45th Annual

January 15-17 2027

Hyatt Regency Santa Clara

The original conference FOR teachers BY teachers

California Kindergarten Conference



Amie Burkholder, Literacy Edventures



Jere Chang, mschanggifted



Jake Daggett, Engage with Jake

Ocean of Ideas, Waves of Impact

2027 California Kindergarten Association CONFERENCE

Pre-K, TK, K, & 1st



Dan St. Romain, Educational Consulting



Jackie Kops, Pocket of Preschool



LeAnna Wolkis Goldstein, wolkiswonderland

California Kindergarten Conference

WHY YOU SHOULD ATTEND!

Ocean of Ideas, Waves of Impact

Dive into an ocean of inspiration and leave empowered to create lasting change for your students, your classroom, and your future.

FRESH IDEAS, REAL SOLUTIONS

Discover practical, research-based strategies you can use right away to support every student.

CONNECT & COLLABORATE

Network with passionate educators from across California who share your commitment and spark your creativity.

RIDE THE WAVES OF GROWTH

Engaging sessions, inspiring speakers, and hands-on learning to help you grow as an educator and leader.

MAKE A LASTING IMPACT

Leave with renewed energy, a toolkit of resources, and the confidence to make waves in your classroom and school community.

CELEBRATE THE JOY OF KINDERGARTEN

Be reminded of why this work matters and the power you have to shape bright futures.

Let's make waves together!

Meet Our Featured Speakers



Amie Burkholder
Literacy Edventures
SESSIONS A2, B2 & C2

Amie Burkholder is a K-5 literacy coach, national speaker, and literacy consultant dedicated to helping teachers bring the science of reading to life in real classrooms. With over 15 years in education, she has served as both a classroom teacher and instructional coach, supporting schools and districts in building aligned, effective literacy systems. Amie holds a Bachelor of Science in Reading PK-6, a master's in literacy leadership K-12 and is trained in Orton-Gillingham and LETRS. She is the author of "Literacy Unlocked: How to Implement the Science of Reading with Young Learners" and the creator of the Foundations to Fluency phonics curriculum, approved under the Virginia Literacy Act. Through her coaching, consulting, and professional development, Amie is known for helping teachers to simplify instruction, strengthen routines, and create classrooms where all students can become confident readers.



Jake Daggett
Engage with Jake
SESSIONS D1, E1 & F1

Jake is an Ohio native who began his teaching career in Milwaukee, WI in 2015. Specializing in literacy instruction, Jake built a social media following for his engaging and rhythmic phonics lessons and evidence-based structured literacy practices, which even landed him on The Kelly Clarkson Show in January 2024. Throughout his career, Jake has taught PreK, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grades and now serves as a Literacy Director for a school in Milwaukee. In his role, Jake supports a team of kindergarten through fifth grade teachers in their implementation of the science of reading. In his spare time, Jake presents nationally at conferences such as Illinois ASCD, Plain Talk NOLA, and the Mississippi Literacy Association. He visits school districts all over the country to model lessons and work with teachers and leaders. He is thrilled to be joining the CKA family!



Jackie Kops
Pocket of Preschool
SESSIONS D2, E2 & F2

Jackie Kops is a dedicated early childhood educator with over 14 years of classroom experience in both full-day and half-day preschool settings. Originating from Missouri, she holds both a bachelor's and a master's degree in early childhood and elementary education from Maryville University. Jackie's mission is to empower educators by unlocking their teaching superpowers, offering innovative, play-based, engaging activities, and designing thematic activities that both nurture and challenge young learners within a supportive classroom community. As founder and CEO of Pocket of Preschool, Jackie shares her expertise beyond the classroom by developing resources and offering guidance to educators worldwide. Jackie's dedication to early childhood education is evident in her commitment to professional growth and her passion for sharing innovative, practical solutions that inspire and elevate her fellow educators.



