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WELCOME!



Thinking BIG matters! It matters for ourselves, our students, our campus, and the community beyond our classroom walls. Join us as we think BIG, take learning to the next level, and change the world!

Every great leap in learning begins with a spark, a moment when curiosity meets courage. This year's theme, **think BIG**, is your invitation to do just that, to think beyond the ordinary, stretch your imagination, and dream up new ways to make learning come alive.

The kids who inspire us to dream, innovate, and grow are counting on us! This immersive event isn't just a conference, it's a space to connect, collaborate, and re-energize.

It's a time for teams to **inspire, challenge, and reshape perspectives**; to learn *with* and *from* each other; and to **play with ideas** that move learning forward.

Over the next couple of days, you'll explore a dynamic mix of sessions and conversations, hear stories from educators who are making BIG change happen, and discover fresh ways to lead learning with purpose and heart.

Whether you're a campus leader seeking new strategies or a teacher eager to reimagine instruction, we invite you to **think BIG** in sessions, in conversations, and even around the firepit.

So, let's step into the magic that happens when we pause the busyness of our everyday work to **learn, imagine, and play together**. Have the conversations. Ask the questions. Share the laughter.

Kids deserve educators like you, brave enough to be bold, curious enough to wonder, and inspired enough to **think BIG!**

Welcome to the adventure.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



eduphoria!



free wifi

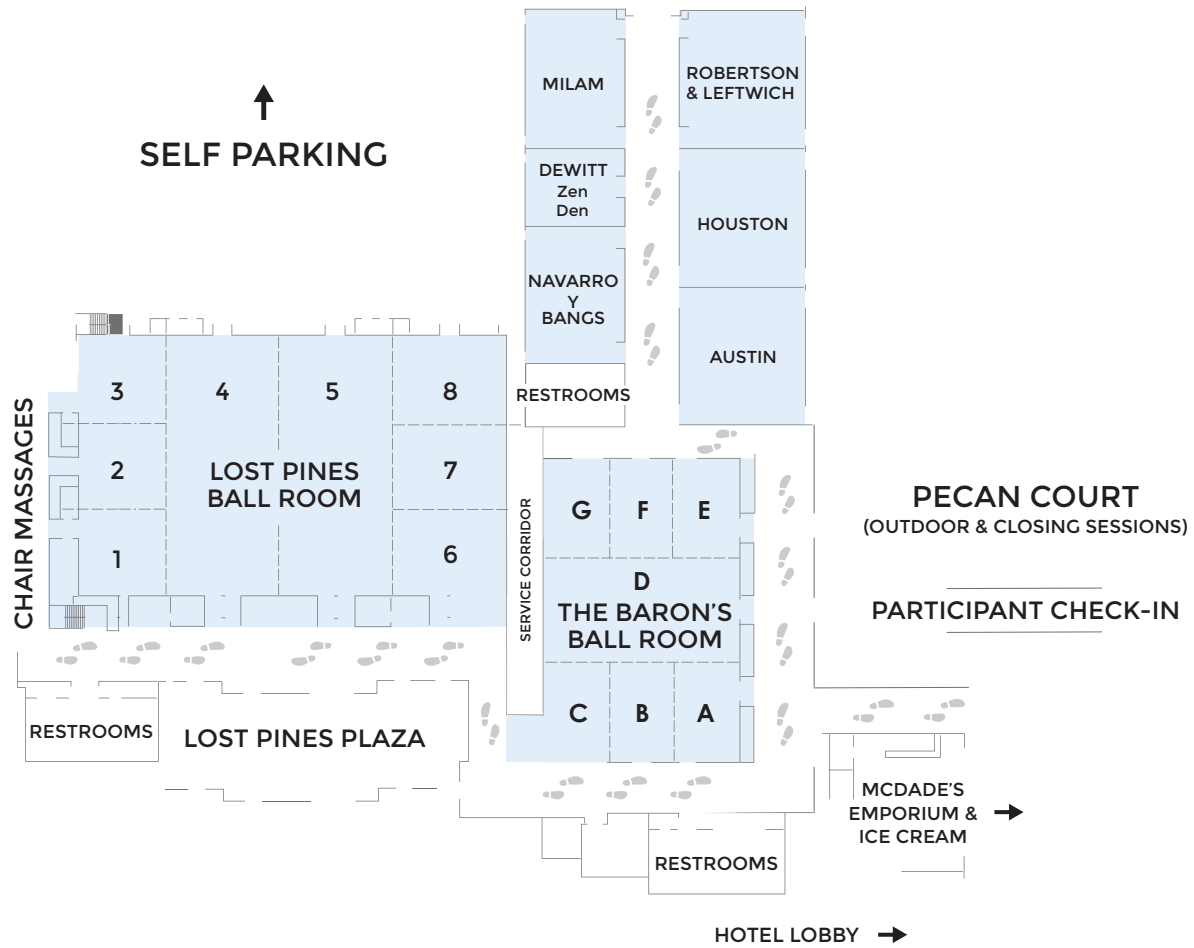
connect to network: lead4ward
and enter password: thinkbig

connect with us



@lead4ward #think25

VENUE LAYOUT



HIGHLIGHTS

- spotlight session - wednesday at 11:15 AM
- reception on riversong lawn with PDA - wednesday at 4:30 PM
- breakfast - thursday from 7:30 - 8:30 AM

SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

| preconference | tuesday, december 2 |
|--------------------|--|
| 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM | preconference check-in (baron's hallway) |
| 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM | preconference - being the leader your new teachers need! (baron's ABC) |
| 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM | preconference - lead4ward 101 (baron's EFG) |
| 3:30 PM - 6:00 PM | participant check-in (pecan court) |

| day 1 | wednesday, december 3 |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| 7:30 AM - 8:30 AM | participant check-in (pecan court) |
| 8:30 AM - 9:45 AM | keynote (lost pines ballroom) |
| 9:45 AM - 10:15 AM | playground |
| 10:15 AM - 11:05 AM | session 1 |
| 11:15 AM - 11:45 AM | spotlight session |
| 11:05 AM - 1:05 PM | lunch on your own |
| 1:05 PM - 1:55 PM | session 2 |
| 1:55 PM - 2:25 PM | playground |
| 2:25 PM - 3:15 PM | session 3 |
| 4:30 PM - 6:30 PM | reception (riversong lawn) |

| day 2 | thursday, december 4 |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 7:30 AM - 8:30 AM | breakfast provided (lost pines foyer) |
| 8:30 AM - 9:20 AM | session 4 |
| 9:20 AM - 9:50 AM | playground |
| 9:50 AM - 10:40 AM | session 5 |
| 10:40 AM - 11:10 AM | playground |
| 11:10 AM - 12:00 PM | session 6 |
| 12:15 PM - 1:00 PM | closing (pecan court) |



go mobile!
download our conference app

BUT WAIT THERE'S MORE

Everyone is invited to a reception featuring PDA!

wednesday - 4:30pm to 6:30pm
on the riversong lawn
don't forget your "color" costume!
let's paint the night BIG with all the colors!



Furry Love

research has proven that
animal synergy dramatically
reduces stress and anxiety

be on the lookout for furry friends



Chair Massages!

lost pines 123 hallway



relax and recharge
with a chair massage

sponsored by
OnDataSuite

Photo Ops

strike a pose
with your peeps in the
celebrity corner and photo kiosks



sponsored by
GREAT MINDS

Zen Den

a calming space to relax,
recharge, and refocus
throughout the conference

Discounts

10% off on LCRA activities
(e.g., sunset float, kayaking, zip line)
10% off on spa treatments
call 512.308.1234

**STOP
BY**

Product Table

check out the thinkalong toolkits,
mathmark, field guides, sorting cards,
books, and more!

