2025 VIRTUAL

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION GRADUATE RESEARCH SHOWCASE

Program

Saturday, April 26, 2025

8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

WICHITA STATE UNIVERSITY

School of Education
College of Applied Studies
Wichita State University

2025 VIRTUAL
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
GRADUATE RESEARCH SHOWCASE

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MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

The research conducted by graduate students and faculty in the College of Applied Studies at Wichita State University demonstrates the impact that applied research has with communities. Applied Research creates opportunities to co-construct projects in diverse settings that explore important questions in partnership with school, industry, and community leaders. Congratulations to each of the presenters in the Annual School of Education Research Showcase, especially our 2025 graduates, who will take with them the knowledge and skills to design new inquiries and collaborative structures with teachers, students, and parents that promote innovation and positive change.

Jennifer Friend, Ph.D. Dean of College of Applied Studies

GRADUATE COORDINATORS & PROGRAM CHAIRS

MEd in Learning and Instructional Design	Coordinator: Dr. Mara Alagic
	Chair: Dr. JaeHwan Byun
MEd in Special Education	Coordinator: Dr. Donna Sayman
Low-Incidence	Chair: Rachel Horn
High-Incidence	Chair: Dr. Donna Sayman
High-Incidence Alternative Certification	Chair: Dr. Reagan Murnan

2025 VIRTUAL SOE GRADUATE RESEARCH SHOWCASE COMMITTEE:

Dr. JaeHwan Byun, Committee Chair

Dr. Mara Alagic; Rachel Horn; Dr. Fuchang Liu; Dr. Donna Sayman

2025 VIRTUAL
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
GRADUATE RESEARCH SHOWCASE

TIME	EVENT	LOCATION
8:30–8:35	Opening Remarks	Main Lounge
8:35–8:50	Keynote: Dr. Carolyn Speer	Main Lounge
9:00–9:30	Round Table Session	Breakout Room 1, 2, 3
9:35–10:00	Oral Presentations Session I	Breakout Room 1, 2, 3, 4
10:05–10:30	Oral Presentations Session II	Breakout Room 1, 2, 3, 4
10:35–11:00	Oral Presentations Session III	Breakout Room 1, 2, 3, 4
11:05–11:30	Oral Presentations Session IV	Breakout Room 1, 2, 3, 4
11:35–12:00	Oral Presentations Session V	Breakout Room 1, 2
12:05–12:10	Closing	Main Lounge

Main Lounge Zoom Link:
https://wichitastate.zoom.us/j/91357960164?pwd=r51IUbgK7Cd3wa6up2rrrhMbZOAe3Z.1