Dan St. Romain
Educational Consulting
Preconference Institute

Dan St. Romain is an independent educational consultant from San Antonio, TX who provides staff development and consultative service to educators and parents working with children at all developmental levels. Dan is passionate about helping individuals shift their perspective on behavior, understanding the best ways to provide support given the challenges posed in today's world. After receiving his master's degree in education, Dan worked in both private home and public-school settings. His work as a self-contained behavior unit teacher, educational diagnostician, director of a learning resource center, and regional educational specialist has afforded him experience at all levels, in both general and special education settings. Dan is now enjoying semi-retirement after having worked in the school system for the past 30 years. Dan's overwhelming strength is his skill as a presenter. Although his sessions are exceedingly interactive, his greatest asset lies in his ability to offer participants rich insight into the connectedness between educational practices and student behavior. He is the author of several books and resources for teaching social skills, featuring his chameleon, Juan Pablo.



LeAnna Wolkis Goldstein
wolkiswonderland
SESSIONS B1 & C1

LeAnna Wolkis Goldstein is an energetic and passionate Kindergarten educator from Arizona with over 28 years of teaching experience and a deep commitment to early childhood education. She earned her bachelor's degree from Arizona State University, a master's degree from Northern Arizona University, an Early Childhood Endorsement, and achieved the rigorous distinction of National Board Certification. LeAnna shares her work with educators through national conferences, district trainings, and virtual professional learning experiences in partnership with educational organizations across the United States and beyond. Her teaching is centered on setting the stage to engage through visually rich environments, thoughtfully designed hands-on learning labs, and the joyful use of music and movement to engage both the body and mind. Inside her award-winning classroom, "The Wolkis Wonderland," LeAnna inspires exploration, creativity, and imagination while bringing learning to life through magical, hands-on experiences.

Preconference Institute

FRIDAY, JANUARY 15, 2027
Registration 8:30-9:00am
Workshop 9:00am-4:00pm
Lunch on Your Own 12:00-1:00pm



Dan St. Romain
Educational Consulting

Behavior Lessons Learned

When it comes to behavior, kids have a lot to learn. But then again, so do adults. When we proactively help students get their needs met in healthy ways, we decrease the likelihood they try to do so, often unconsciously, through disruptive behaviors. In this interactive session, participants will learn specific strategies for positively shaping student behaviors while discovering how many of our typical teaching practices work against these efforts.

**Please note that the registration fee includes the discounted cost of Dan's newest book, "Lessons Learned through Puppy Training: A Proactive Approach to Strengthening Positive Behaviors in Children", to complement the content of the workshop.

Keynote Address

Meet Our Keynote Speaker, Jere Chang!



Jere Chang is an award-winning educator, keynote speaker, author, and digital content creator with more than 4 million followers across social media. Jere is known for blending humor, heart, and honesty into unforgettable presentations on school leadership, school culture, student engagement, inclusion, and educator well-being.

Through relatable storytelling and real classroom experiences, Jere invites audiences into the everyday realities of teaching, parenting, and navigating life with authenticity. Whether sharing hilarious classroom moments, discussing the power of creative thinking, or tackling difficult conversations around education and belonging, her message resonates because it feels real. Audiences leave her sessions feeling inspired, energized, valued, and deeply connected to the work they do.

Jere has been invited twice to the White House alongside national digital creators and advocates and has spoken internationally to standing-room-only audiences. She was recognized as a Distinguished Alumna by the University of Georgia and is the author of the book "Becoming the Teacher I Needed" (Wiley, 2026).

In addition to her work in education, Jere has partnered with leading brands and organizations including LEGO Education, Microsoft, Amazon, and The Coca-Cola Company to create impactful campaigns supporting educators, creativity, and student learning.

Keynote Speaker Address:

Finding Joy in Work that Matters

Are you becoming weary of the ongoing conversations about teacher shortages and high turnover rates? It's time for a fresh perspective! Join Jere as she uses storytelling and humor to reignite your passion for education. With practical strategies and an uplifting message, Jere reminds educators of the profound impact of teaching – not just on students, but on every career and community. Rediscover the purpose and joy that come with this extraordinary profession.

38th Annual Young Children's Art Exhibit



Pre-K, TK, K, and 1st Grade Teachers:

Showcase Your Students' Artwork!

Paintings • Collages • Drawings • Prints
Class Quilts • Murals • Stitchery • Sculptures

CLICK HERE

to download the required Art Information Sheet.

Announcing Two Art Grants!

TWO $100 grants have been initiated by Founding CKA Board Members, Linda Becker and Zelda Le Frak, to generate exciting Pre-K, TK, K, and 1st grade projects for display in the 38th Annual Young Children's Art Exhibit in January 2027.

