

2025 – National Family Engagement Summit

In-Person Agenda

October 29, 2025 – Wednesday

7:45am-11:00am – Check-in / Registration

11:00am-1:00pm – Welcome / Opening Ceremony / Keynote: Robert Jackson

1:00pm -2:00pm – Lunch (On Your Own)

*(*click on the resources tab on the nfesummit.com website to see great recommendations)*

2:00pm-2:15pm – Exhibitors / Networking

2:15pm-3:15pm – Breakout Sessions:

Topic	Presenter	Location
Engaging Fathers as Partners: Strategies for Equity and Impact	Dion Chavis	Salon 123
Designing Engaging Portfolio Systems that Strengthen Home-School Partnerships	Dr. Marlon Styles	Salon 4
From Barriers to Bridges: Transforming Family School Partnerships for Student Success	Tiffany Fincher	Salon 5
Building Better Family Bonds	Ida Carter	Salon 678
Cultivating Spaces for Engagement and Connection	Chanda Epps	Madison Jefferson Monroe
From Challenges to Triumphs: Empowering Latino Parents with Practical Solutions	Thelma Aviles	Shenandoah
A Kite Without a String: The Cost of Unanchored Leadership	Maxine Petty	Dominion / Commonwealth

Description of Sessions:

Engaging Fathers as Partners:

Strategies for Equity and Impact-Fathers play a critical role in shaping student success, yet their involvement is often underutilized, particularly in underserved communities. This workshop explores research-driven, practical strategies to promote meaningful father engagement in schools. Educators will learn actionable approaches to create inclusive, welcoming environments that empower fathers to participate actively in their child's education, advancing equity and improving outcomes for all students.

Designing Engaging Portfolio Systems that Strengthen Home–School Partnerships

Imagine a portfolio that grows alongside a student — capturing their strengths, dreams, and milestones while also giving families a clear window into their journey. In this session, you'll explore how to design systems where portfolios become more than collections of work: they become tools of connection. We'll look at how districts can align portfolios to their Portrait of a Graduate, invite family voices into the process, and showcase learning in ways that matter to communities. You'll leave with strategies to spark student ownership, strengthen family engagement, and build a shared narrative of growth that supports every learner's path forward.

From Barriers to Bridges: Transforming Family School Partnerships for Student Success

This session is designed for school and district leaders who are committed to advancing equity and student achievement through strategic family engagement. It is especially relevant for principals, assistant principals, and district administrators seeking to strengthen partnerships between families and schools. Participants will leave with leadership-driven strategies to nurture inclusion, empowerment, and shared responsibility in their school communities.

Building Better Family Bonds

This interactive session introduces a four-part workshop series designed to help families grow stronger together. Through hands-on activities focused on communication, forgiveness, gratitude, and teamwork, participants learn practical skills to build trust, resolve conflict, and create a more connected home life. Facilitators will also gain tools to lead engaging, inclusive sessions that support families of all shapes and sizes. Whether you're guiding a group or participating as a family, this session offers meaningful strategies to build better bonds—one conversation, one activity, one breakthrough at a time.

Cultivating Spaces for Engagement and Connection

This interactive session invites educators, administrators, family-facing professionals, and community partners to explore creative, culturally responsive strategies for building meaningful family engagement. Participants will experience hands-on activities and guided reflection that demonstrate how to foster trust, amplify family voices, and reduce barriers to participation. Walk away with practical tools and ideas to create inclusive, community-centered engagement practices that extend far beyond the classroom or event space.

From Challenges to Triumphs: Empowering Latino Parents with Practical Solutions

This session equips educators, community leaders, and service providers with effective strategies to support and empower Latino parents. Participants will learn how to foster open, culturally responsive communication and create safe, inclusive environments where parents feel valued and heard. The session emphasizes the importance of offering culturally relevant educational content, recognizing the inherent strengths of Latino families, and guiding parents in advocating for their children's needs within the educational system. By enhancing parental engagement and collaboration, this training aims to promote stronger family-school partnerships and contribute to the overall success and well-being of Latino communities. This session will describe evaluation findings and lessons learned from an initiative in Atlanta that implemented a father engagement program in four elementary schools with primarily Black and Hispanic fathers.

A Kite Without a String: The Cost of Unanchored Leadership

A kite is designed to rise, but only when it's connected. In this reflective session, participants will examine the metaphor of leadership as a kite: bold, elevated and meant to reach great heights but only when held by a guiding string. Leaders who lose connection to their teams, values or community often find themselves tossed by every wind of change, trend or ego.

3:15pm-3:30pm – Exhibitors / Networking Break

3:30pm-4:30pm: Breakout Sessions

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Presenter</u>	<u>Location</u>
Connecting for Student Success: Tools for Your Tool Box	Dr. Everett Davis	Salon 123
Rooted in Relationships: Culturally Responsive Engagement with Immigrant and Refugee Families	Rachel Gonsalves Gabriel Hernandez	Salon 4
Engaging with Students and Families Who are in Transition with Stable Housing	Dr. Shonda Harris-Muhammed	Salon 5
Neighborhoods of Kindness: Neighborhoods of Impact	Mallory Mbalia	Shenandoah
Unpacking Family Engagement Through Wellness	Dr. Kelli Cedo & Mary Roberts Curran	Madison Jefferrson Monroe

Fathers Matter: Father Engagement in Schools	Latrice Rollins	Salon 678
Two-Way Communication: Intentionally Inviting Family Feedback to Improve School Safety	Gloria Martinez & Natalie Sessoms	Dominion

Description of Sessions:

Connecting for Student Success: Tools for Your Tool Box

During this session, participants will first learn about family best practices and resources from a large suburban school district. Following the best practice sharing, participants will have an opportunity to share best practices with one another, ensuring that each of these are linked to learning. Participant best practices will be captured and archived for future use and adaptation in their local community/school district.