2025 School of Education Research Showcase Schedule

https://wichitastate.zoom.us/j/91357960164?pwd=r51IUbgK7Cd3wa6up2rrrhMbZOAe3Z.1

Time	Session Facilitator	Main Lounge Jay Byun	ZOOM Breakout Room 1 Dr. Jay Byun	ZOOM Breakout Room 2 Dr. Fuchang Liu	ZOOM Breakout Room 3 Dr. Rachael Horn	ZOOM Breakout Room 4 Dr. Donna Sayman
8:30 - 8: 35 (5')	**Opening Remarks**	**All participants**	Closed			
8:35 - 8:50 (15')	**Keynote**	**Dr. Carolyn Speer** Will AI Undermine Education?				
8:50 - 9:00 (10')	Introduction about how to switch rooms and Transition (Time to move to the Rooms based on individual interests by clicking the breakout rooms on the Zoom menu)					
9:00 - 9:30 (30')	**Round Table**		**Morgan Town** Does Using ChatGPT as a Reflective Partner After Cooking Labs Help Identify Areas of Improvement, Build Knowledge, and Increase Self-Confidence in the Culinary Classroom? **Michael DelVecchio** Utilizing Gen. AI to Enhance Teaching Practices and Support Educators	**Candace Helms, Jessica Lindsted, Jordan Kinnevan, Taylor Lyles** Ethical Use of A.I. In K-12 Education **Kimber Taylor** How May Data Driven Instruction Help with Learner Academic Progression in Interim Tests	**Marah Alwazani** E-textbooks Within The Educational Setting **Jami Dryden** Sustaining Leadership	Closed
9:30 - 9:35 (5')	Transition (Time to move to the Rooms based on individual interests by clicking the breakout rooms on the Zoom menu)					
9:35 - 10:00 (25')	**Oral Presentation Session I**		**Kalila Peyton, Elizabeth Mooers, Monica Urzua** Student-AI Collaboration in Education	**Erin Finley** Enhancing Multiplication Fact Fluency in Fourth Graders: Investigating the Impact of Timed Tests and Strategy Instruction on Math Automaticity	**Sarah Amador** Proposed Transformational Coaching Program to Improve Inclusive Education Practices in the Central American K-12 Context	**Christopher Freshour** The Effects of Deployment on Children of Military Service members.
10:00 - 10:05 (5')	Transition (Time to move to the Rooms based on individual interests by clicking the breakout rooms on the Zoom menu)					
10:05 - 10:30 (25')	**Oral Presentation Session II**		**Nicole Childers-Parks** Bias in Generative AI: Perceptions, Impacts, and Strategies for Fairness, Transparency, and Inclusion	**Jessica Kannady** The Importance of Movement and Math in the Elementary Classroom	**Raodot Olamide Jimoh, Dr. Beata** Socio-emotional Development of an Immigrant Child	**Courtney Kettelhake** Evolvement in School
10:30 - 10:35 (5')	Transition (Time to move to the Rooms based on individual interests by clicking the breakout rooms on the Zoom menu)					
10:35 - 11:00 (25')	**Oral Presentation Session III**		**Joseph Stark** Preferences of Single Factor Block Periodization or Complex Periodization Among Collegiate Strength and Conditioning Coaches	**Olivia Rhett** Growth of Higher Achieving Students on Standardized English and Language Arts Assessments	**Amber Steindler** Enhancing Social and Emotional Development in the Classroom: The Role of Therapy Dogs	**Ali Levine** A Digital Game-Based Learning Approach to Computer Literacy
11:00 - 11:05 (5')	Transition (Time to move to the Rooms based on individual interests by clicking the breakout rooms on the Zoom menu)					
11:05 - 11:30 (25')	**Oral Presentation Session IV**		**Joanna Veeh** What Works? Instructional Design & Engagement on YouTube	**Loni Horner** Game-Based Learning to Enhance Reading Development	**Annette Tillotson** Improving Recycling Habits in the Community	**Connor Ledy** The Impact of Pollution on Children's Health and Outdoor Play
11:30 - 11:35 (5')	Transition (Time to move to the Rooms based on individual interests by clicking the breakout rooms on the Zoom menu)					
11:35 - 12:00 (25')	**Oral Presentation Session V**		**Sue Scherer** Optimizing Learning in Continuing Education for Dental Hygienists	**Mollie Hoffman** Evaluating the Impact of the Science of Reading: Teacher Perceptions and Trends in 4th-Grade Reading Performance	**Joseph Clay, Kristen English** Exploring AI Integration in Secondary Education: Teacher and Student Perspectives	**Ardalia Criner** Reframing Perception of Dyslexia
12:00 - 12:05 (5')	Transition (Time to move to the Rooms based on individual interests by clicking the breakout rooms on the Zoom menu)					
12:05 -	**Closing**	**All participants**	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed

You can see the larger version of the schedule table at the following link: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1La0ujD1q7Lj9ZgcUknJqsD4f90MkAXvzxWV2-MXU1RU/edit?usp=sharing

2025 VIRTUAL
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
GRADUATE RESEARCH SHOWCASE

[ROUNDTABLE SESSIONS] 9:00-9:30

Breakout Room 1

Does Using ChatGPT as a Reflective Partner After Cooking Labs Help Identify Areas of Improvement, Build Knowledge, and Increase Self-Confidence in the Culinary Classroom?