Lunch Option

discounted buffet lunch for
conference participants at

Heartwood House

WEDNESDAY SESSIONS

| | session 1 10:15 am - 11:05 am | session 2 1:05 pm - 1:55 pm | session 3 2:25 pm - 3:15 pm |
|----------------------|---|--|--|
| Lost Pines 1, 2, 3 | Leading with Clarity: Navigating IMRA and HQIM Implementation Todd Davis, Texas Education Agency | From Insight to Impact: BIG Thinking in Leadership Coaching Megan Humphrey & Jennifer Paden, Rockwall ISD | Accountability Now John Fessenden, lead4ward |
| Lost Pines 4 & 5 | 11:15 am - 11:45 am From D to A: Turning Challenges into Change at Turner Elementary Michelle Hall, Willis ISD & Clee Upchurch & Stephanie Zelenak, lead4ward | | |
| Lost Pines 6, 7, 8 | Engaging Learners Brad Gibson, lead4ward | Talk It Out, Write It Down: 5 Strategies That Elevate Discourse and Writing in HQIM Classrooms Jessica Gore & Rachael Lewis, Snyder ISD | Leadership Moves That Matter Sophia Acevedo, lead4ward |
| Baron's A, B, C | | Small Feedback for BIG Results Jolynn Meade-Ibarra, Taylor ISD | One Size Doesn't Fit All: Thinking BIG about Access to the Math HQIMs Kim O'Neal & Kathy Clapsaddle, lead4ward |
| Baron's D | Digging Deeper into Reading Language Arts with the PLC Cycle and Genre Studies Alison Jalufka, Liberty Hill ISD | | Coaching Mentors Help New Teachers Think BIG! Keli Soliz, lead4ward |
| Baron's E, F, G | AI in Action: Empowering Principals to Lead Smarter, Not Harder Shanta' Creeks, Houston ISD | If Only There Were a Manual: Creating User Guides for Leadership Success Kirsten Hund, Adrienne Williams & Kenisha Coburn, The Holdsworth Center | From the TIP to the Top: An Elementary School's Journey Duy Nguyen & Kevin Morrison, Nederland ISD |
| Navarro y Bangs | Think BIG: Reimagining Professional Learning Through Choice, Voice, and Vision Jennifer Penton & Brooke Doughtie, Rockwall ISD | BIG Synergy: AI Meets Analog John Wilks, Midland ISD | Power Up for Progress: A Rally for Growth and Grit Jade Jackson, Sharnelia Johnson, Melissa Fuertes & Nekenisha Brand Humble ISD |
| Austin | Teach the Thinking, Not Just the Math Kelli Ferguson, Port Arthur ISD | Bringing It All Together: Curriculum, Assessment, and Teacher Growth Doni Cash, Eduphoria | Understanding the BIG impact of Content and Language Supports Kimberly Pena, Hays CISD |
| Houston | From Numbers to Next Steps: Activating Data Walls in Secondary PLCs Ashley Marquez, Alvin ISD | Blending Science in 3D: Using Station Rotations, the 5Es, and 3D Learning to Empower and Engage Caitlin Couch, Ector County ISD | BIG Thinking Starts With "What If?" Diane Mallard, Connie Schaut, Laurie Jack & Elissa Griffin Humble ISD |
| Robertson & Leftwich | BIG Impact: Mentors That Multiply Jennifer Roach & Holli Malloy, Galena Park ISD | Bingo: BIG Ideas, BIG Wins! Terri Taylor, Brittany Ellis, Rebecca Nix, Carla Rogers & Marjorie Pineada Shepherd ISD | Think BIG, Teach Smart: High-Impact Phonics Instruction That Builds Confident Readers in PK-2 Jennifer Penton, Rockwall ISD |
| Milam | Alexa in the Special Education Classroom Emillie Armstrong, Dickinson ISD | Under Construction: Rebuilding Social Studies in Texas Jodi Denton, lead4ward | Get in Touch with the Bill of Rights Jodi Denton, lead4ward |
| Outdoor Session | | BIG Dreams Kathleen Moore, Garland ISD | Play BIG, Learn BIG Heather Self, Belton ISD |

THURSDAY SESSIONS

| | session 4 8:30 am - 9:20 am | session 5 9:50 am - 10:40 am | session 6 11:10 am - 12:00 pm |
|-----------------------|---|---|---|
| Lost Pines 1, 2, 3 | Surviving the 89th: A Principal's Guide to Political Mayhem Mark Terry, TEPSA | The lead4ward Thinkalongs for Loopbacks That Land! Stephanie Zelenak, lead4ward & Gigi Laspada, El Paso ISD | You Don't Have to Change Everything to Change Everything! Michelle Hall, Willis ISD |
| Lost Pines 6, 7, 8 | Think BIG, Act Bold: Decoding Data to Drive Achievement for All Elissa Griffin, Diane Mallard, Connie Schaut, & Laurie Jack, Humble ISD | It's All About the Growth! Lindsay Duhon, Crystal Hamrick, Kelly Champeau & Sandi Davis, Lampasas ISD | Math Thinkalong Toolkits: Warm-Ups That Work Abby Loggains, lead4ward |
| Baron's A, B, C | From Fixed to Flourishing: Unlocking BIG Potential with a Growth Mindset in Math Jennifer Paden & Megan Humphrey, Rockwall ISD | Think, Talk, Solve! Melanie Gonzales, Humble ISD | Help New Teachers See BIG, Run BIG, and DO BIG Stefani Spoon, Richardson ISD & Keli Soliz, lead4ward |
| Baron's D | Let's Get It WRITE! Gayla Wiggins, lead4ward | Maximizing Classroom Walls: An Interactive Approach to Word Walls and Anchor Charts Brittney Ainsworth, Galena Park ISD | Feedback That Fuels Writing Growth Jennifer Brewer, Dickinson ISD |
| Baron's E, F, G | How to Energize Every Meeting: Go BIG (Bold, Innovative, and Gutsy)! Holli Malloy, Galena Park ISD | Focus on the Essential Standard in the PLC Cycle and Data Collection Alison Jalufka, Liberty Hill ISD | From Data to Breakthrough: Thinking BIG with lead4ward Field Guides Hollye Walker & Tessa Stinson, Midlothian ISD |
| Navarro y Bangs | | Say Less, Explore More: Let Sensemaking Lead the Way Laurie Jack, Diane Mallard, Connie Schaut & Elissa Griffin, Humble ISD | BIG Talk: Sparking Bold Conversations in the Secondary Classroom Candice Adcock, Mesquite ISD |
| Austin | STAAR4ward Science Jennie Ramsey, lead4ward | New ELPS, New Era: Language + Learning on a New Beat Celina Meraz, lead4ward | Intervention with Intention: A Framework for Special Educators to Think BIG April Greathouse, Grand Prairie ISD & Kathy Clapsaddle, lead4ward |
| Houston | Think BIG with AI: A Roundtable Conversation John Fessenden, Alex Kavich & Wade Labay lead4ward; Shanta' Creeks, Houston ISD; John Wilks, Midland ISD | Engaging Learners: A Roundtable Conversation Brad Gibson, Jodi Denton, Kim O'Neal, Celina Meraz & Clee Upchurch, lead4ward | Phenomenal 3D Coaching: Empowering Science Teachers to Implement the New TEKS Andrea Alvarado, Pflugerville ISD |
| Robertson & Leftwich | Feedback Loops for Mastery Martha Gomez, Galena Park ISD | | Data on Fire: Using lead4ward Reports in DMAC to Spark Student Growth Natalie Woods & Crysten Millican, DMAC Region 7 |
| Milam | Teachers Have PLCs ... What About Leaders? Emily Fraser, Georgetown ISD | BIG Behaviors Call for Bigger Connections Laurie Wilks & John Wilks, Midland ISD | "I used to hate math, but now I love it." Lindsey Moore, Conroe ISD |

SESSION 1 DESCRIPTIONS

WEDNESDAY, December 3

10:15 - 11:05



Leading with Clarity: Navigating IMRA and HQIM Implementation

Lost Pines 1, 2, 3

Todd Davis, Texas Education Agency

How do we move from *knowing* about HQIM to *leveraging* it for real instructional impact?

This session for instructional leaders strengthens alignment and strategy around high-quality instructional materials (HQIM). We'll establish a shared understanding of key terminology; explore past, current, and upcoming IMRA cycles; and review the Bluebonnet Learning portfolio of current and planned instructional materials. We'll also focus on identifying the ideal conditions for effective HQIM implementation, equipping leaders with the knowledge and tools to drive consistent, high-impact instructional practices across their systems.