Rooted in Relationships: Culturally Responsive Engagement with Immigrant and Refugee Families

This session highlights how Henrico County Public Schools engages immigrant and refugee families through intentional, culturally responsive strategies. Participants will explore real-world examples of community-based outreach, advisory councils, and strong partnerships that bridge gaps and build trust. Learn how relationship-driven practices can create meaningful impact—no matter the size of the crowd.

Engaging with Students and Families Who are in Transition with Stable Housing

Maintaining engagement with families during housing transitions is pivotal to ensure students continue to receive academic and social-emotional support. Administrators, division leaders, and stakeholders will discuss the importance of developing strategies to support students and families facing instabilities with housing.

Neighborhoods of Kindness: Neighborhoods of Impact-

Fred Rogers once said “there are three ways to ultimate success: the first way is to be kind, the second way is to be kind and the third way is to be kind.” This session will share how kindness is a path to connection, trust and true impact with families. The content and free resources from Fred Rogers Productions will be shared that center on kindness and respect and that can be incorporated in family engagement. Thank you, neighbors!

Unpacking Family Engagement Through Wellness

Come enjoy a session where you will build your toolbox in unpacking family engagement through trust and strategic planning and implementation. Participants will also build their toolbox with wellness tools that support all families and provide equity through resource access.

Fathers Matter: Father Engagement in Schools

This session will describe evaluation findings and lessons learned from an initiative in Atlanta that implemented a father engagement program in four elementary schools with primarily Black and Hispanic fathers.

Two-Way Communication: Intentionally Inviting Family Feedback to Improve School Safety

Join Natalie Sessoms (Sales and Partnerships) and Gloria Martinez (Customer Experience) from Possip to learn how school leaders use family feedback in strategic planning, school improvement projects, and daily operations to improve school safety and uphold trust, transparency, and accountability standards.

Participants will examine top trends in parent concerns gathered by Possip from nearly 1,500 schools nationwide over the past eight years. Natalie and Gloria will discuss protocols and strategies for implementing equitable family engagement practices that support and strengthen all facets of school safety and a positive school climate.

4:30pm-4:45pm – Exhibitors / Networking Break

4:45pm-5:30pm – Keynote Presentation: Dr. Omega Wilson (Ballroom)

October 30, 2025 – Thursday

7:00am-8:00am – Conference Registration / Check-in

7:15am-8:15am – Continental Breakfast

8:15am-9:30am – Panel of Experts (Ballroom)

This panel brings together educators and thought leaders who all have unique perspectives when it comes to the importance of K-12 teachers, student success, and family engagement. The panelists will engage in a conversation guided by these key questions: 1) Why do K12 teachers and leaders need to engage families in their work? 2) What's the status of teaching about family engagement in educator prep programs nowadays, in terms of coursework and fieldwork? 3) When teacher education programs teach about "families", what sorts of families are discussed?

Are these families diverse and representative of the families teachers will work with when they become practicing teachers?

Panelists: Ruby Batz, Ph.D, Fred A. Bonner II, Ed.D, Keesha Greer-Effs, Ed.D., B.C.S.E, Carolyn Silva, Ph.D, Terrell L. Strayhorn, Ph.D. Facilitator: Nicholas, D. Hartlep, Ph.D

9:30-9:45am – Exhibitors / Networking Break

9:45am-10:45am – Breakout Sessions

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Presenter</u>	<u>Location</u>
Inspired Conversations Transforming Family Engagement from Transactional to Transformational	Anthony Brown	Salon 123
Crack the Code: Leveraging Data to Engage, Elevate and Empower Parents	Natasha Rouse & Michelina Thornton	Salon 4
Panel Discussion: School-Based Father Engagement (SBFE) – Changing the Narrative of Family Engagement	Keith Schumacher, Dion Chavis, Tahlia Crenshaw, J. Michael Hall, Joseph Washington, & Jeff Usher	Salon 678
I Don't Do Math: Family Engagement Debunks the Myth	Johnnie L. Brown	Dominion
Empowering Families: Building Resilience in the Face of Housing Insecurity	Phoebe Grant-Robinson	Salon 5
F.E.S.T. Transforming Family Engagement in Schools	Dr. Edgar Alfonzo	Madison Jefferson Monroe
Poverty Informed Family Engagement	Michaela Stovall	Shenandoah

Description of Sessions:

Inspired Conversations Transforming Family Engagement from Transactional to Transformational

What if the most transformational family engagement strategy isn't a new app, flyer, or checklist—but a meaningful conversation?

This session introduces Inspired Conversations, a reflective, relationship-centered framework grounded in the book *Inspire Me Moments: Living Out Loud with No Regrets*. Led by educator and author Anthony Harris Brown, this session explores how authentic engagement that is rooted in trust, cultural responsiveness, and lived experience, can transform school-family dynamics.