Morgan Town
MEd in Learning and Instructional Design

This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of using ChatGPT as a reflective partner compared to peer reflection in post-cooking lab reflections within a high school culinary class. Participants engaged in either ChatGPT-supported or peer reflection sessions, with subsequent data collected through quizzes, teacher observations, and surveys. Statistical analysis revealed no significant difference in students' ability to identify areas for improvement or self-confidence between the two reflection methods. However, students who reflected with ChatGPT demonstrated higher quiz performance and provided more in-depth reflections with improved vocabulary use. These findings suggest that ChatGPT can be a valuable tool for reinforcing learning and enhancing reflection in culinary education. Future research could examine the long-term effects of ChatGPT on student performance as well as its potential integration with other educational technologies.

Utilizing Gen. AI to Enhance Teaching Practices and Support Educators

Michael DelVecchio
MEd in Learning and Instructional Design

This capstone project investigates how Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) can enhance teaching practices and support educators in addressing common classroom challenges. As GenAI tools evolve, their educational applications remain underexplored, particularly in assisting teachers with tasks such as lesson planning, personalized instruction, and administrative work. This study aims to evaluate how GenAI can alleviate teacher workload, improve student engagement, and support differentiated learning. Data will be collected from 8 to 15 middle school teachers across various subjects—Algebra 1, Math, ELA, Spanish, French 1, Science, STEM, and Advanced Math—within the Woodcliff Lake School District in New Jersey. Participants, aged 22 to 66 and representing diverse career stages and socio-economic backgrounds, will complete a Microsoft Forms survey combining Likert scale and open-ended questions. The research will assess not only the practical benefits of GenAI integration but also teachers' concerns, including potential threats to student engagement, data privacy, and professional autonomy. Findings will offer evidence-based insights into the responsible use of AI in education, highlighting best practices and strategies for effective implementation. Ultimately, this project contributes to ongoing discussions about AI in education, aiming to support informed decision-making around GenAI adoption in classrooms.

Breakout Room 2

Ethical Use of A.I. In K-12 Education

Candace Helms, Jessica Lindsted, Jordan Kinnevan, Taylor Lyles
MEd in Learning and Instructional Design

This study will explore the ethical concerns of using artificial intelligence (AI) in K-12 schools. The aim is to create guidelines and establish best practices for using AI in an ethical way. This project will answer the question: In what ways can AI be used positively in K-12 schools? The most important areas that must be prioritized are data privacy, fairness, and how AI affects human relationships in schools. The participants will be K-12 teachers from school districts where the researchers are actively engaged. The survey will utilize a questionnaire deployed via Google Forms to gather data on teachers' experience, issues, and attitudes about using AI in their classrooms. Data gathered will be analyzed using qualitative and quantitative methods to identify common issues, trends, and possible solutions. Findings of this research will provide actionable guidance to policymakers and teachers so that AI tools are implemented in a way that promotes ethical usage, protects student data, and improves learning outcomes. This project will also contribute to the broader theoretical discussion regarding the role of AI in education and its implications for future classroom practice.

How May Data Driven Instruction Help with Learner Academic Progression in Interim Tests

Kimber Taylor
MEd in Learning and Instructional Design

The use of data-driven instruction became popular after “No Child Left Behind,” but many question it’s effectiveness in the classroom. This study shows how data-driven instruction may help in increasing academic progression in a seventh grade English Language Arts and Reading class. This is a short-term study that used a pretest at the beginning of the quarter to identify the learner’s weaknesses and strengths. Throughout the quarter the learners worked on their weaknesses (Example: Main Idea) and practiced them. At the end of the quarter, they took a posttest. I compared the quantitative data to each other to calculate the progression that was made as a class. The analysis of the data is compared to previous studies of data-driven instruction shown in the literature review.

