful ideas through brief, engaging presentations.

- **Science of Reading (SOR)** | Janna Ethridge, The Fletcher Academy
- **The Use of AI in the Art Classroom;** My conversation with Chatgpt | Sandra Litzenberger, The Fletcher Academy
- **Language Acquisition for Students with Learning Differences (TPR /TPRS)** | Paulina Delgado, The Fletcher Academy
- **Panel Discussion-** Paul Atkinson and Tara Terry, The Fletcher School

2:15 pm Break

2:30 pm

Breakout Session 2 | Select One

Think, Move, Learn: Bringing Fun to Multisensory Math | Kristen Bailey, Jacqueline Peebles, Trish Yerkes & Amy Ensey, The Fletcher School

Audience: K-5

Strand: Math

Location: Rankin

In Think, Move, Learn: Bringing Fun to Multisensory Math, explore how engaging multiple senses can enhance math instruction for neurodivergent learners. Discover the systematic approach to structuring a multisensory lesson, featuring practical tools and activities that activate multiple senses—combining movement, tactile interaction, and visual organization within the concrete-representational-abstract approach. Learn how strategies from Building Thinking Classrooms, such as Vertical Non-Permanent Surfaces and random groupings, **are** designed to reduce anxiety, encourage risk-taking, and offer real-time feedback for improved math reasoning. Leave with actionable strategies, engaging tasks, and activities that foster a flexible, inclusive learning environment where math concepts come to life.

Multi-sensory Strategies for Fun and Effective Spelling Success | Maria McLean, Heidi Moxley & Debbie Broxterman, The Fletcher School

Audience: K-5

Strand: Spelling

Location: TLC

- Discover innovative multi-sensory techniques that transform spelling lessons into engaging experiences.
- Explore hands-on activities that cater to diverse learning styles and enhance retention.
- Incorporate movement to create dynamic spelling sessions that energize learners.
- Implement games and challenges that foster collaboration and friendly competition among students.
- Share practical tips for adapting multi-sensory strategies to different age groups and skill levels.
- Inspire educators to foster a positive learning environment that celebrates spelling successes.
- Motivate students to take ownership of their learning through personalized spelling activities.
- Conclude with actionable takeaways that participants can immediately apply in their classrooms.

Diving into Differentiation | Jen Barcella, St. Timothy's School

Audience: K-8

Strand: Differentiation

Location: Gym

This Diving into Differentiation session will provide K-8th grade educators with a comprehensive overview of differentiated instruction and practical strategies for implementation. The fun interactive activities and lively discussions ensure engagement and promote the application of concepts to real classroom scenarios. By the end of the session, teachers should feel more confident and motivated in their ability to differentiate instruction and meet the diverse needs of their students.

Designing Accessibility Technology Support for 5-12 Learners | Ryan James, Senior Digital Facilitator for Carolina Day School

Audience: 5-12

Strand: Technology

Location: Dining Hall

In this session, participants will learn about accessibility tools available for students using laptops like Chromebooks. By the end of the session, participants will be able to reflect on the current accessibility tools that their school provides, examine new tools for their effectiveness, and build a framework for the accessibility tools that their school offers. Participants will be guided through the Backwards Design planning cycle to create a plan for implementing accessibility tools in the classroom. Participants will examine accessibility tools using rubrics and how to score their effectiveness. In addition, participants will understand how to transition learners from the 5-12 learning environment to college and university levels.

3:30 pm

Adjourn