Participants will explore storytelling as a leadership tool, reframe events from transactional to transformational, and consider how fathers, male caregivers, and underrepresented voices can be

intentionally centered in the family-school partnership. Backed by real CMSD data, field-tested tools, and the Dual Capacity-Building Framework, this session invites educators to reimagine engagement as a powerful bridge between school, home, and community.

Whether you support family partnerships, school culture, or student success, you'll leave this session re-energized and equipped to design family engagement experiences that uplift voice, value, and visibility.

Crack the Code: Leveraging Data to Engage, Elevate and Empower Parents

Unlock the power of parent engagement with Crack the Code: Leveraging Data to Engage, Elevate, and Empower. In this interactive session, participants will learn how to use simple, meaningful data to better understand families, strengthen school-home connections, and support student success. Whether you're new to data or looking for fresh ideas, this workshop will provide practical tools, real-world examples, and a friendly approach to making data work for you. Walk away feeling confident, inspired, and ready to engage parents in powerful new ways.

Panel Discussion: School-Based Father Engagement (SBFE) – Changing the Narrative of Family Engagement

Too often, schools unintentionally overlook fathers and father figures in their family engagement strategies. Yet research consistently shows that when dads are welcomed and intentionally invited into schools, student success, classroom climate, and teacher morale improve.

This panel brings together leaders from nationally recognized School-Based Father Engagement (SBFE) programs. Panelists will share strategies, successes, and lessons learned from the field. Together, they will explore how SBFE strengthens family-school partnerships, supports Title I compliance, aligns with MTSS Tier 1 practices, and builds a more inclusive school culture for every child.

While SBFE may be a new name, these programs have been strengthening school communities for well over 20 years. They enrich the lives of children with active fathers and provide important role models for students who may not have a dad at home. Unlike traditional “fatherhood” or “mentoring” programs, SBFEs are rooted in the school setting, designed to support academic success through direct family-school partnership, and inclusive of all families. The panel will outline what sets SBFE apart and why it matters for today’s schools.

I Don't Do Math: Family Engagement Debunks the Myth

I Don't Do Math: Debunking the Myth' workshop is designed to empower educators with research-backed strategies for engaging parents in their children's STEM education (K-12). Many parents believe they lack the necessary skills to support their children in math and science. However,

research shows that family engagement significantly enhances student achievement. This workshop will explore how educators can build partnerships with families, fostering a supportive home environment that promotes success in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.

Empowering Families: Building Resilience in the Face of Housing Insecurity

Join us at the intersection of housing insecurity and literacy proficiency for an engaging session, highlighting the transformative power of parental engagement in fostering children's literacy development amidst the challenges of homelessness and high mobility. Grounded in Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory and Dr. Karen Mapp's Dual Capacity Framework, participants will learn how to advocate for students facing housing insecurity and high mobility (HHM), raise awareness for this underserved group, and explore the profound link between housing instability, parental engagement, and literacy outcomes.

F.E.S.T. Transforming Family Engagement in Schools

FEST: Strengthening School-Family Partnerships Discover how the Family Engagement Support Team (FEST) empowers schools to improve family engagement practices using a collaborative, parent-driven rubric. Learn key strategies for fostering meaningful connections and driving student success.

Poverty Informed Family Engagement

How are we as educators responsive to the needs of students and families living in poverty? Experience a virtual poverty simulation and learn about the unique characteristics of poverty that may be impacting your families. Walk away with a renewed perspective and strategies to meet students and families where they are.

10:45am-11:00am - Exhibitors / Networking Break

11:00am-12:00pm - Breakout Sessions:

Topic	Presenter	Location
Beyond Words: Strategies for Engaging Multilingual Families Through Trust, Inclusion and Community	Dr. MariaRosa Rangel	Salon 5
Plan, What Plan? Revisiting, Reassessing and Reworking Your Family Engagement Plan	Dr. Roslyn Moffitt	Dominion

Beyond the Cookout: Designing Father Engagement that Drives Results	J. Michael Hall	Shenandoah
Voices That Matter: How Listening to Families Transforms Schools	Joseph Washington	Salon 123
Bridging the Gap: Family Engagement as a Catalyst for Equity, Excellence, and Collective Impact through Visible Learning	Alyse Zeffiro Kaptein	Salon 678
Empowering Voices: Shared-Decision Making in Schools	Erin Boyd	Salon 4
Heal Before You Reveal	Dr. Jorge Valenzuela	Madison Jefferson Monroe

Description of Sessions:

Beyond Words: Strategies for Engaging Multilingual Families Through Trust, Inclusion and Community

As school communities across the United States grow increasingly diverse, effective engagement with multilingual families has become essential for student success. This interactive workshop equips educators, administrators, and community partners with practical, culturally responsive strategies to build trust, foster inclusion, and strengthen school-family relationships. Participants will explore the unique challenges multilingual families face, including language barriers, limited access to school information, and cultural misunderstandings. Through evidence-based practices, real-life examples, and hands-on collaboration, the session highlights how to improve communication, plan inclusive events, leverage community partnerships, and use technology to create equitable access. Attendees will walk away with actionable tools, new insights, and the confidence to transform family engagement in ways that affirm and empower every family—regardless of the language they speak.