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, teachers, instructional coaches, special educators, teacher leaders



Engaging Learners

Lost Pines 6, 7, 8

Brad Gibson, lead4ward

Let's look at why some kids don't like school and what we can do about it.

Move from teacher-centered instruction with passive, bored students to exciting, engaging instruction where students move, do the talking, comprehend content, correct mistakes, and deepen connections. Get ready to move, interact, and have lots of fun as we rehearse activities that engage students to learn academic vocabulary, analyze complex visuals, comprehend difficult text, and THINK! TALK! WRITE! You'll be able to use the strategies we practice in the session with students the very next day!

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, teachers, instructional coaches, special educators, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: instructional strategies playlist

lead4ward instructional strategies: multiple



Digging Deeper into Reading Language Arts with the PLC Cycle and Genre Studies

Baron's D

Alison Jalufka, Liberty Hill ISD

How can collaborative teams think BIG by using the PLC cycle to create intentional, impactful RLA instruction that drives student growth?

We'll explore how to leverage the power of the PLC cycle to transform RLA instruction. We'll examine how unpacking essential standards and aligning them with intentional data collection can guide instructional decisions and enhance student outcomes. Through the lens of genre studies, we'll dive into the critical role sentence stems play in scaffolding student thinking and writing. Discover how collaborative teams can think BIG by making strategic moves in RLA that are grounded in the PLC process.

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, rla teachers, instructional coaches, special educators, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: instructional strategies playlist, IQ released items tool

lead4ward instructional strategies: Dance it – Chance it

SESSION 1 DESCRIPTIONS

WEDNESDAY, December 3

10:15 - 11:05



AI in Action: Empowering Principals to Lead Smarter, Not Harder

Baron's E, F, G
Shanta' Creeks, Houston ISD

What if artificial intelligence could be your most effective leadership partner by helping you think faster, plan smarter, and coach stronger?

Explore how school leaders can leverage AI to transform instruction, streamline planning, and enhance teacher coaching. Learn how to upload lesson plans for instant, rubric-aligned feedback; generate targeted reteach strategies; and build effective walkthrough-to-coaching systems. Whether you're new to AI or ready to go deeper, you'll leave with ready-to-use prompts and leadership workflows that save time and strengthen your impact. Thinking BIG with AI can lead to smarter leadership, more focused instruction, and stronger outcomes for students and staff!

audience: elementary and secondary principals

lead4ward resources highlighted: instructional strategies playlist

lead4ward instructional strategies: Which One Doesn't Belong?



Think BIG: Reimagining Professional Learning Through Choice, Voice, and Vision

Navarro y Bangs
Jennifer Penton & Brooke Doughtie, Rockwall ISD

How can we transform professional learning into an experience that energizes, equips, and elevates every educator?

We'll think BIG and reimagine PD through a conference-style model for educators that offers voice, variety, and visionary practice using multiple track offerings, limitless growth opportunities, and one bold vision.

audience: elementary and secondary principals, teachers, instructional coaches, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: instructional strategies playlist, snapshots

lead4ward instructional strategies: Total Recall



Teach the Thinking, Not Just the Math

Austin
Kelli Ferguson, Port Arthur ISD

How can we empower students to become strategic thinkers, not just answer seekers?

Discover how the lead4ward thinkalong routine aligns with the Technical Reading Strategy to build confident, strategic problem solvers. Students move from visual analysis to solving and justifying multi-step problems using a clear, repeatable process: MMM Statement, Key Facts, Model, Solve, and Justify. You'll leave with practical tools, classroom examples, and a simple framework that promotes collaboration and STAAR readiness. Join us to see how small shifts in instruction can lead to BIG thinking and even bigger results!

audience: elementary and secondary math teachers

lead4ward resources highlighted: instructional strategies playlist, IQ released items tool, thinkalong toolkits

lead4ward instructional strategies: Think-Pair-Share

SESSION 1 DESCRIPTIONS

WEDNESDAY, December 3

10:15 - 11:05



From Numbers to Next Steps: Activating Data Walls in Secondary PLCs

Houston

Ashley Marquez, Alvin ISD

How can we design and implement data walls that empower secondary teachers so they see the value, not just the workload?

Too often in secondary schools, data feels like something done to teachers instead of something that works for them. Explore how leaders can encourage PLCs to use data walls to track student performance, foster collaboration, and drive meaningful instructional decisions that support every learner's growth. Learn what an effective data wall looks like, how to select the right data, and how to create a process teachers believe in because it makes their work easier and more impactful. Leave with real examples and a clear plan for making data walls both practical and powerful!

audience: secondary district leaders, principals, instructional coaches, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: data tools, principal field guides

lead4ward instructional strategies: Would You Rather



BIG Impact: Mentors That Multiply

Robertson & Leftwich

Jennifer Roach & Holli Malloy, Galena Park ISD

What if mentoring on your campus wasn't just a program, but a think BIG mindset, fueled by monthly collaboration and lead4ward resources, that consistently grows leaders and transforms new teacher development?

We'll share how we developed a 10-month plan that empowers campus mentors to lead, not just support. Each month, mentors attend district-led training and return to their campuses equipped to guide new teachers with relevant, ready-to-use resources. The result? A scalable, sustainable system that builds consistency across campuses while strengthening leadership. Walk away with a template, tools, and the confidence to think BIG about what your mentors and new teachers can become.

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, instructional coaches, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: instructional strategies playlist, quickchecks, teacher induction materials

lead4ward instructional strategies: Total Recall, Yet to Yes



Alexa in the Special Education Classroom

Milam

Emillie Armstrong, Dickinson ISD

How can a simple voice assistant like Alexa transform learning by promoting independence, accessibility, and engagement for special education students?

Thinking BIG in education sometimes starts with something small, like placing an Alexa in the classroom. For special education, this isn't just a tech upgrade; it's a powerful shift toward inclusion and empowerment. Alexa breaks barriers by responding equally to every voice, fostering independence, supporting language development, and building confidence through structured reminders and routines. For second language learners and students with communication challenges, she provides consistent, judgment-free opportunities to practice and grow. Even as a reward, she motivates. Thinking BIG means reimagining what inclusion looks like; and sometimes, it sounds just like Alexa.

audience: elementary and secondary teachers, instructional coaches, special educators, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: data tools, instructional strategies playlist, scaffolds, sorting cards, thinking stems

lead4ward instructional strategies: Think and Throw

SPOTLIGHT SESSION DESCRIPTION

WEDNESDAY, December 3

11:15 - 11:45



From D to A: Turning Challenges into Change at Turner Elementary

Lost Pines 4 & 5

Michelle Hall, Willis ISD

Clee Upchurch & Stephanie Zelenak, lead4ward

Turner Elementary didn't wait for change, they led it. With purposeful leadership and a commitment to instructional alignment, they transformed a struggling campus into a model of academic growth. Be part of this powerful discussion and stay for an open Q&A to deepen the dialogue. Walk away inspired with practical ideas to strengthen culture, increase student engagement, and sustain a growth mindset across your campus.

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, teachers, instructional coaches, special educators, teacher leaders

SESSION 2 DESCRIPTIONS

WEDNESDAY, December 3

1:05 - 1:55



From Insight to Impact: BIG Thinking in Leadership Coaching

Lost Pines 1, 2, 3

Megan Humphrey & Jennifer Penton, Rockwall ISD

What if every coaching conversation not only clarified practice but transformed student achievement?

Explore how strategic coaching, grounded in the Get Better Faster framework, can drive lasting change in instructional practices. Learn how we made BIG changes in our feedback practices to coach up our instructional coaches and administrative teams. We'll challenge coaches and administrators to think beyond quick fixes and instead build a culture of deep, measurable growth starting with one powerful insight at a time within themselves.

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, instructional coaches, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: instructional strategies playlist, thinking stems

lead4ward instructional strategies: Pair-Square-Share, Rise and Shine



Talk It Out, Write It Down: 5 Strategies That Elevate Discourse and Writing in HQIM Classrooms

Lost Pines 6, 7, 8

Jessica Gore & Rachael Lewis, Snyder ISD

How can we intentionally use talk to fuel writing and make engagement manageable in every HQIM-aligned classroom?