Breakout Room 3

E-textbooks Within The Educational Setting

Marah Alwazani
MEd in Learning and Instructional Design

This study investigates how student engagement, academic achievement, and fair access to technology in schools are affected by e-textbooks and rotational scheduling methods. The study is organized around four main research questions that aim to determine how e-textbooks affect students with varying learning styles, how to overcome barriers to technological accessibility, how well rotational models work in resource-constrained schools, and whether e-textbooks can close the achievement gaps in schools with unequal access to technology. A mixed-methods strategy, which combines the collecting and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data, is utilized

to look into these topics. Students and teachers will be the two main groups included in the study. Students will share their perspectives on how e-textbooks and the rotational model affect their academic engagement, achievement, and happiness.

Sustaining Leadership

Jami Dryden
MEd in Learning and Instructional Design

The Ambassadors Program at an elementary school serves as a platform for student leadership, fostering organizational skills and community engagement. However, the COVID-19 pandemic significantly disrupted the program's operations, creating challenges for both students and sponsors. Currently, the program is managed by only two sponsors who must balance their classroom responsibilities with overseeing the program, placing it at risk of discontinuation without immediate intervention. This study aims to identify and implement effective tools and strategies to support the program's sustainability. The research will assess current operational barriers, evaluate solutions for improving organizational efficiency, and explore ways to maintain the program with limited resources. By examining the program's significance—such as its role in promoting student leadership and its historical benefits—the study will highlight its value to the school community. A mixed-methods approach will be utilized, incorporating surveys, participation trend analysis, and stakeholder interviews to provide evidence-based recommendations. The findings will inform efforts to enhance the program's functionality, ensuring it continues to serve as a vital component of student development and school improvement. Keywords: student leadership, program sustainability, organizational efficiency, elementary education, COVID-19 impact.

[ORAL PRESENTATION SESSION I] 9:35-10:00

Student-AI Collaboration in Education

Kalila Peyton, Elizabeth Mooers, Monica Urzua
MEd in Learning and Instructional Design

Breakout Room 1

This study explores Artificial Intelligent driven tools' impact on Student-AI Collaboration (SAC) and their ethical implications in K-12 education. As AI becomes more integrated into the classroom, understanding its role in student interactions is crucial. Our research gathers perspectives from scholars, teachers, educators and graduate course members through qualitative data analysis from experience and online surveys. We plan to survey a minimum of 12 participants to examine how students collaborate with AI and how it enhances learning. Additionally, we will investigate ethical concerns surrounding AI as a collaboration tool. This research aims to contribute valuable insights to the ongoing discourse on AI in education by highlighting experiences with SAC tools in classroom settings.

Enhancing Multiplication Fact Fluency in Fourth Graders: Investigating the Impact of Timed Tests and Strategy Instruction on Math Automaticity

Erin Finley
MEd in Learning and Instructional Design

Breakout Room 2

Math fact fluency and automaticity are important building blocks for developing a strong understanding of mathematics. Teachers must be able to implement interventions that help students develop automaticity and fluency. This study examined the effectiveness of a combined intervention that incorporated explicit multiplication strategy instruction and timed multiplication fact practice. Sixteen fourth-grade students participated in a nine-week intervention with daily practice sessions. Each session included 10 minutes of explicit strategy instruction and 10 minutes of timed practice. Pre-and post-tests measured automaticity and strategy use, and a Likert-scale survey was used to gather feedback on students' perceptions of the intervention. Results showed improvements in automatic fact recall and strategy usage. These findings support the benefits of combining conceptual understanding with timed practice to strengthen math fact fluency and overall mathematical competence in elementary students.