Plan, What Plan? Revisiting, Reassessing, and Reworking Your Family Engagement Plan

Shifting family engagement systems in school districts requires a new approach. This session covers strategies for restructuring engagement, such as professional development, using data, and practical solutions to strengthen school-family partnerships. Attendees will review their beliefs and practices to update their family engagement plans for effective collaboration between schools, families, and communities. In this session attendees will evaluate the effectiveness of current family engagement strategies to identify partnerships. Attendees will review their beliefs and practices to update their engagement plans for effective collaboration between schools, families, and communities. In this session, attendees will evaluate the effectiveness of current family engagement strategies to identify strengths and areas for improvement, review existing goals and objectives to ensure alignment with the needs and priorities of families, revise approaches and tactics based on feedback and outcomes to foster stronger connections and collaborations.

Beyond the Cookout: Designing Father Engagement that Drives Results

Tired of father engagement initiatives that fall flat? This session reveals the secrets to crafting father and child programs that are not just attendance-boosters, but powerful catalysts for achieving student outcomes. We'll explore how to align father engagement efforts with your campus and district goals, making it an integral, impactful, and enjoyable part of your work with families.

Voices That Matter: How Listening to Families Transforms Schools

This session highlights the power of truly listening to families and students. Joseph shares how his third-grade teacher, Miss Oakel, transformed his life by coming to his home, sitting with his mother, who battled Bipolar Disorder, and listening with compassion. That simple act built trust, created a partnership, and turned his mother and teacher into allies in his success. Educators will leave this session inspired and equipped with fresh insight on how listening with intention can create unexpected allies, forge deeper relationships, and produce greater outcomes for students. By valuing every voice, no matter how broken or overlooked, schools can transform not only classrooms but entire lives.

Bridging the Gap: Family Engagement as a Catalyst for Equity, Excellence, and Collective Impact through Visible Learning

Join the 2025 National Distinguished Principal for Virginia for an inspiring and data-driven conversation on how intentional family engagement, coupled with high-impact instructional leadership, can radically transform school culture and student outcomes. As a Visible Learning Certified School, we have implemented two of the most influential factors on student achievement—Teacher Clarity and Collective Teacher Efficacy—with deep fidelity, leading to transformational change.

- This session will highlight how these practices, alongside authentic family partnerships, have resulted in:
 -  The highest student achievement in 12 years, with all student groups surpassing state and division benchmarks
 -  Over 90% teacher retention, signaling a culture of shared purpose and professional sustainability
 -  Increased student engagement, with a significant decrease in chronic absenteeism
 -  Recognition as a National Distinguished Title I School for closing achievement gaps and a Virginia Highest Achievement Exemplar School

- 🤝 A profound sense of belonging among students, families, and staff, reflected in high rates of parent trust and overall satisfaction

Through the lens of our Parent Advisory Council, monthly collaborative planning, and transparent communication on budget, staffing, and school goals, we've fostered a space where families are authentic partners in learning. This session will share actionable strategies that empower schools to scale inclusive practices and create deeply rooted family-school connections that drive continuous growth

Be ready to explore how engagement meets impact—and walk away with tools to elevate both

Empowering Voices: Shared Decision-Making in Schools

This session focuses on the importance of equitable voices within schools. It is not just about seeking input; it is about sharing power and authority to create a more inclusive and effective education environment. Ms. Boyd will be focusing on the importance of shared voice, building relationships as the foundation of shared voices, creating a culture of trust, and meaningful engagement strategies.

Heal Before You Reveal: The Blueprint for Emotionally Intelligent Leadership

This session is for educators who want to master emotional intelligence to maximize partnerships with families while leading with clarity, empathy, and purpose while caring for self and others. This session also models a practical framework for settling disputes.

12:00pm-1:00pm – Lunch Break (on your own)

1:00pm-1:15pm - Networking Break / Exhibits

1:15pm-2:15pm – Breakout Sessions

Topic	Presenter	Location
Enhancing Family and Community Engagement through the Four Agreements	Ruth Naomi James	Salon 5
From Conflict to Collaboration: Family Engagement as the Secret Sauce for Preventing Special Education	Marisa Howard-Karp & Pamela White	Salon 123

Showdowns		
Leveling Up: Building Team Capacity, Boosting Family and Community Engagement	Seth Knight & Nicole Boone	Salon 4
Family Engagement Reloaded: Fresh Strategies that Actually Work	Dr. Herbert Thomas	Salon 678
The Role of School Administrators and Family Engagement	Kim Winslow Ed.S.	Shenandoah
Warriors in the Neighborhood-Guerreros en el Barrio	Cristina Ramirez, Crista Adams, & Brian Packowitz	Dominion
Enhancing SEL Instruction Through Yoga + Mindfulness	Emily Fleming	Madison Jefferson Monroe

Description of Sessions:

Enhancing Family and Community Engagement through the Four Agreements

In this engaging workshop, participants will discover how the transformative wisdom of The Four Agreements—a timeless framework for personal and professional growth—can be utilized to foster stronger connections between educators, families, and communities. Focused on statewide engagement, educator preparation, and parent and family leadership, this session will demonstrate how these principles can be applied to create a more inclusive and supportive culture within educational systems. By embracing these agreements, participants will learn how to improve communication, build trust, and enhance collaboration to ultimately drive better outcomes for students and families.