CLICK HERE

Download the Art Grant Application!

Due Sunday, November 1, 2026

We're Having an Art Party!

Hosted by the CKA Visual Arts Committee

Help us celebrate 38 Years of the Young Children's Art Exhibit

Friday, January 15 · 4:00-5:00pm

Hyatt Regency Santa Clara



- Exciting Hands-On Art Stations
- DRAWINGS for Children's Picture Books
- Maureen Perkinson's Art Bag filled with goodies!

AND...

- A chance to win an art visit by the CKA Art Divas!



Meet
Rachel Duenas

2027 recipient of the Patricia Rees-Miller Award for Art Advocacy

Meet Rachel at the award presentation during Sunday morning's CKA Annual Meeting.

Join Us at the Deep Sea Disco! Shell Ya!

Saturday 7:00-9:00pm

What's beneath the surface?

- Live DJ
- Raffle Prizes
- No Host Bar
- Photo Booth
- Make & Take Tables

Adults Only

Saturday

COMMERCIAL EXHIBITS
8:00am-5:30pm

KEYNOTE by Jere Chang
9:00-10:30am

SESSION A 11:00am-12:15pm

Lunch On Your Own 12:15-1:45pm
(Don't forget to visit the workshops & exhibits!)

SESSION B 1:45-3:00pm

SESSION C 3:15-4:30pm

Sunday

COMMERCIAL EXHIBITS
8:00am-1:30pm

CKA ANNUAL MEETING
7:45-8:15am

SESSION D 8:30-9:45am

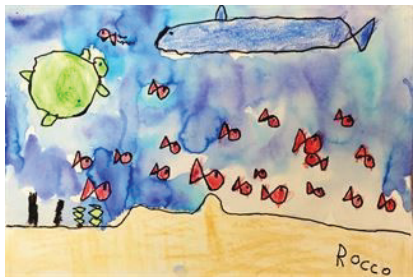
SESSION E 10:00-11:15am

SESSION F 11:30am-12:45pm

Wrap Up Session
1:00-1:30pm (Exhibit Hall)

7:00-9:00pm

The Deep Sea Disco!



Want to view the Young Children's Art Exhibit and browse the commercial exhibits at your leisure? Choose the following sessions in place of a workshop when registering: A10, B10, C10, D10, E10, or F10.

Session A • Saturday 11:00am-12:15pm

A1

Jere Chang

mschanggifted
Atlanta, GA

Becoming the Teacher Every Child Deserves: Teaching with Purpose and Passion

What if the best teacher you can become is the one you needed as a child? Jere Chang reflects on her journey from feeling unseen in the classroom to becoming an educator who makes space for every kind of learner. Through personal stories, humor, and hard-earned wisdom, Jere shares how building an inclusive, student-centered classroom starts with healing your own story. This is a call to action for teachers to create classrooms where all kids feel safe, valued, and seen, because when we become the teacher we once needed, we become the teacher every child deserves.

A2

Amie Burkholder

Literacy Edventures
Roanoke, VA

From Sounds to Words: Helping Young Readers Move Beyond Sound-by-Sound Reading

Support students in moving from slow, choppy decoding to smooth, connected reading. This session walks teachers through simple, high-impact routines that build automaticity while maintaining accuracy. Teachers will leave with ready-to-use strategies for blending, word chaining, and early fluency.

https://www.instagram.com/literacy.edventures

A3

Erica Dallas

Director of Professional Development
California

A Whole Child Ecosystem: Cultivating Learning Through Every Milestone

This interactive session explores how educators can connect curriculum goals with developmentally appropriate instruction across Pre-K, TK, kindergarten, and first grade. Participants will examine inclusive strategies that support literacy, mathematics, oral language, inquiry, and social-emotional growth through active learning, purposeful play, and observation-based planning.

www.learning-genie.com/tk-curriculum

A4

Wiley & Debbie Rankin

Owners/Musicians
Palo Alto

Getting Smarter Through Music! Encouraging Brain Development in Young Children

Our workshop is fun! Learning outcomes: teachers learn clever songs for singing, playing, transitions, and activities; music promotes cognitive, social, and kinesthetic development; music encourages growth of the cerebral cortex and executive function; and laughter involves multiple regions of the brain and has physiological benefits. No musical background needed!