Proposed Transformational Coaching Program to Improve Inclusive Education Practices in the Central American K-12 Context

Sarah Amador
MEd in Learning and Instructional Design

Breakout Room 3

Inclusive education is a right and a need worldwide. The Global Education Agenda 2030 via Sustainable Development Goal 4 states: "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all (UN Sustainable Goals, 2024)." In the Central American context, there is a great need to

improve inclusive education. Transformational coaching is an evidence-based practice known for creating sustainable change in education. This project proposes that transformational coaching will initiate the change needed to better educate students with disabilities in Central America. Of the teachers surveyed at a Nicaraguan K-12 school, over 90% identified the transformational coaching characteristics in their leaders, and over 80% found their leader's support of Universal Design for Learning implementation using transformational coaching to be successful. Much research is needed to determine the long-term impact of transformational coaching on improved teacher practice and outcomes for students with disabilities in Central America.

The Effects of Deployment on Children of Military Service members.

Christopher Freshour
MEd in Special Education

Breakout Room 4

A quarter of the schools' population are students whose parents are actively serving in the military. A majority of the students either have a parent that is currently deployed or has been in the past. Personal interviews with students, their parents, and McConnell Air Force base personnel. The greeting card shower for deployed Air Force servicemembers from McConnell Air Force Base was a school-wide collection. This is important for the morale of the deployed service persons and also is encouraging for students in the school who currently have a parent deployed. From the student perspective, in analyzing the data interviews will be conducted with the six Social/Emotional Learning teachers in the building to get a gauge of how committed the classes were to the project. How much time did they spend making their cards? How did they engage with the service persons who visited their classrooms to talk about their deployment experiences?

[ORAL PRESENTATION SESSION II] 10:05-10:30

Bias in Generative AI: Perceptions, Impacts, and Strategies for Fairness, Transparency, and Inclusion

Nicole Childers-Parks
MEd in Learning and Instructional Design

Breakout Room 1

This study explores perceptions of bias in generative artificial intelligence (AI), examining its impact on work, education, and social impact, as well as the types of bias observed and recommendations for mitigation. Survey data from AI users, ranging from novice to expert, was analyzed, combining qualitative and quantitative responses. Findings reveal significant concerns about racial, ethnic, cultural, and gender biases in AI outputs, with many respondents highlighting inaccuracies as a result of these biases. Participants emphasized the need for greater transparency regarding training datasets and user control to adjust or flag biased outputs. Additionally, the importance of collaboration between AI developers and diverse teams was stressed to ensure more inclusive and ethical AI systems. These findings underscore the necessity of addressing AI bias and implementing measures to improve fairness, accountability, and transparency in AI development.

The Importance of Movement and Math in the Elementary Classroom

Jessica Kannady
MEd in Learning and Instructional Design

Breakout Room 2

This essay examines how important it is to incorporate movement into math lessons in elementary schools. According to research, including physical activity in math classes improves cognitive function, kinesthetic learning, and student engagement—especially for younger students. The study looks at how movement-based techniques, like interactive games, manipulatives, and tangible representations of mathematical concepts, can help students grasp and remember mathematical concepts more deeply. Additionally, it talks about how to match movement to academic standards and offers useful strategies that educators can use in a variety of school environments. By emphasizing the link between academic success and physical exercise, this study promotes a more dynamic and all-encompassing method of teaching primary math.

Socio-emotional Development of an Immigrant Child

Raodot Olamide Jimoh, Dr. Beata
EdS. In School Psychology

Breakout Room 3

This case study examines the socio-emotional development in an immigrant child. It was hypothesized that there will be a significant impact on the child's socio-emotional development due to immigration. Data was collected through parent interviews, naturalistic observations (at home and with peers/adults), interaction, and standardized assessments. The participant is a 4-year-old Nigerian born in Saudi Arabia. This case shows that moving to a new country significantly affected this child's social-emotional development. Quantitative data from standardized assessments shows high functioning (86%) in overall social skills with specific strengths in prosocial behavior

and cooperation. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected to measure the child's prosocial behavior, cooperation, self-regulation, and emotional control. The findings of this study support Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory and Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory.