From Conflict to Collaboration: Family Engagement as the Secret Sauce for Preventing Special Education Showdowns

Special education can often lead to conflict between schools and families. The best way to manage conflict is to prevent it, and family engagement is a powerful prevention tool. But family engagement in special education is not one-size fits all, and the needs of these families are often different than those of families of typical learners. In this session, we'll talk about how a tailored special education family engagement approach builds collaboration, strengthens communication, and prevents costly, time-consuming disputes. Our presenters, representing both educator and parent perspectives, will break down how schools and families can become true partners.

Leveling Up: Building Team Capacity, Boosting Family and Community Engagement

Family engagement has been an integrated practice across school communities for many years, but times change. Explore how Henrico County Public Schools' Division of Family and Community Engagement 'leveled up' staff skills and division support to meet the needs of families in a changing world.

Family Engagement Reloaded: Fresh Strategies that Actually Work

This session invites educators, leaders, and community partners to reimagine family engagement as more than a checklist of activities. Together, we will explore transformative strategies that create authentic, lasting connections between families and schools—connections that empower families to be true partners in student learning. Through interactive discussion and hands-on activities, participants will examine the barriers that often limit family involvement and uncover new ways to build trust, strengthen communication, and foster inclusive practices. Real-life stories and practical examples will illustrate how schools can move beyond traditional methods to adopt approaches that are innovative, culturally responsive, and sustainable. Expect a highly engaging experience where ideas are tested, assumptions are challenged, and collaboration is at the forefront. You will leave with fresh perspectives and practical tools to strengthen partnerships, enhance school culture, and reframe how families and educators work together for student success.

The Role of School Administrators and Family Engagement

Participants will gain an understanding of how communication and culture play a pivotal role in engaging families in their students' learning. The session also emphasizes the role of school administrators in promoting family engagement through effective and equitable communication strategies.

Warriors in the Neighborhood-Guerreros en el Barrio

In this presentation participants will learn about a suburban school district's journey to more inclusive and responsive family engagement. Participants will learn steps towards creating a systemic approach to community engagement and building relationships within a diverse community.

Enhancing SEL Instruction Through Yoga + Mindfulness

In this workshop, participants will learn how yoga and mindfulness practices can be used as a way to support and reinforce SEL instruction. This presentation will explore each of the 5 SEL competencies and how specific yoga / mindfulness strategies align with each. Participants will have time to engage with these practices in real-time and will leave with a plan for where and how they will incorporate specific practices into their SEL instruction.

2:15pm-2:30pm - Exhibitor / Networking Break

2:30pm-3:30pm – Breakout Sessions

Topic	Presenter	Location
Beyond the School Walls: Transformative Outreach Strategies That Ignite Family Engagement and Strengthen Community Schools	Danielle Wilson Saddler & Dr. Stacy Ashton	Salon 123
Family Forward: Empowering Communities through the Parent Academy	Mariel Brie Milano, Victoria Tiemey, & Gledys Galban-Carrion	Shenandoah
Engagement At Every Level	Dr. Philip Hammonds	Salon 5
A Family's Guide to Pathways & Possibilities	Dr. Marlon Styles	Salon 4
Amplifying Multilingual Voices: How Our High School's Parent Advisory Committee Has Evolved	Mara Paich Grujanac & Alma Tamayo	Dominion
Feel Your Best Self: Exploration of Emotion-Focused Mindsets for Leveraging Family at Home and School	Dr. Sandra M. Chafouleas, Emily Wicks, & Molly Ferreira	Salon 678
Heal Before You Reveal	Dr. Jorge Valenzuela	Madison Jefferson Monroe

Description of Sessions:

Beyond the School Walls: Transformative Outreach Strategies That Ignite Family Engagement and Strengthen Community Schools

This session explores how transformative outreach serves as a powerful driver for equity, family empowerment, and sustainable community school models. Participants will delve into outreach practices that prioritize trust, cultural responsiveness, and shared leadership—moving beyond traditional engagement efforts. Through real-life examples, data insights, and interactive reflection, the presentation highlights how intentional outreach transforms families from passive participants to active partners in student success. Attendees will leave with tools and strategies to reimagine family engagement and strengthen school-community connections through an equity-centered lens.

Family Forward: Empowering Communities through the Parent Academy

Join us for 'Family Forward: Empowering Communities through the Parent Academy' and discover how to unite schools and empower families for student success! Let's harness the power of family engagement and pave the way for brighter futures together!

Engagement At Every Level-Leaders

The session targets principals, assistant principals, teacher leaders, parent liaisons, etc. Sustainable organizational success depends on more than vision—it requires meaningful engagement at every layer of the school community and organization. This session explores how leaders can strategically and practically cultivate engagement across their respective communities by recognizing and leveraging the unique talents of individuals and teams. Participants will learn how to optimize alignment between leadership priorities, staff strengths, and stakeholder needs in ways that reinforce a transformative culture. Through case-based insights and actionable strategies, this presentation will equip leaders to:

- Harness talent across all levels of the organization to strengthen commitment and performance.
- Build systems and practices that foster collaboration, innovation, and ownership.
- Bridge the gap between strategy and daily practice to ensure engagement is both intentional and sustained.

Attendees will leave with frameworks and tools to foster engagement that fuels growth, equity, and shared success—driving a culture where everyone is invested in the mission and empowered to contribute.