What if engagement wasn't "one more thing," but the bridge between content and cognition? Join Snyder ISD teachers as they model the Top 5 lead4ward strategies that spark academic talk and writing using HQIMs (like Bluebonnet). Explore how simple, high-impact moves can elevate student voice, deepen thinking, and strengthen writing without burning out teachers. Walk away with a ready-to-use toolkit of materials, highly engaging instructional tools, and ideas for bold classroom moves that leverage student learning. It's time to think BIG about engagement – not as a buzzword, but as the key to helping every student think deeply, speak clearly, and write boldly.

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, teachers, instructional coaches, special educators, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: instructional strategies playlist

lead4ward instructional strategies: Think and Throw, Café Conversations, Musical Mix-Freeze-Group, Cut Apart, Topic Blast



Small Feedback for BIG Results

Baron's A, B, C

Jolynn Meade-Ibarra, Taylor ISD

How can small, bite-sized feedback create BIG results in student success?

Discover how to use the GBF observation and feedback protocol to drive BIG student gains and strong teacher buy-in. Learn how bite-sized, specific feedback paired with practice and follow-up helps teachers sharpen their craft and spark student success. Walk away with practical tools to build a culture of BIG growth, BIG confidence, and BIG results across your campus!

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, instructional coaches

lead4ward resources highlighted: instructional strategies playlist, thinking stems

lead4ward instructional strategies: Balloon Bop, Connect the Dots

SESSION 2 DESCRIPTIONS

WEDNESDAY, December 3

1:05 - 1:55



If Only There Were a Manual: Creating User Guides for Leadership Success

Baron's E, F, G

Kirsten Hund, Adrienne Williams & Kenisha Coburn, The Holdsworth Center

What if every leader came with a user manual?

Explore how creating personal “user manuals” can accelerate trust, improve communication, and strengthen team dynamics. Learn how principals and leadership teams are using this simple, powerful tool to clarify working styles, expectations, and values. Walk away with your own draft and a plan to implement this practice with your team!

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, teachers, instructional coaches, teacher leaders



BIG Synergy: AI Meets Analog

Navarro Y Bangs

John Wilks, Shepherd ISD

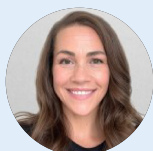
How can we blend the power of AI with the tools and strategies we already know and love?

Adding AI into our lesson planning and delivery doesn't mean putting students on Chromebooks all day. Learn how to blend AI tools with lead4ward resources to create powerful learning experiences!

audience: elementary and secondary teachers, instructional coaches, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: instructional strategies playlist, student learning reports, think it up

lead4ward instructional strategies: Choose and Chat



Bringing It All Together: Curriculum, Assessment, and Teacher Growth

Austin

Doni Cash, Eduphoria

What if you could easily bring data together to reveal how teachers are planning, what's being delivered instructionally, and how students are performing?

Rather than reacting to the ever-changing instructional needs within a school district, this session helps instructional leaders shift from a reactive to a proactive approach. Learn how to triangulate data through scope and sequence audits, classroom observations, and student performance to better understand instructional impact and guide purposeful coaching decisions.

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, instructional coaches

lead4ward resources highlighted: data tools, instructional strategies playlist

SESSION 2 DESCRIPTIONS

WEDNESDAY, December 3

1:05 - 1:55



Blending Science in 3D: Using Station Rotations, the 5Es, and 3D Learning to Empower and Engage

Houston

Caitlin Couch, Ector County ISD

Ready to evolve science instruction in your district?

Join this interactive session to explore how the Station Rotation Model, 5E Instructional Model, and Three Dimensions of Science Instruction work together to transform learning. Discover how this blended approach supports student voice, choice, and engagement through multiple modalities and perspectives. Leave with insights, tools, and strategies to design blended, TEKS-aligned instruction and empower learners through flexible, meaningful, and multidimensional science experiences.

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, science teachers, instructional coaches, special educators, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: data tools, instructional strategies playlist, IQ released items tool, science side-by-sides, teacher field guides

lead4ward instructional strategies: Odd One Out, Nine Squares



Bingo: BIG Ideas, BIG Wins!

Robertson & Leftwich

Terri Taylor, Brittany Ellis, Rebecca Nix, Carla Rogers & Marjorie Pineada, Shepherd ISD

Unlock the potential of every learner by expanding your instructional toolkit!

Explore a variety of high-impact instructional strategies through a dynamic Bingo challenge designed for diverse learning environments. Discover how this fun, competitive approach has been used across campuses to boost student engagement and inspire BIG wins in teaching and learning!

audience: elementary and secondary teachers, instructional coaches, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: instructional strategies playlist

lead4ward instructional strategies: Fact or Fib Showdown, Vote With Your Feet, One Minute Paper, Café Conversations, Play it - Say it



Under Construction: Rebuilding Social Studies in Texas

Milam

Jodi Denton, lead4ward

What steps can districts take now to prepare for the next era of social studies?

From framework updates to new standards, social studies in Texas is undergoing major renovation. Come see what's being redesigned, who's at the drafting table, and how educators can prepare for what's next!

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, social studies teachers, instructional coaches, special educators, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: snapshots

lead4ward instructional strategies: Connect the Dots, Jig Saw "Sell"



BIG Dreams

Outdoor Session

Kathleen Moore, Garland ISD

What bold, brilliant dreams are your students reaching for? How do your students measure success?

We'll discuss how to help students think through their BIG dreams and scaffold stepping stones to achieving their goals. Participants will leave with a lesson plan format for a PBL around life goal setting and career planning. We'll also share relational capacity activities to build trust with students so they can be vulnerable enough to share their BIG dreams.

audience: elementary and secondary teachers, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: emergent bilingual, instructional strategies playlist, think it up

lead4ward instructional strategies: Fact or Fib Showdown, Mind Bender

SESSION 3 DESCRIPTIONS

WEDNESDAY, December 3

2:25 - 3:15



Accountability Now

Lost Pines 1, 2, 3

John Fessenden, lead4ward

Students generally move from grade to grade ... but the real question is: Are they GROWING? Are they making one year's growth for one year of instruction?

In the A-F Accountability system, #growthwins! The question is, what is "growth" and how, exactly, is growth measured or determined? We'll explore the Academic Growth measure as defined and used in the A-F Accountability system. Learn how focusing on growth is about #mastersstaymasters and #30for30. Growth can transform classroom instruction and support student learning and student success! Growth: IT'S WHAT WE DO!

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, teachers, instructional coaches, special educators, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: quicklooks

lead4ward instructional strategies: Pick Up the Slip Up



Leadership Moves That Matter

Lost Pines 6, 7, 8

Sophia Acevedo, lead4ward

What if we could distill great leadership into three power moves to kick off the spring semester with hope and urgency?

We'll focus on three leadership moves designed to make a BIG impact: using the master schedule to prioritize planning and support, focusing on the process standards to raise instructional quality, and asking the right questions to build teacher confidence with discipline. We can foster hope and urgency at the same time when we learn to make space for what matters most! See how these moves help leaders lead with purpose, build momentum, and stay in rhythm.

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, teachers

lead4ward resources highlighted: principal field guides

lead4ward instructional strategies: Café Conversations



One Size Doesn't Fit All: Thinking BIG about Access to the Math HQIMs

Baron's A, B, C

Kim O'Neal & Kathy Clapsaddle, lead4ward

How can we leverage math HQIMs to ensure all learners can access the standards in ways that are effective and sustainable for teachers?

High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIMs) in math are designed to align with all grade-level TEKS, reflect strong instructional research, and provide some support for diverse learners. Yet even the most comprehensive materials can fall short of meeting every learner's needs in every context. In this interactive session, we'll explore three evidence-based, high-impact intervention strategies that can be seamlessly integrated into commonly used math HQIMs. Through hands-on exploration of HQIM examples, you'll think BIG about how and where these strategies can make the greatest difference. Leave with practical tools to start building your own intervention toolbox and a sharper lens for identifying and leveraging the strengths already built into HQIMs.

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, teachers, instructional coaches, special educators, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: instructional strategies playlist

lead4ward instructional strategies: Mind Bender, Rise & Shine, Café Conversations

SESSION 3 DESCRIPTIONS

WEDNESDAY, December 3

2:25 - 3:15



Coaching Mentors Help New Teachers Think BIG!