Evolvement in School

Courtney Kettelhake
MEd in Learning and Instructional Design

Breakout Room 4

Involving families is essential for fostering students' academic success, but many schools find it difficult to do so, which has a detrimental impact on both student accomplishment and school-community ties. According to research, less than 30% of parents participate in regular meetings and events, despite the fact that there are numerous techniques to boost engagement. A decrease in communication and a lack of culturally sensitive tactics are obstacles to participation. The significance of family involvement is examined, engagement strategies are noted, and individualized communication techniques and culturally appropriate engagement strategies are considered as viable remedies in this research review. It emphasizes the value of parent challenges, interactive newsletters, and digital platforms as effective strategies for encouraging family involvement. It has long been acknowledged that parental involvement in school is essential to students' academic performance. The beneficial relationship between family involvement and better student outcomes, such as better grades, more motivation, and general well-being—has been the subject of numerous research. However, a recurring problem persists even after family participation programs have been widely implemented in schools: many families continue to be disengaged from their children's educational experience, which limits the programs' potential advantages.

[ORAL PRESENTATION SESSION III] 10:35-11:00

Preferences of Single Factor Block Periodization or Complex Periodization Among Collegiate Strength and Conditioning Coaches

Joseph Stark
MEd in Learning and Instructional Design

Breakout Room 1

This research was aimed at discovering the popularity of Single Factor Block Periodization (SFBP) versus the popularity of Complex periodization (CP) in the collegiate strength and conditioning landscape in the United States. To analyze each periodization styles popularity, a survey was sent out to strength and conditioning coaches at the NAIA, Junior College, and NCAA divisions 1, 2, and 3 levels. The survey included questions aimed at seeing what percent of the sample uses each periodization style, and which percent of the population uses or used both SFBP and CP. The multiple-choice questions were followed by open ended questions to add context to the prior selections. The two objectives of the survey were to discover how common each periodization style is, and to analyze the answers to the open-ended questions to discover themes or differences in how collegiate coaches approach weightlifting program design. The Literature review references past research that compares SFBP and CP. There is not conclusive evidence of one style being better than the other. We learned through this survey if the controversy of SFBP and CP is reflected in the practice of Collegiate strength and conditioning.

Growth of Higher Achieving Students on Standardized English and Language Arts Assessments

Olivia Rhett
MEd in Learning and Instructional Design

Breakout Room 2

This study aims to address the question of how to show growth of higher achieving students on standardized English and Language Arts assessments. Growing these students, who are already on grade level, is challenging. This is even more difficult when the focus is put on average or lower performing students. These points are why it is important to analyze what research-based interventions or strategies are effective to grow this group of students. The participants will be both male and female. All participants are in fourth grade. The achievement test is a standard based assessment assessing the students on a variety of English Language Arts standards. Each assessment has 30 questions with four reading passages and a paragraph edit. Assessments are kept secure until the day of the test and then the teacher administers it to the students in a secure environment. The interventions used to measure growth of the high achieving students are differentiation, questioning, and grouping.

Enhancing Social and Emotional Development in the Classroom: The Role of Therapy Dogs

Amber Steindler
MEd in Special Education

Breakout Room 3

This study discusses the benefits of therapy dogs in educational settings, including reducing stress and anxiety. Research has shown that therapy dogs have a positive impact on students with social and emotional needs. The

intent of the study is to determine if interacting with a therapy dog will increase the overall wellbeing of students with social and emotional needs, lower anxiety levels in the classroom, and how interacting with a therapy dog can improve students' self-esteem and self-regulation.

A Digital Game-Based Learning Approach to Computer Literacy

Ali Levine
MEd in Learning and Instructional Design

Breakout Room 4

Computer literacy is an increasingly critical competency for achieving success as an adult; accordingly, this study sought to explore the effectiveness of digital game-based learning (DGBL) as a tool for computer literacy acquisition in adult learners. Study participants played a computer game called CornTroll Farms, a farming simulation that taught learners five Windows control commands. The game design incorporated the andragogical learning models of Malcolm Knowles folded into the behaviorist laws of Edward Thorndike. Across 51 study participants, 98% of respondents agreed that the computer game was an effective learning tool for the subject matter, and all participants who entered the study with little to no knowledge of the subject matter demonstrated a marked improvement in knowledge scores after gameplay. Participants found that the most effective elements in the game were the incorporation of a real-life simulation, the introduction to the commands, and the satisfaction of growing virtual crops.