www.jumpforjoymusic.com

A5

Polly Benson, OTR/L

The OT Handwriting Coach
Atlanta, GA

When Writing Brings Tears (Mostly Yours): OT Strategies for Kindergarten

Kindergarten writing shouldn't feel like a daily battle, but it often does. When students struggle, is it behavior, academics, or motor skills? And who has time for extra interventions? In this session, Polly Benson, OTR/L, shares whole-class, low-prep strategies to support all learners, even those who don't qualify for OT, using simple, embedded supports.

www.legiliner.com

A6

Brandie Rosen

Teacher Mentor/Founder
Los Angeles

The Elements of a Well-Managed Classroom Nobody Taught You

Effective classroom management isn't one strategy; it's a system of elements working together. When any one is missing, the whole classroom feels harder than it should. This session breaks down every element of a well-managed classroom, helping teachers see the full picture and walk away with a practical plan.

https://teachinguntangled.com

A7

Laura Bornfreund

Author, Researcher, Educator
Orlando, FL

Rediscovering Play & Joy in Kindergarten and 1st Grade

Kindergarten and 1st grade have changed and not always for the better. This hands-on session invites participants to rediscover what school can be. Drawing on *Rediscovering Kindergarten: Embracing Play and Joy in Learning*, participants will experience strategies grounded in the science of learning that show how joy and rigor work together.

http://education.bornfreund.com

A8

Palma Lindsay

International Educator & Presenter
Greenwood

Emergent Writing: Creating Foundations for Successful Writers (TK-K-1st)

Get your littlest learners excited about writing! Discover practical tools, engaging activities, and proven strategies to strengthen language skills and build solid foundations for ELL and EO emergent writers. Leave empowered with resources and activities that foster essential writing building blocks and provide students the confidence to be successful writers.

kfundamentals.blogspot.com

A9

Rebecca Engle, M. Ed.

Special Education Teacher/Author
Saint Hedwig, TX

Supporting Challenging Behaviors Without Rewards or Punishments

In early childhood, challenging behavior is often met with rewards and consequences that fail to address underlying needs. This session explores a neuroscience-informed approach to understanding behavior as communication. Participants will learn practical, relationship-based strategies to support regulation, reduce disruptions, and build inclusive environments without relying on external rewards or punishments.

https://2002rebs.wixsite.com/stichesstanzas

Want to view the Young Children's Art Exhibit and browse commercial exhibits at your leisure? Choose A10.

Session B • Saturday 1:45-3:00pm

B1

LeAnna Wolkis Goldstein, M.Ed., NCBT

Kindergarten Teacher & Early Learning Advocate • Scottsdale, AZ

Cultivating Compassionate Classrooms: A Focus on SEL and Mindfulness

Join us for an enlightening exploration of how children can enhance their social emotional learning using a unique set of self-soothing tools. These tools not only support positive interactions but also help maintain focused attention. Cultivate an environment where students feel safe to engage in meaningful conversations, thereby advancing their communication skills. Watch as children become empowered to stand on their "Box of Courage" through calming techniques that boost their mindfulness. Let LeAnna guide you in equipping your classroom with its own set of SEL Superpowers! *Instagram: @wolkiswonderland*

B2

Amie Burkholder

Literacy Edventures
Roanoke, VA

The Hidden Link: How Handwriting Impacts Reading and Spelling

Handwriting is more than neatness–it plays a critical role in literacy development. This session explores how letter formation supports phonics, spelling, and word recognition, and provides simple routines teachers can implement daily without adding more to their plate.
https://www.instagram.com/literacy.edventures

B3

Katie Barnes & Stacey Alvarez

Kindergarten Teachers
Dublin

Low Prep, High Engagement Research-Based Literacy Activities

Looking for ways to boost student engagement in your literacy block without spending hours planning? This session is designed for educators who want effective, low-prep strategies! Teachers will explore high-engagement literacy activities that are easy to implement and grounded in research. You'll walk away with ready-to-use ideas!
https://pillar.io/teachertrickstimestwo