Baron's D
Keli Soliz, lead4ward

How can mentors balance direct guidance with collaboration to help new teachers grow into confident, independent thinkers?

Mentors play a pivotal role in helping new teachers think beyond daily survival toward BIG-picture growth. Explore effective communication strategies and the levels of directness and collaboration mentors can use to meet new teachers where they are. Reflect on when to step in with clear direction, when to guide with questions, and how to build trust that encourages new teachers to think BIG and for themselves. Walk away with practical tools to strengthen mentoring conversations and empower new teachers to do the BIG thinking that drives long-term success!

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, teachers, instructional coaches, special educators, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: instructional strategies playlist, quickchecks, teacher induction materials

lead4ward instructional strategies: Rise and Shine, Would you Rather



From the TIP to the Top: An Elementary School's Journey

Baron's E, F, G
Duy Nguyen & Kevin Morrison, Nederland ISD

How can simple changes lead to massive improvement in accountability and student success?

Discover how Hillcrest Elementary transformed its academic success by implementing key changes to the structure and culture of the school. By thinking BIG, Hillcrest set a goal to rise from being the lowest-performing school in the district, required to submit a Targeted Improvement Plan, to becoming the top school in the district. Within just a few years, these intentional changes propelled Hillcrest to not only lead the district but also become the top-performing school in the region.

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, teachers, instructional coaches, special educators, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: data tools

lead4ward instructional strategies: Think and Throw



Power Up for Progress: A Rally for Growth and Grit

Navarro y Bangs
Jade Jackson, Sharnelia Johnson, Melissa Fuertes & Nekenisha Brand, Humble ISD

In what ways can we celebrate effort, growth, and resilience – not just scores?

Let's shift the focus from test pressure to student empowerment. Through department-specific data, targeted workbooks, and joyful celebration, we'll explore how to encourage effort, highlight growth, and recognize resilience during STAAR prep. Instructional teams will reflect on progress, share successful strategies, and plan intentional ways to motivate all learners – especially those who need it most. With music, prizes, and school spirit, this isn't just PD, it's a rally for the work that matters most. Come ready to celebrate students, energize your team, and power up for the final stretch!

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, teachers, instructional coaches, special educators, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: frequency distribution, instructional strategies playlist, IQ released items tool, teacher field guides

lead4ward instructional strategies: Ball Toss Boogie, Summary Salad

SESSION 3 DESCRIPTIONS

WEDNESDAY, December 3

2:25 - 3:15



Understanding the BIG Impact of Content and Language Supports

Austin

Kimberly Pena, Hays CISD

How can we make curriculum content accessible and equitable for all students?

Explore a common understanding of the BIG impact content and language supports can have in your classroom. Learn what these powerful supports are, how they vary by content area, and all the ways they can benefit your students. We'll dig deep into how they're used in each content area and how that can inform instruction. Enrich your classroom with these powerful tools!

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, teachers, instructional coaches, special educators, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: emergent bilingual, IQ released items tool, literacy central, scaffolds

lead4ward instructional strategies: Card Sort, Think and Throw, 3-2-1 Summary



BIG Thinking Starts With "What If?"

Houston

Diane Mallard, Connie Schaut, Laurie Jack & Elissa Griffin, Humble ISD

How can we use curiosity as the launchpad for SEP-driven investigations that turn viral moments into meaningful science?

Tap into student curiosity using TikToks, YouTube Shorts, and viral science demos to launch hands-on inquiry. We'll model how trending media can inspire students to test claims, design investigations, and engage with the Science and Engineering Practices. Instead of following a set path, students explore and learn through discovery. Experience low-prep, high-engagement strategies that shift learners from passive viewers to active scientists. Leave with a fresh mindset for turning everyday wonders into moments of deep science learning.

audience: elementary and secondary science teachers, instructional coaches, special educators

lead4ward resources highlighted: instructional strategies playlist, think it up

lead4ward instructional strategies: Nine Squares, 3-2-1 Summary



Think BIG, Teach Smart: High-Impact Phonics Instruction That Builds Confident Readers in PreK-2

Robertson & Leftwich

Jennifer Penton, Rockwall ISD

What if the way we teach phonics, not just what we teach, was the key to unlocking decoding success?

Explore how a systematic phonics instructional progression, paired with purposeful strategies, empowers PreK-2 teachers to build confident, capable readers.

audience: pk-2 district leaders, principals, rla teachers, instructional coaches, special educators, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: instructional strategies playlist, snapshots

lead4ward instructional strategies: Thought Bubbles

SESSION 3 DESCRIPTIONS

WEDNESDAY, December 3

2:25 - 3:15



Get in Touch with the Bill of Rights

Milam

Jodi Denton, lead4ward

How might students' understanding of the Bill of Rights change if they could apply it in multiple contexts?

We'll take a hands-on approach to learning about the Bill of Rights using artifacts, images, and primary source text. Let's go beyond memorization and move to application!

audience: elementary and secondary social studies teachers, instructional coaches, special educators, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: socialstudies+

lead4ward instructional strategies: Card Sort, Mystery Bag



Play BIG, Learn BIG

Outdoor Session

Heather Self, Belton ISD

How do you use the playlist to play BIG and learn BIG?

We'll use the instructional strategies playlist to engage with activities for K-5 math and reading. Get ready to move and play BIG!

audience: elementary teachers

lead4ward resources highlighted: instructional strategies playlist, teacher learning reports

lead4ward instructional strategies: Think and Throw, Ball Toss Boogie, Texas Two-Step, Positive Pings, Card Sort, Word Whack, Tic Tac Tally, Mystery Bag, IQ Slap Down, Balloon Bop, Dance It – Chance It, Insta-GRAPHIC

SESSION 4 DESCRIPTIONS

THURSDAY, December 4

8:30 - 9:20



Surviving the 89th: A Principal's Guide to Political Mayhem

Lost Pines 1, 2, 3
Mark Terry, TEPSA

When policy gets political, how do you keep leadership personal?

After a raucous, contentious 89th Texas Legislative session, it's time to take a hard look at how principals are left to deal with the myriad of bills that passed. Many of the legislative decisions will directly impact the children of the school you lead, the communities in which you live, and the professionals you lead. If you're looking for the politically correct discussion of our elected officials, "this isn't the one for you." Let's have some fun!

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, teachers, instructional coaches, special educators, teacher leaders



Think BIG, Act Bold: Decoding Data to Drive Achievement for All

Lost Pines 6, 7, 8
Elissa Griffin, Diane Mallard, Connie Schaut, & Laurie Jack, Humble ISD

In a world where every student's potential matters, how can we use data to decode thinking patterns and drive growth for all learners?

Think BIG by leveraging student data to close learning gaps while challenging every learner to reach beyond their current abilities. By decoding the patterns in student thinking and responses, you'll gain insights to adjust instruction in real time, offering tailored support for struggling students and meaningful extensions for those ready to go further. Learn how to make high-impact strategies low-floor and high-ceiling, ensuring accessibility for all learners. Key takeaway: We don't teach to where students currently are but to where we want them to grow. Walk away with actionable strategies to build an inclusive, engaging classroom where every student thrives.

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, teachers, instructional coaches, special educators, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: data tools, instructional strategies playlist, IQ released items tool, think it up, thinking stems

lead4ward instructional strategies: Card Sort, Thinking Inside-Outside the Box



From Fixed to Flourishing: Unlocking BIG Potential with a Growth Mindset in Math

Baron's A, B, C
Jennifer Paden & Megan Humphrey, Rockwall ISD

What happens when we stop asking who's "good at math" and start believing that every student can grow, thrive, and flourish?

We'll explore how cultivating a growth mindset can transform student engagement and achievement in mathematics. Too often, fixed beliefs like "I'm not a math person" limit potential. We'll challenge that mindset and offer research-based strategies to build math classrooms that value mistakes; promote persistence; and develop confident, capable learners. Gain tools to shift classroom language and practice, fostering a culture of curiosity and resilience. Come ready to think BIG and leave empowered to help every student move from fixed to flourishing in math.

audience: elementary and secondary math teachers, instructional coaches, special educators, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: instructional strategies playlist, think it up, thinking stems

lead4ward instructional strategies: Café Conversations, 3-2-1 Summary

SESSION 4 DESCRIPTIONS

THURSDAY, December 4

8:30 - 9:20



Let's Get It WRITE!