A Family's Guide to Pathways and Possibility

Designing K–12 Career-Aligned Journeys that Engage Families and Communities. Every student deserves a pathway that leads from their passions to real opportunities — and families deserve to be partners in shaping that journey. This session highlights how one district built the Passport to Tomorrow, connecting classrooms, careers, and community partnerships in ways that open doors for students. You'll see how initiatives like the Ready Now 100 are transforming collaboration with families and local employers, creating pathways that are both practical and inspiring. Walk away with a framework and language you can use to strengthen family engagement in workforce readiness while ensuring students leave your system prepared for what comes next.

Amplifying Multilingual Voices: How Our High School's Parent Advisory Committee Has Evolved

Schools have always viewed students' families as vital components to student success but it is critical for schools to institute programming that encourages collaboration with families and supports ELs to manage their learning and emotions. We will examine how one school is providing this support through monthly discussions focused on content for parents and caregivers on helping

teens build skills and support teens' academic success as well as their social-emotional learning (SEL) skills.

Feel Your Best Self: Exploration of Emotion-Focused Mindsets for Leveraging Family at Home and School

This session introduces Feel Your Best Self (FYBS), a FREE toolkit that offers 12 simple, evidence-informed emotion-focused coping strategies to help strengthen emotional well-being. FYBS incorporates puppetry and allows for flexible implementation in English and Spanish. Participants will learn about the toolkit and how to use it, and they will make plans for when, where, and how to use it to support children's mental health and emotional well-being across home, school, and community.

Heal Before You Reveal: The Blueprint for Emotionally Intelligent Leadership

This session is for educators who want to master emotional intelligence to maximize partnerships with families while leading with clarity, empathy, and purpose while caring for self and others. This session also models a practical framework for settling disputes.

3:30pm-3:45pm – Exhibitor / Networking Break

3:45pm-4:45pm – Breakout Sessions

Topic	Presenter	Location
Is Your Family Engagement Inclusive? Why Dads Might Say It's Not	Keith Schumacher	Salon 5
Beyond School Walls: Reimagining Family Engagement	Dr. Lindsay Whitley	Salon 678
Fostering Employee Engagement Through Cultural Diversity	Dery Rodriguez	Shenandoah
Seeing Your Community Through a Different Lens: Poverty Escape Room Experience – Grandma Leah's Story	Angie Lynch & Desmond Keller	Salon 4
Implicit Bias and its Effects on Families	Dr. Roslyn Moffitt	Dominion
Connecting for Student Success: Tools for Your Tool Box	Dr. Everett Davis	Salon 123
Creating Engaging Parent Centers	Dr. Chiquita Seaborne, Dr. Rick Bowmaster, Katy Wilde, & Alexis Simms Miller	Madison Jefferson Monroe

Description of Sessions:

Is Your Family Engagement Inclusive? Why Dads Might Say It's Not

Providing an environment that is welcoming and inclusive for all family members is an important piece when seeking transformative family engagement at the local school level. Unfortunately, many schools miss the opportunity to be “father friendly” and unintentionally discourage large numbers of family members who could otherwise be engaged with the school. We will discuss recognizing and removing those barriers to family engagement.

Beyond School Walls: Reimagining Family Engagement

True family engagement happens far beyond the four walls of a school building. This session invites you to explore bold and innovative approaches designed to meet families where they are and provide them with the tools to support student success in the classroom and beyond. From a Family Engagement Bus that brings resources directly into neighborhoods to partnerships with trusted key communicators who serve as messengers in the community, we will share out-of-the-box efforts that are helping us build trust, break barriers and connect with every family.

Join us to discover what worked, what did not and how we are measuring impact. You will leave with practical strategies and fresh ideas to strengthen family-school partnerships, because when it comes to helping students cross the graduation stage and succeed in life, all means all.

Fostering Employee Engagement through Cultural Diversity: A Workshop on Culturally Responsive Engagement in School Communities

Discover the power of Culturally Responsive Engagement in (Schools, District) ! Join us for an enlightening session where we explore practical strategies for celebrating diverse heritages and fostering employee engagement within educational settings. Learn how embracing cultural diversity can strengthen bonds among staff, promote collaboration, and create inclusive environments where everyone feels valued and respected. Don't miss this opportunity to transform your community into a vibrant and inclusive space for learning and growth.

Seeing Your Community Through a Different Lens: Poverty Escape Room Experience – Grandma Leah's Story

Step into the shoes of someone navigating the daily realities of poverty in this immersive escape room experience. Through hands-on scenarios and reflective discussion, participants will uncover the systemic barriers families face, challenge their own assumptions, and walk away with a renewed lens for empathy, equity, and meaningful engagement.

Implicit Bias and Its Effects on Families

Have you ever looked at a person and made an assumption based on your impression of their appearance or who you thought they were. Perhaps, in that fleeting moment, your mind crafted a narrative, weaving together fragments of experience, culture, and bias - often without a single word exchanged. Unfortunately, families believe that educators do just that. Beneath those snap judgments, there is always so much more—layers of history, hope, and individuality waiting to be discovered. In this session, the presenter and attendees will discuss implicit bias and how it affects our relationships with families that we wish to partner with.

Connecting for Student Success: Tools for Your Tool Box

During this session, participants will first learn about family best practices and resources from a large suburban school district. Following the best practice sharing, participants will have an opportunity to share best practices with one another, ensuring that each of these are linked to learning. Participant best practices will be captured and archived for future use and adaptation in their local community/school district.