B4

Cindy Pacino

Teacher & Author
Carlsbad

STEAM through Storytime

This workshop explores how to integrate STEAM concepts into story time for young learners. Through engaging read-alouds and creative questioning, teachers will discover strategies to spark curiosity, build critical thinking skills, and make science, technology, engineering, math, and art meaningful, playful, and developmentally appropriate for young children.
www.hooraybooks.com

B5

Marlena R. Ramirez

Educator
Half Moon Bay

Unlocking Language: The Power of Puppetry

Discover how puppetry empowers TK-1st grade students! This session includes a lecture, hands-on activities, and discussion on using puppets to build confidence and language skills. Perfect for all learners, these techniques especially support English Language Learners in a joyful environment. Attendees will practice with provided puppet sets and books.

B6

Christina Torres

Kindergarten Teacher
South Pasadena

Every Learner, Every Voice: Differentiation Strategies for Kindergarten Success

Classrooms include diverse learners with varied academic, language, and social-emotional needs. In this interactive session, educators practice using three steps to support differentiation, student voice, and engagement. Through real scenarios and routines, participants explore strategies to scaffold learning, support multilingual learners, and create equitable, responsive environments where all students can succeed. *www.thinkingmats.com*

B7

Mandi Bottoms & Molly Wong

Curriculum Specialist/TK Teacher
Sacramento

Plants, Animals, and Our Food: Discovering Life on the Farm

Bring the farm to your classroom with a fun, flexible (and FREE) unit about agriculture. Students explore what plants and animals need to live and grow while discovering how crops and livestock provide the food they eat every day. Spark curiosity while building real-world connections across science, ELA, and math.
www.learnaboutag.org

B8

Kelly Nickel, M.A. Education

Tier 3 Literacy Specialist
Redding

Giggles, Games, Good Times: Building Literacy through Fun, Laughter, and Play

This highly interactive session teaches participants multiple strategies, techniques, and resources for making literacy instruction more fun, engaging, sticky, and effective. Focused on phonics, sight words, and fluency, participants leave with dozens of ideas to create and deliver instruction that get students laughing, playing, and enjoying learning to read.

B9

Ronald Mah, M.A., Ph.D., LMFT

Consultant/Trainer/Author
Castro Valley

Having the Hard Conversation with Parents

Focus is on understanding and addressing the underlying emotional/psychological issues of parents with issues with your program; how staff best meet needs through awareness combined with appropriate technique, without compromising their integrity and needs. Four keys for asserting professionalism along with a three-step process for having the hard conversations will be shared.
www.ronaldmah.com

Want to view the Young Children's Art Exhibit and browse commercial exhibits at your leisure? Choose B10.

Session C • Saturday 3:15-4:30pm

C1

LeAnna Wolkis Goldstein, M.Ed., NCBT

Kindergarten Teacher & Early Learning Advocate • Scottsdale, AZ

Maximizing Student Engagement: Effective Time on Task Techniques

Discover innovative strategies and techniques to energize your classroom, promote active participation, cultivate cooperative learning and a passion for learning. Learn how to hook your students, utilize technology effectively, and implement interactive activities that keep students motivated and focused. Join LeAnna to explore practical approaches that transform your classroom into a vibrant hub of engagement and enthusiasm.

Instagram: @wolkiswonderland

C2

Amie Burkholder

Literacy Edventures
Roanoke, VA

Scribbles to Sentences: A Developmental Approach to Early Writing

Early writing doesn't start with sentences–it starts with ideas. This session walks teachers through a clear progression from oral language to independent writing. We'll explore how to move students from drawing and dictation to writing words and simple sentences with confidence.

https://www.instagram.com/literacy.edventures

C3

Katie Barnes & Stacey Alvarez

Kindergarten Teachers
Dublin

Ready To Run Math Centers with Math Stackers

Turn math centers into high-energy learning with Math Stackers! This session shares low-prep, hands-on activities that get students building, talking, and thinking deeply about math. We'll share simple strategies to boost engagement, strengthen math conversations, and make centers meaningful without the extra prep! Participants will receive paper math stackers, too!

https://pillar.io/teachertrickstimestwo

C4

Rian Troth

CalSTRS Pension2 Strategic Services Manager
Sacramento

CalSTRS Retirement Benefits & Pension2

Join our session to learn about the CalSTRS hybrid retirement system, your survivor and disability benefits, how your benefit will be calculated, and other CalSTRS resources available to you. Also, learn how Pension2 can help you save additional money for retirement to help reach your retirement goals.