Baron's D

Gayla Wiggins, lead4ward

How can we teach students to write like real writers while still preparing them for a test that doesn't always feel real?

Writing instruction doesn't have to be a tug-of-war between authenticity and test prep. This hands-on, strategies-packed session helps teachers blend both worlds – guiding students to write about their experiences, what they know, and their perspectives while meeting academic expectations. Learn how to build writing routines that develop intent, structure, and style; support students in responding to reading with evidence; and strengthen idea development and organization through revision. You'll leave with practical tools, a clear framework, and renewed confidence to help students write like real writers for real purposes in real classrooms.

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, teachers, instructional coaches, special educators, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: literacy central, genre bookmarks, snapshots, think it up

lead4ward instructional strategies: Cut It Apart, Just the Facts



How to Energize Every Meeting: Go BIG (Bold, Innovative, and Gutsy)!

Baron's E, F, G

Holli Malloy, Galena Park ISD

How do we keep participants energized in training sessions and meetings? Go BIG!

Get ready to go BIG (Bold, Innovative, and Gutsy)! Discover how to use energizers to boost engagement, elevate energy, and improve the effectiveness of every meeting. Through short, purposeful, and interactive activities, you'll learn how to maintain focus, re-energize participants, and keep everyone actively involved. Explore strategies for selecting and facilitating energizers that are both fun and intentional. You'll leave this session energized with BIG ideas and activities to transform your next meeting!

audience: elementary and secondary principals, instructional coaches

lead4ward resources highlighted: instructional strategies playlist

lead4ward instructional strategies: Ball Toss Boogie, Snap & Chat



STAAR4ward Science

Austin

Jennie Ramsey, lead4ward

What is important to know about the 2026 STAAR administration and the new assessed curriculum? How can we help ALL kids learn and show what they know?

Science standards have undergone some BIG changes, so we need to respond in BIG ways! We'll match the new science TEKS and STAAR blueprint with effective and fun strategies that help kids make content connections and learn in memorable ways.

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, science teachers, instructional coaches, special educators, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: academic vocabulary, instructional strategies playlist, IQ released items tool, quickchecks, scaffolds, snapshots

lead4ward instructional strategies: Fixer Upper, Learning Loops, Insta-GRAPHIC

SESSION 4 DESCRIPTIONS

THURSDAY, December 4

8:30 - 9:20



Think BIG with AI: A Roundtable Conversation

Houston

John Fessenden, Alex Kavich & Wade Labay, lead4ward
Shanta' Creeks, Houston ISD & John Wilks, Midland ISD

Curious about how AI can enhance teaching, learning, and leadership?

Join this fast-paced, interactive roundtable session where ideas come alive! You'll move through four discussions, each led by a facilitator exploring a different AI topic or question. Spend 10 minutes with each facilitator engaging in meaningful conversation, sharing experiences, and gathering ideas you can take back to your campus or district. Whether you're just getting started or already experimenting with AI tools, you'll leave with fresh insights, practical takeaways, and BIG ideas for how AI can support educators and students alike.

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, teachers, instructional coaches, special educators, teacher leaders



Feedback Loops for Mastery

Robertson & Leftwich

Martha Gomez, Galena Park ISD

How do we provide effective feedback that promotes student growth?

Think BIG about transforming student learning by exploring the powerful impact of feedback loops on mastering content. Discover effective strategies to provide constructive feedback, engage students in their learning process, and create a feedback-rich classroom environment. Learn how to leverage technology and best practices to foster a growth mindset, empowering students to take ownership of their learning. Together, we can build a culture of continuous improvement and mastery that inspires educators and students alike!

audience: elementary and secondary teachers, instructional coaches, special educators, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: data tools, instructional strategies playlist, quickchecks, student learning reports

lead4ward instructional strategies: Learning Loops, Show-Glow-Grow, Ping-Pong Summary, 7 Little Words



Teachers Have PLCs ... What About Leaders?

Milam

Emily Fraser, Georgetown ISD

How can principals use the PLC process to help guide district-wide collaboration and alignment?

As instructional leaders, we work hard to ensure our teachers are engaged in meaningful PLCs. But what about us? As principals, we also need time to collaborate, reflect, and grow. Connecting with our peers helps us identify our strengths, uncover areas for growth, and refine our impact on our campuses. When we think bigger, we recognize that student success doesn't stop in the classroom; it's a shared responsibility across our district and state.

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals

lead4ward resources highlighted: frequency distribution, instructional strategies playlist, quickchecks, teacher field guides

lead4ward instructional strategies: Insta-GRAPHIC, Snap and Chat, Fixer Upper

SESSION 5 DESCRIPTIONS

THURSDAY, December 4

9:50 - 10:40



The lead4ward Thinkalongs for Loopbacks That Land!

Lost Pines 1, 2, 3

Stephanie Zelenak, lead4ward & Gigi Laspada, El Paso ISD

What if we could easily implement loopbacks that really land and have a BIG impact on student learning and performance?

We'll explore how the thinkalong routine maximizes warm-ups to loop back on content/skills students need more practice with to build student confidence, strengthen understanding of priority concepts, increase agency and autonomy, and improve academic success. The lead4ward thinkalong toolkits provide a manageable and strategic way to respond when kids don't get it with a simple, highly engaging routine that helps learners with both content knowledge and the cognitive processes necessary for success in problem-solving and extended constructed response!

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, teachers, instructional coaches, special educators, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: instructional strategies playlist, genre bookmarks

lead4ward instructional strategies: Fact or Fib, IQ Slapdown, Think/Share/Write, Odd One Out



It's All About the Growth!

Lost Pines 6, 7, 8

Lindsay Duhon, Crystal Hamrick, Kelly Champeau & Sandi Davis, Lampasas ISD

Growth is what matters most!

We'll share how our elementary campus transformed STAAR 2.0 performance, rising from a low C rating in 2022-23 to a solid B in 2023-24 and 2024-25. Our teachers made a pivotal shift – a strategic change in focus – that sparked real growth. Join us as we unpack the mindset, methods, and milestones that fueled our journey toward continuous improvement!

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, teachers, instructional coaches, special educators, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: data tools, frequency distribution, instructional strategies playlist, IQ released items tool, mathmark, quickchecks, snapshots, student learning reports, teacher learning reports

lead4ward instructional strategies: One Minute Paper



Think, Talk, Solve!

Baron's A, B, C

Melanie Gonzales, Humble ISD

How can we encourage meaningful math discourse to help students develop critical thinking skills, think like mathematicians, and become better problem solvers?

Take math talk to the next level by using instructional strategies that encourage students to discuss, debate, and learn from each other as they tackle problem solving as a team. We'll explore how these low-prep, high-impact activities can be differentiated and incorporated into the classroom by using thinking stems and STAAR material from the IQ released items tool. By using these strategies to create a community of learners, students at all academic levels can transform from passive learners to BIG thinkers through meaningful student discourse, active engagement, and collaboration.

audience: elementary math teachers

lead4ward resources highlighted: instructional strategies playlist, IQ released items tool, thinking stems

lead4ward instructional strategies: IQ Slap Down, Positive Pings, Compare/Contrast Model

SESSION 5 DESCRIPTIONS

THURSDAY, December 4

9:50 - 10:40



Maximizing Classroom Walls: An Interactive Approach to Word Walls and Anchor Charts

Baron's D

Brittny Ainsworth, Galena Park ISD

Looking for a powerful way to spark language growth, boost phonics skills, and make learning come alive?

Transform your existing word wall into an interactive hub that brings literacy to life! Learn how to create dynamic, student-centered word walls and anchor charts that engage learners, promote independence, and reinforce key vocabulary and concepts. Walk away with practical ideas and activities to increase engagement, deepen understanding, and make your classroom walls a vibrant part of learning success!

audience: elementary rla teachers, instructional coaches

lead4ward resources highlighted: instructional strategies playlist, thinking stems

lead4ward instructional strategies: Board Race, Idea Shuffle, Nine Squares, Hand Up-Stand Up-Pair Up



Focus on the Essential Standard in the PLC Cycle and Data Collection

Baron's E. F. G

Alison Jalufka, Liberty Hill ISD

How can collaborative teams connect the PLC Cycle with MTSS to monitor growth for all students?