[ORAL PRESENTATION SESSION IV] 11:05-11:30

What Works? Instructional Design & Engagement on YouTube

Joanna Veeh
MEd in Learning and Instructional Design

Breakout Room 1

YouTube is a widely used platform for informal learning, yet the instructional quality of its educational content—especially for adult learners pursuing career development—remains underexplored. This study will examine how instructional design principles influence the effectiveness and engagement of YouTube videos related to adult career development. Guided by Brame's framework (cognitive load, engagement, and active learning), the study will analyze a sample of videos using both qualitative coding and quantitative metrics, including interaction index, viewing rate, and usefulness scores. Videos will be selected using a cache-cleared browser and search terms validated through Google Trends. The goal is to identify common instructional design features in highly rated and highly viewed content. Findings from this mixed-methods study will offer practical recommendations for educators, instructional designers, and content creators seeking to develop engaging, effective video-based learning experiences for adult learners on open platforms like YouTube.

Game-Based Learning to Enhance Reading Development

Loni Horner
MEd in Learning and Instructional Design

Breakout Room 2

This research paper investigates the impact that game-based instruction has on the retention of alphabetic principles and phonemic awareness in young children. Specifically, it examines whether students who receive game-based instruction in addition to traditional alphabetic principles and phonemic awareness instruction retain these skills at a higher rate than those who receive only traditional alphabetic principles and phonemic awareness instruction. The study population consisted of children aged 4 to 5 years. The experimental group of 10 children received game-based and traditional instruction, and a control group of 11 children received only traditional instruction. Pre- and post-assessments measuring alphabetic principles and phonemic awareness using the DIBLES assessment tool were administered to gauge retention. The results indicated a significant difference between the two groups, with the experimental group showing a higher retention rate of alphabetic principles and phonemic awareness than the control group. This suggests that the incorporation of game-based instruction may enhance learning outcomes in early literacy skills, promoting more effective long-term retention. These findings have implications for early childhood education, encouraging the integration of interactive, game-based learning strategies alongside traditional teaching methods to foster literacy development.

Improving Recycling Habits in the Community

Annette Tillotson
MEd in Special Education

Breakout Room 3

This service-learning project takes place at Franklin Elementary in Wichita, Kansas. The community has shown

a need for a more effective recycling campaign. Residents are either unaware of what items can be recycled, or are unmotivated to take part in recycling programs that are available (Beacon, 2023). This prevents residents from reducing their environmental footprint. The research questions are: how does the clarity of communication about recycling rules affect recycling behaviors in Wichita, and what methods can reduce confusion and improve recycling accuracy? To answer these questions, the students in the project will create a campaign with posters with positive slogans, visual aids to clarify rules, and community activities. Data will be collected before and after the campaign. If the campaign results reflect the authors hypothesis, the results show that clear and positive communication significantly improves recycling behaviors, as well as overall recycling awareness in the community.

The Impact of Pollution on Children's Health and Outdoor Play

Connor Ledy
MEd in Special Education

Breakout Room 4

Pollution in public spaces, such as parks and playgrounds, poses a growing concern, particularly for children with special needs. These children are at a higher risk of health issues due to environmental contamination. The proposed project aims to assess the impact of a clean-up initiative on children's health and outdoor play. By reducing pollution in these areas, the project seeks to improve the safety and well-being of children, especially those with special needs. This study will examine the effectiveness of the intervention through surveys and questionnaires conducted before and after the clean-up.