www.calstrs.com/pension2

C5

Georgia & Ken Frawley

Retired Child Development Teachers
Aubrey, TX

ASL & Action Songs that Support Standards and Reading Readiness

Participants will be engaged the entire session with ASL instruction and songs that teach various phonics rules as well as action songs and activities that meet California Physical Education standards. The more kinesthetic activity you can include in a lesson, the more the children will retain.

www.hobbyhorsingusa.com

C6

Christina Torres

Kindergarten Teacher
South Pasadena

From Tears to Triumph: Simple Problem-Solving Tools for Classrooms

Young children experience big emotions and are learning how to navigate them. In this interactive session, participants practice using three steps to guide students through talking, listening, and problem-solving. Through role-play and real scenarios, educators build routines that support communication, emotional awareness, and independence during everyday classroom and playground moments. *www.thinkingmats.com*

C7

Marie Butler & Molly Sutherland

Music Teacher/TK Teacher
Napa & Sacramento

Building Intelligence Through Play: Song Games of Education Through Music

Bring more play, movement, and joy into your classroom with *Education Through Music*. Experience interactive games that strengthen learning, build community, and support healthy brain development. This hands-on workshop shows how music, movement, and play can transform your teaching and your students' engagement. No music background required.

https://www.new.richardsinstitute.org

C8

Anna Weltman

Math Specialist
Berkeley

Discovering Quadrilaterals (and Other Dinosaurs)

Stegosaurus, allosaurus, ankylosaurus... trapezoid? We all know plenty of five-year-olds who can rattle off the names of a dozen or more dinosaurs and classify them by their stats. So, what's so scary about a quadrilateral? Explore quadrilaterals through the eyes of the playful, information-ravenous young children we know and love.

C9

Dr. Kathryn Murray

Future Strong Educational Consultancy
Australia

Have Fun with Literacy Learning in the Block Area!

The block area is popular in most early childhood classrooms. Do you ever wonder how to increase opportunities for learning? What happens when we add nature or items of novelty? This presentation includes easy and fun ways to use blocks and add variety and interest in learning experiences.

www.futurestrongeducation.com

Want to view the Young Children's Art Exhibit and browse commercial exhibits at your leisure? Choose C10.

Session D • Sunday 8:30-9:45am

D1

Jake Daggett

Foundational Literacy Director
Milwaukee, WI

Sound Walls in K-3 Literacy
Do I need a word wall? Do I need a sound wall? How do I use a sound wall? What is the research on the use of mouth articulation images? Get answers to all these FAQs and more in Jake's exploration of both phonological and orthographic sound wall usage for K-2 classrooms.
https://www.engagewithjake.com

D2

Jackie Kops

Preschool Teacher
Fenton, MO

Building Builders and Engineers in the Blocks Center
Make the blocks center a place where little builders and engineers are engaged, working together, and learning through play. Learn how to be intentional when setting up the environment, how to integrate various themes into the blocks center, and how to let students take the lead in their learning. Jackie teaches you new ways to seamlessly integrate STEM and literacy experiences throughout the center using photographs, books, and props!
https://pocketofpreschool.com

D3

Sarah Gehrke & Sara Lea

Kindergarten Teachers
Stockton

Not Your District's Pacing Guide
Join The Sara(h)s for a session on using technology to plan your year and strengthen team collaboration. Learn to create a pacing guide that includes required and desired content. We'll share our weekly planning system to keep teaching purposeful and meaningful, while still allowing creativity and fun in your classroom!
https://bit.ly/4fKwvPM

D4

CKA Art Divas

Art Educators
Greater Bay Area

Hip, Hip, Hooray for Hands-On Art!
In this exciting session, you will create wonderful standards-based art activities that span the ECE curriculum. Language arts, math and science come alive as your young artists use sponges, feathers, markers, yarn, and buttons to arrange, tear, draw, print and paint.