The secret is to focus on the essential standard throughout the PLC cycle and data collection. We'll highlight tools and strategies that focus on the essential standard during the four questions of the PLC cycle. We'll also explore ways to collect and analyze data around the essential standard that connects the data to the MTSS process. Learn how focusing on the essential standard as a collaborative team can make a BIG impact on growth for all students!

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, rla teachers, instructional coaches, special educators, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: instructional strategies playlist

lead4ward instructional strategies: Rise and Shine, Dance it – Chance it



Say Less, Explore More: Let Sensemaking Lead the Way

Navarro y Bangs

Laurie Jack, Diane Mallard, Connie Schaut & Elissa Griffin, Humble ISD

What if students built their own explanations first – then learned the terms to match – making scientific language more meaningful and memorable?

Rethink vocabulary instruction by putting students' thinking, experiences, and language at the center. Explore practical strategies and routines that embed vocabulary naturally across a unit beginning with hands-on phenomena and rich sensemaking discussions. Prioritize exploration before explanation and watch students construct lasting understanding. Leave with a ready-to-use sensemaking strategy template and a refreshed approach to instructional planning – one that empowers students to think and speak like scientists with clarity and confidence because they understand the concepts, not just memorized the words.

audience: elementary and secondary science teachers, instructional coaches, special educators, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: instructional strategies playlist

lead4ward instructional strategies: Talk a Mile a Minute, Vocabulary Dominoes

SESSION 5 DESCRIPTIONS

THURSDAY, December 4

9:50 - 10:40



New ELPS, New Era: Language + Learning on a New Beat

Austin

Celina Meraz, lead4ward

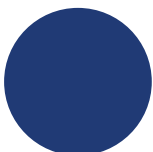
Are you ready to step into the new ELPS era? How do the new ELPS standards and PLDs give us fresh ways to amplify EB voices in every classroom?

This session invites teachers and leaders of EBs to start thinking BIG about language and learning supports through the lens of the new ELPS standards. We'll explore the ELPS snapshots with quick access to the big-picture and Proficiency Level Descriptors (PLD) now with 5 levels of content-specific support. Through a multidisciplinary lens, we'll rehearse how to provide BIG, bold, and practical supports that keep EBs at the center of instruction. Walk away ready to turn up the volume on thinking BIG in this exciting new ELPS era!

audience: pk, elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, teachers, instructional coaches, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: academic vocabulary, emergent bilingual, instructional strategies playlist, quickchecks, scaffolds, snapshots

lead4ward instructional strategies: Musical Mix-Freeze-Group, Tour of Knowledge



Engaging Learners: A Roundtable Conversation

Houston

Brad Gibson, Jodi Denton, Kim O'Neal, Celina Meraz & Cleo Upchurch, lead4ward

What does it really take to keep learners curious, connected, and motivated?

In this interactive roundtable session, four facilitators will rotate through your table – each focused on a different strategy for engaging today's learners. Spend 10 minutes with each facilitator exploring ideas, sharing success stories, and gathering practical tools you can use right away. From boosting participation to building stronger relationships, this session is all about discovering new ways to make learning meaningful, memorable, and fun for both students and teachers!

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, teachers, instructional coaches, special educators, teacher leaders



BIG Behaviors Call for Bigger Connections

Milam

Laurie Wilks & John Wilks, Midland ISD

How can we decrease behaviors that cause BIG problems in the classroom while creating a classroom culture that encourages engagement with empathy, respect, and fun?

Do BIG behaviors derail learning? Not when we foster bigger connections with students. Go beyond behavior charts and "management" to create a classroom culture that encourages BIG connection and BIG growth. Learn and practice research-based strategies that encourage student engagement and empathy.

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, instructional coaches, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: quickchecks, think it up, thinking stems

lead4ward instructional strategies: Facetime, Turn and Talk, Sketch It

SESSION 6 DESCRIPTIONS

THURSDAY, December 4

11:10 - 12:00



You Don't Have to Change Everything to Change Everything!

Lost Pines 1, 2, 3

Michelle Hall, Willis ISD

What small moves make a BIG impact in instructional delivery and truly push student thinking?

BIG change doesn't require a total overhaul. Our campus saw BIG growth by implementing small, high-leverage instructional strategies. Learn how sentence stems, student discourse, and structured conversations led to deeper thinking and stronger academic results. Walk away with practical tools you can use immediately – because small moves can make a BIG impact.

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, teachers, instructional coaches, special educators, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: emergent bilingual, instructional strategies playlist, think it up, thinking stems

lead4ward instructional strategies: Choose and Chat; Think, Talk, Write; Sentence Stems and Frames; Show and Tell and Teach; Snap and Chat



Math Thinkalong Toolkits: Warm-Ups That Work

Lost Pines 6, 7, 8

Abby Loggains, lead4ward

What if “warm-up” time could become your most powerful thinking time?

BIG thinkers know that slowing down can actually speed up learning! lead4ward's thinkalong toolkits offer ready-to-use, 5-10 minute routines that turn everyday warm-ups into powerful opportunities for deep thinking. By working with one problem over several days, students learn to approach challenges strategically, make connections, and transfer their learning to new contexts. Come explore how thinkalong toolkits help teachers simplify daily review while amplifying student engagement, reasoning, and confidence.

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, teachers, instructional coaches, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: instructional strategies playlist

lead4ward instructional strategies: Fact or Fib Showdown, Compare/Contrast Model, Make the Case, Odd One Out



Help New Teachers See BIG, Run BIG, and DO BIG

Baron's A, B, C

Stefani Spoon, Richardson ISD & Keli Soliz, lead4ward

How can teacher leaders support new teachers with a routine of professional learning using the lead4ward instructional strategies playlist?

Learn how Richardson ISD is helping new teachers think BIG with the instructional strategies playlist so that teachers feel confident to run and do, building new teacher agency and self-efficacy so that students can think BIG and talk BIG!

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, instructional coaches, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: instructional strategies playlist

lead4ward instructional strategies: See-Run-Do, Card Sort

SESSION 6 DESCRIPTIONS

THURSDAY, December 4

11:10 - 12:00



Feedback That Fuels Writing Growth

Baron's D

Jennifer Brewer, Dickinson ISD

What if feedback didn't just correct writing but sparked transformation?

In this interactive session, educators will think BIG about how intentional feedback can ignite growth in student writing. Explore simple, high-leverage strategies that move writers beyond surface edits toward meaningful revision and reflection. Walk away inspired and with practical tools to help every writer grow.

audience: elementary and secondary rla teachers

lead4ward resources highlighted: instructional strategies playlist, literacy central

lead4ward instructional strategies: Follow the Leader; Important vs. Interesting; Show, Glow, Grow; Rise and Shine



From Data to Breakthrough: Thinking BIG with lead4ward Field Guides

Baron's E, F, G

Hollye Walker & Tessa Stinson, Midlothian ISD

Does your campus think "BIG picture" when it comes to planning practices, PLC conversations, and student outcomes?

Utilizing lead4ward reports helped us identify essential TEKS and our areas of need. Then we used the field guides to address those gaps and have deeper PLC conversations, professional development, and goal setting with students. This has led to a positive culture on campus regarding data, high-quality instruction, and student growth. Walk away with ideas that will help your teachers think BIG.

audience: elementary principals, instructional coaches

lead4ward resources highlighted: leadership report card, field guides, lead4ward data tools

lead4ward instructional strategies: Rise and Shine, Thought Bubbles



BIG Talk: Sparking Bold Conversations in the Secondary Classroom

Navarro y Bangs

Candice Adcock, Mesquite ISD

Want your students to think BIG? Start by getting them talking.