[ORAL PRESENTATION SESSION V] 11:35-12:00

Optimizing Learning in Continuing Education for Dental Hygienists

Sue Scherer
MEd in Learning and Instructional Design

Breakout Room 1

This study investigated the impact of designing a CEC that accommodates various learning styles to enhance the educational experience of dental hygienists. Using a qualitative research methodology, the study explored the effectiveness of the Adaptive Learning Model (ALM), which incorporates visual, aural, read/write, and kinesthetic learning strategies. Participants, recruited through professional networks, completed the 16-question VARK® questionnaire, as well as pre- and post-surveys administered via Qualtrics, to assess their learning experiences within a CEC designed using the ALM framework. The study findings suggest that a CEC tailored to diverse learning styles creates a more engaging and effective educational experience, leading to improved knowledge retention and practical application in clinical settings. This research provides valuable insights into optimizing CEC design to better meet the educational needs of dental hygienists, ultimately contributing to enhanced professional development and patient care.

Evaluating the Impact of the Science of Reading: Teacher Perceptions and Trends in 4th-Grade Reading Performance

Mollie Hoffman
MEd in Learning and Instructional Design

Breakout Room 2

Reading is a fundamental skill that plays a critical role in academic success and lifelong learning. Proficient reading abilities not only enhance students' academic performance but also contribute to their confidence and intrinsic motivation to engage with texts. However, a significant number of students encounter difficulties in reading, particularly in the fourth grade, when texts become increasingly complex. This phenomenon, known as the "fourth-grade slump," raises concerns regarding students' preparedness for more advanced literacy demands. The challenges associated with reading proficiency have been further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly among younger students who were still in the process of acquiring foundational literacy skills.

Exploring AI Integration in Secondary Education: Teacher and Student Perspectives

Joseph Clay, Kristen English
MEd in Learning and Instructional Design

Breakout Room 3

The rapid rise of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) tools like ChatGPT and Microsoft Copilot has generated both enthusiasm and concern within secondary education. As students continue to encounter these tools in their classrooms, many educators are uncertain about how to effectively and ethically implement them. This mixes-methods study examined how secondary educators and students perceive, experience, and implement GenAI tools, with a particular concentration on barriers and opportunities for classroom integration. Surveys were

given to 71 students at a public high school in Baltimore, Maryland, and 42 educators in both Baltimore and Wichita, Kansas. Results showed that while 80% of students reported teacher use of GenAI in their classes, their engagement and understanding of the tools remained largely neutral or underdeveloped. In contrast, 60% of teachers perported having never used GenAI, mentioning concerns regarding plagiarism, misinformation, and a lack of training. Only 20% of the teachers who responded received any formal training in GenAI use. This disconnect between student exposure and teacher confidence and preparedness suggests that there is an urgent need for professional development related specifically to GenAI. This should include more specific district policies, intentional classroom strategies, and techniques to support ethical and effective GenAI integration. This may help schools to ensure that GenAI will support learning while prioritizing academic integrity.

Reframing Perception of Dyslexia

Ardalia Criner
MEd in Learning and Instructional Design

There are more than 40 million adults in the USA who have dyslexia, with only 2 million of them receiving a diagnosis (Zauderer, 2025). This staggering figure indicates that 95% of American adults suffering from dyslexia have not had an official diagnosis. This study explored self-perceptions (such as self-esteem) and domain-specific ones (academic self-concept), while also examining the roles of attributional styles, educational environment, and the impact of receiving a dyslexia diagnosis. The study employed a qualitative case-study approach, gathering user data through in-person interviews, revealing participants' lived experiences. The results contribute to a belief that children and young people (CYP) affected by dyslexia are highly aware of how their specific literacy difficulties and dyslexia impact their academic self-perceptions. As a result, their self-perceptions may be affected.

Reframing the perception of dyslexia is still in its early stages. A key challenge in this process includes the development of attributional styles, which are shaped by supportive and accepting environments where children and young people (CYP) have opportunities to experience success. However, more evidence in this area needs to be gathered and studied to better understand the connection between the perception of dyslexia and its influence on self-perception to adequately reframe the perception of dyslexia.