Creating Engaging Parent Centers

Discover how Parent Resource Centers are transforming the landscape of family engagement. In this dynamic panel discussion, leaders and practitioners will share how the Virginia Department of Education's investment and support have empowered these thriving community hubs where families connect, learn, and grow together. Hear success stories, innovative strategies, and lessons learned from centers that are breaking barriers and deepening partnerships between home and school.

4:45pm-5:00pm - Networking / Exhibits

5:00pm-6:00pm - Featured Keynote – Drs. Constantino (Ballroom)

7:15pm – Costume Networking / Awards Reception
*(*Optional) -*

Join us for an evening of fun and connection as we blend networking with the creativity of a costume party! Wearing a costume is completely optional. This special networking event invites you to unwind, network, and celebrate! Whether you arrive in a classic mask, themed attire, or simply your relaxed attire, you will enjoy an atmosphere filled with music, laughter and community spirit!



Highlights include - Live Band / Music, Photo Lounge, Appetizers

** Experience the unique culture of Richmond!!!!*

October 31, 2025 – Friday

7:15am-8:15am – Continental Breakfast (Ballroom)

8:15am-9:15am – Featured Keynote Presentation: Dr. Eric Davis (ballroom)

The Courage to Connect: Fear isn't just something families experience — educators and leaders feel it too. Whether it's the anxiety of low turnout, the worry of not being understood, or the nerves that come with parent-teacher conferences, fear often shapes how we approach engagement. Left unchecked, it creates a cycle of hesitation, avoidance, and regret that keeps schools and families from truly connecting. The Courage to Connect will challenge you to face your own fears as an educator — and give you the tools to transform them into courageous connections with families.

9:15am-9:30am – Exhibits / Networking Break

9:30am-10:30am – Breakout Sessions

Topic	Presenter	Location
The Art of De-escalating Adults in the Educational Environment	Kenneth Henry Jr.	Dominion
Beyond the School Walls: Transformative Outreach Strategies That Ignite Family Engagement and Strengthen Community Schools	Danielle Wilson Sadler & Dr. Stacy Ashton	Salon 123
The 4N's Model	Maxine Petty	Madison Jefferson Monroe
Building a Welcoming Environment for Multicultural and English Learning Families	Marylynn Coalson & Paola Gonzalez	Salon 4
Igniting the Spark: Practical Strategies for Unlocking Father Engagement	J. Michael Hall	Salon 678
The Need for Change: Tiered Strategies for Family Engagement	Lisa Williams, April Beck, & Blake Young	Salon 5
Engaging Fathers as Partners: Strategies for Equity and Impact	Dion Chavis	Shenandoah

Description of Sessions:

The Art of De-escalating Adults in the Educational Environment

This session includes opportunities for participants to find partners (preferably someone they do not know) and explore myths about de-escalation. They will be able to discuss strategies and compare ideologies regarding supporting angry stakeholders. Additionally, they will share experiences when they were at their angriest (to the extent of comfortability) to connect to the escalation process and to better understand the basis of calming strategies.

Beyond the School Walls: Transformative Outreach Strategies That Ignite Family Engagement and Strengthen Community Schools

This session explores how transformative outreach serves as a powerful driver for equity, family empowerment, and sustainable community school models. Participants will delve into outreach practices that prioritize trust, cultural responsiveness, and shared leadership—moving beyond traditional engagement efforts. Through real-life examples, data insights, and interactive reflection, the presentation highlights how intentional outreach transforms families from passive participants to active partners in student success. Attendees will leave with tools and strategies to reimagine family engagement and strengthen school-community connections through an equity-centered lens.

The 4 N's — Name, Need, Nurture, Navigate —

Designed to enhance student success by fostering a strong, inclusive community. We'll explore the power of intentionally learning and using names to build connections, discovering individual needs through authentic conversations, nurturing those needs with empathy and support, and equipping students and families with the tools to navigate challenges effectively. This session will empower participants to cultivate a sense of belonging, collaboration, and purposeful engagement within the family and community to increase student success. Whether you're a teacher, leader or community partner, this session will equip you with practical tools, reflective insight and a renewed commitment to engage with purpose. Come ready to transform how you connect with those you serve, from the inside out!

Building a Welcoming Environment for Multicultural and English Learning Families

The session will highlight the importance of cultural humility, ongoing staff training, and collaborative partnerships with families to break down systemic barriers. Attendees will gain actionable tools to strengthen family-school relationships, celebrate linguistic and cultural richness, and co-create environments where every family, regardless of background, can thrive and meaningfully participate in their children's learning journey. This session is designed for educators wishing to build an inclusive and inviting environment for families from diverse backgrounds, cultures and multilingual backgrounds. Attendees can expect to learn ways to foster inclusion and encourage family engagement.

Igniting the Spark: Practical Strategies for Unlocking Father Engagement

This dynamic session moves beyond theory to provide actionable steps for educators and program leaders to cultivate genuine father and family partnerships. Learn how to transform passive participation into active collaboration, creating a vibrant culture where fathers feel valued, heard, and empowered to contribute to student success.

The Need for Change: Tiered Strategies for Family Engagement

Participants will be encouraged to shift their thinking about relationships with families from 'that's just the way it is' to 'there has to be a better way.' Realizing that schools tend to focus time, money, and energy on intervention, the presenters will share ways they are choosing to embrace a proactive approach with families and children. The Family Support Educators will show participants components of the interactive curriculum they utilize within weekly parent groups. The presenters will share real stories and experiences from their work in family engagement. They will also explain three tiers (basic, intermediate, and advanced) for family engagement and assist participants in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of their current family engagement practices. Along with the support of the presenters, participants will be challenged to rethink the status quo. The presenters will encourage participants to leave with a deeper understanding of the importance of the school-family partnership for the success of the children. Participants will leave with evidence-based practices and research in family engagement. Participants will take away new ideas and strategies for family engagement.