We'll explore practical strategies to spark bold, meaningful conversations in secondary classrooms. Learn how to create spaces where students feel safe to speak, challenged to listen, and empowered to lead their own learning. From structured protocols to low-stakes talk moves, discover how intentional collaboration builds connection, deepens understanding, and drives engagement. Let's shift the spotlight from teacher talk to student voice ... and watch their thinking grow BIG.

audience: secondary principals, teachers, instructional coaches, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: instructional strategies playlist, thinking stems

lead4ward instructional strategies: IQ Slap Down, Make the Case, Vocabulary Pyramid

SESSION 6 DESCRIPTIONS

THURSDAY, December 4

11:10 - 12:00



Intervention with Intention: A Framework for Special Educators to Think BIG

Austin

April Greathouse, Grand Prairie ISD & Kathy Clapsaddle, lead4ward

Special educators are often stretched across multiple grades and content areas, but what if we didn't need to know everything to make a BIG impact?

Join Grand Prairie ISD as they share their journey of reimagining special education and redefining the special educator's role as an intentional interventionist. Discover a framework that transforms IEPs from compliance checklists into meaningful, living tools that guide instruction and intervention. Learn how to use IEPs the way they were meant to be used: to drive effective intervention, inform instructional decisions, and empower student success. Walk away with bold, practical strategies to streamline your work, strengthen student outcomes, and think BIG about what's possible!

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, special educators

lead4ward resources highlighted: instructional strategies playlist, quickchecks, long strands

lead4ward instructional strategies: Pick Up the Slip Up, Mind Bender



Phenomenal 3D Coaching: Empowering Science Teachers to Implement the New TEKS

Houston

Andrea Alvarado, Pflugerville ISD

How can instructional coaches inspire BIG shifts in science teaching through 3D learning, phenomena, and purposeful coaching that transforms classrooms and mindsets?

Phenomenal change starts with bold coaching. This session empowers instructional leaders to think BIG and support science teachers in the transition to 3D instruction. Experience a 3D science lesson from a student perspective, then step into a coaching role to explore tools, strategies, and reflection protocols that elevate teacher practice. Grounded in inquiry, collaboration, and real-world application, learn to lead powerful conversations, guide TEKS-aligned instruction, and make student learning visible with a ready-to-use coaching toolkit designed for 3D science learning and teacher growth.

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, science teachers, instructional coaches, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: instructional strategies playlist, IQ released items tool, leadership field guides, quickchecks, snapshots, think it up

lead4ward instructional strategies: Connect-Extend-Challenge



Data on Fire: Using lead4ward Reports in DMAC to Spark Student Growth

Robertson & Leftwich

Natalie Woods & Crysten Millican, DMAC Region 7

How can we turn data into dynamic instruction that truly sparks student growth?

Tired of data talks that fizzle out? Think BIG and ignite instruction! Learn how to use lead4ward reports within DMAC to analyze state and local 2025 assessment data, uncovering patterns and pinpointing low-performing SEs to focus spring instruction. Match those TEKS with engaging lead4ward strategies (movement, visuals, and more) to reignite learning and spark student growth. Get ready to have fun while turning data into dynamic, hands-on teaching!

audience: elementary and secondary district leaders, principals, teachers, instructional coaches, special educators, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: data tools, instructional strategies playlist, student learning reports, teacher learning reports

lead4ward instructional strategies: Undercover Agent, Pair-Square-Share

SESSION 6 DESCRIPTIONS

THURSDAY, December 4

11:10 - 12:00



"I used to hate math, but now I love it."

Milam

Lindsey Moore, Conroe ISD

How do we encourage and facilitate student discourse while building a love of learning?

Connect powerful lead4ward instructional strategies, purposeful student discourse, and meaningful grouping techniques to create a classroom culture of engagement and rigor. Discover how to design lessons that not only challenge students but also connect with their interests, helping them find joy in the learning process. Walk away with practical tools and ideas to inspire curiosity, deepen understanding, and foster a lifelong love for learning!

audience: elementary and secondary math teachers, instructional coaches, special educators, teacher leaders

lead4ward resources highlighted: instructional strategies playlist

lead4ward instructional strategies: Each One Teach One, Fact or Fib Showdown, Tic Tac Tally, Hand up - Hand Over, Justified List

PRESENTERS

| | | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Sophia Acevedo | lead4ward | Wade Labay | lead4ward |
| Candice Adcock | Mesquite ISD | Gigi Laspada | El Paso ISD |
| Brittney Ainsworth | Galena Park ISD | Rachael Lewis | Snyder ISD |
| Andrea Alvarado | Pflugerville ISD | Abby Loggains | lead4ward |
| Emillie Armstrong | Dickinson ISD | Diane Mallard | Humble ISD |
| Nekenisha Brand | Humble ISD | Holli Malloy | Galena Park ISD |
| Jennifer Brewer | Dickinson ISD | Ashley Marquez | Alvin ISD |
| Doni Cash | Eduphoria | Jolynn Meade-Ibarra | Taylor ISD |
| Kelly Champeau | Lampasas ISD | Celina Meraz | lead4ward |
| Kathy Clapsaddle | lead4ward | Crysten Millican | DMAC Region 7 |
| Kenisha Coburn | The Holdsworth Center | Kathleen Moore | Garland ISD |
| Caitlin Couch | Ector County ISD | Lindsey Moore | Conroe ISD |
| Shanta' Creeks | Houston ISD | Kevin Morrison | Nederland ISD |
| Sandi Davis | Lampasas ISD | Duy Nguyen | Nederland ISD |
| Todd Davis | Texas Education Agency | Rebecca Nix | Shepherd ISD |
| Jodi Denton | lead4ward | Kim O'Neal | lead4ward |
| Brooke Doughtie | Rockwall ISD | Jennifer Paden | Rockwall ISD |
| Lindsay Duhon | Lampasas ISD | Kimberly Pena | Hays CISD |
| Brittany Ellis | Shepherd ISD | Jennifer Penton | Rockwall ISD |
| Kelli Ferguson | Port Arthur ISD | Marjorie Pineada | Shepherd ISD |
| John Fessenden | lead4ward | Jennie Ramsey | lead4ward |
| Emily Fraser | Georgetown ISD | Jennifer Roach | Galena Park ISD |
| Melissa Fuertes | Humble ISD | Carla Rogers | Shepherd ISD |
| Brad Gibson | lead4ward | Connie Schaut | Humble ISD |
| Martha Gomez | Galena Park ISD | Heather Self | Belton ISD |
| Melanie Gonzales | Humble ISD | Keli Soliz | lead4ward |
| Jessica Gore | Snyder ISD | Stefani Spoon | Richardson ISD |
| April Greathouse | Grand Prairie ISD | Tessa Stinson | Midlothian ISD |
| Elissa Griffin | Humble ISD | Terri Taylor | Shepherd ISD |
| Michelle Hall | Willis ISD | Mark Terry | TEPSA |
| Crystal Hamrick | Lampasas ISD | Clee Upchurch | lead4ward |
| Megan Humphrey | Rockwall ISD | Hollye Walker | Midlothian ISD |
| Kirsten Hund | The Holdsworth Center | Gayla Wiggins | lead4ward |
| Laurie Jack | Humble ISD | John Wilks | Midland ISD |
| Jade Jackson | Humble ISD | Laurie Wilks | Midland ISD |
| Alison Jalufka | Liberty Hill ISD | Adrienne Williams | The Holdsworth Center |
| Sharnelia Johnson | Humble ISD | Natalie Woods | DMAC Region 7 |
| Alex Kavich | lead4ward | Stephanie Zelenak | lead4ward |
| Ervin Knezek | lead4ward | | |



ROCKIN' REVIEW 2026 CONFERENCE

February 3 – Hyatt Baytown

February 4 – Hyatt Baytown

February 17 – Irving Convention Center

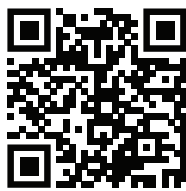
February 18 – Irving Convention Center

February 23 – Virtual

March 2 – San Marcos – Embassy Suites Conv. Ctr.

March 3 – San Marcos – Embassy Suites Conv. Ctr.

March 4 – Virtual



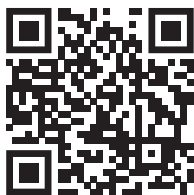
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registration opens december 5, 2025!



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