Engaging Fathers as Partners:

Strategies for Equity and Impact-Fathers play a critical role in shaping student success, yet their involvement is often underutilized, particularly in underserved communities. This workshop explores research-driven, practical strategies to promote meaningful father engagement in schools. Educators will learn actionable approaches to create inclusive, welcoming environments that empower fathers to participate actively in their child's education, advancing equity and improving outcomes for all students.

10:30am-10:45am - Exhibits / Networking Break

10:45am-11:45am- Breakout Sessions

Topic	Presenter	Location
Community Based Engagement Model	Alexis Simms Miller	Salon 5
Reframing Family Engagement	Virginia Gills	Salon 4
Family Matters: Inspired Conversations to Strengthen School, Home, and Community Connections	Anthony Brown	Salon 123
Fostering Employee Engagement through Cultural Diversity: A Workshop on Culturally Responsive Engagement in School Communities	Dery Rodriguez	Madison Jefferson Monroe
Leveraging Family Engagement Funds	Terry Alston	Dominion
Seeing Your Community Through a Different Lens: Poverty Escape Room Experience – Grandma Leah's Story	Angie Lynch & Desmond Keller	Shenandoah

When Spiderwebs Unite: Strengths-Based Applications for Family & Community Engagement Using Equity-Focused Practices	Dr. Kim Burton	Salon 678
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Description of Sessions:

Community Based Engagement Model

Learn how the Community-Based Engagement Model transforms outreach into authentic, lasting partnerships. This session offers a step-by-step look at a replicable framework that builds trust, boosts capacity, and drives sustainable impact. Leave with real-world strategies to strengthen community connections and power meaningful change.

Reframing Family Engagement

Family engagement goes beyond event attendance—it's about creating meaningful, inclusive connections that reflect the diverse needs of every family. This session invites participants to rethink traditional approaches and explore how intentional, relationship-based outreach can make a lasting impact. We'll also focus on how to engage and inspire your own team in this work by strengthening internal relationships and building a shared vision. Participants will leave with actionable strategies to implement in their schools and communities that foster authentic engagement.

Family Matters: Inspired Conversations to Strengthen School, Home, and Community Connections

What if the most transformational family engagement strategy isn't a new app, flyer, or checklist—but a meaningful conversation?

This session introduces Inspired Conversations, a reflective, relationship-centered framework grounded in the book *Inspire Me Moments: Living Out Loud with No Regrets*. Led by educator and author Anthony Harris Brown, this session explores how authentic engagement that is rooted in trust, cultural responsiveness, and lived experience, can transform school-family dynamics. Participants will explore storytelling as a leadership tool, reframe events from transactional to transformational, and consider how fathers, male caregivers, and underrepresented voices can be intentionally centered in the family-school partnership. Backed by real CMSD data, field-tested tools, and the Dual Capacity-Building Framework, this session invites educators to reimagine engagement as a powerful bridge between school, home, and community.

Whether you support family partnerships, school culture, or student success, you'll leave this session re-energized and equipped to design family engagement experiences that uplift voice, value, and visibility.

Fostering Employee Engagement through Cultural Diversity: A Workshop on Culturally Responsive Engagement in School Communities

Discover the power of Culturally Responsive Engagement in (Schools, District) ! Join us for an enlightening session where we explore practical strategies for celebrating diverse heritages and fostering employee engagement within educational settings. Learn how embracing cultural diversity can strengthen bonds among staff, promote collaboration, and create inclusive environments where everyone feels valued and respected. Don't miss this opportunity to transform your community into a vibrant and inclusive space for learning and growth.

Leveraging Family Engagement Funds

Family Engagement makes sense. Research has shown that strong family engagement is closely linked to positive student outcomes. This session will explore strategies and utilization of federal dollars to enhance family engagement strategies that will identify and leverage resources effectively. In this session, attendees will strategize ways for using Federal Funds to Strengthen Family Engagement.

Seeing Your Community Through a Different Lens: Poverty Escape Room Experience – Grandma Leah's Story

Step into the shoes of someone navigating the daily realities of poverty in this immersive escape room experience. Through hands-on scenarios and reflective discussion, participants will uncover the systemic barriers families face, challenge their own assumptions, and walk away with a renewed lens for empathy, equity, and meaningful engagement.

When Spiderwebs Unite: Strengths-Based Applications for Family & Community Engagement Using Equity-Focused Practices

How can you use equity tools as a framework for effective family engagement? In this session, participants will leave with strategies grounded in Equity Focused Practices that may be utilized in daily work with students, families, and staff. Participants will leave with ideas for how to ensure that leadership is visible and is authentically embedded in the culture of the school to promote success for all.

11:45am-12:00pm - Networking Break /Exhibits

12:00pm-1:30pm - Closing Keynote - Dr. Marlon Styles (ballroom)

Special Thanks to our Amazing Sponsors / Exhibitors

GOLD

The logo for POSSIP features a blue speech bubble icon on the left, followed by the word "POSSIP" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font.

BRONZE