D5

Lindsay Astor Grant

OT Consultant/Owner of Learning Redesigned
Los Angeles

Calm Classrooms, Engaged Learners:
Designing Inclusive Environments Where Children Thrive
Discover how sensory-informed classroom design reduces dysregulation and boosts engagement. This session highlights environmental factors that shape behavior and offers practical, high-impact strategies for creating calm, developmentally aligned spaces. Learn how intentional design strengthens regulation, executive function, and participation, helping neurodiverse students feel grounded, focused, and ready to learn.
www.learningredesigned.net

D6

Shelly Scheafer & Allyn Fisher

Math Learning Center
Bend & Portland, OR

Dots, Frames & Beads:
Counting & Computing with Confidence
Come play with us as we explore how dot patterns, number frames, and the number rack help young learners see and explain number relationships within 5, 10, and 20. Participants will leave with games, routines, and activities for teaching children to count, structure numbers, and add and subtract with fluency.

D7

Erin Cooney

Director of Curriculum & Instruction
El Cerrito

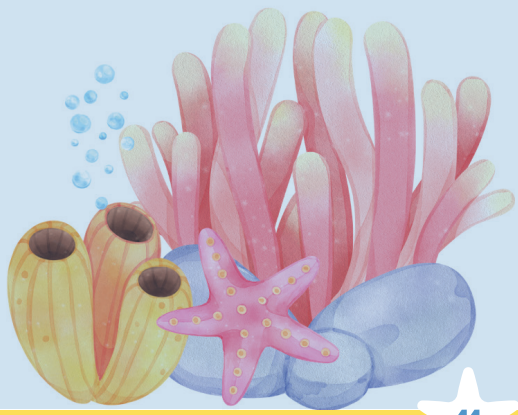
Let's Play: Building Focus Through Sport & Play
Support young learners focus through movement and play. The *Let's Play* video series uses sports-themed storytelling and simple *Brain Breaks* to strengthen attention, emotional regulation, and readiness to learn. Experience playful, developmentally appropriate strategies first-hand and leave with free curriculum resources ready for immediate use in your classroom.
www.pureedgeinc.org

D8

Molly Bricker

CTI Teacher Training Consultant
Los Angeles

Playing POSSUM? Not in Kindergarten!
Active Vocabulary and Fluency Strategies
The POSSUM strategy isn't just for older students! Learn to seamlessly weave phonology, orthography, syntax, semantics, understanding, and morphology into early reading instruction. The POSSUM strategy builds background knowledge, vocabulary, and fluency from the start. Practice sample routines and plan your own POSSUM lesson using a decodable text.
https://chartwellteachinginstitute.org



Want to view the Young Children's Art Exhibit and browse commercial exhibits at your leisure? Choose D10.

Session E • Sunday 10:00-11:15am

E1

Jake Daggett

Foundational Literacy Director • Milwaukee, WI

Direct Instruction Unpacked: Environment, Planning & Rigor

Knowledge about the SOR has made its way through thousands of schools, and curriculum companies have followed suit with their edited and updated materials. However, what we continue to see is a challenge with our current generation of students: engagement. How do I make explicit, systematic instruction joyful? How do I make direct instruction inclusive for a classroom of diverse learners? How do I balance compliance with student-centered advocacy? Jake answers all this and more as he models how achievement is the ultimate catalyst for motivation.

https://www.engagewithjake.com

E2

Jackie Kops

Preschool Teacher • Fenton, MO

Creative Chaos:
Embracing Process Art and Artful Explorations with Less Mess

Embrace the beauty of process art while keeping your classroom under control! Explore a wide range of process art activities that inspire young learners to express themselves freely and creatively. From painting to mixed media, discover how to implement open-ended projects that emphasize the creative process over the finished product. You'll gain practical classroom management strategies to ensure a smooth and engaging experience for all students and less stress and mess for the teacher.

https://pocketofpreschool.com

E3

Calvie Clement

Retired TK Teacher
Hanford

Move, Learn, Succeed:
Linking Motor Skills and Classroom Success

Ready to turn wiggles into wins? This session shows how building perceptual motor skills helps students focus and manage big behaviors. Walk away with easy, classroom friendly movement strategies, simple routines, and practical tips you can use right away to create a calmer, more engaged learning environment for every child.

E4

Maryann Evans & Julia Avila

TK Teachers
Elk Grove

Smart Cookies: Hands-On Data & Play in Early Math

Turn everyday play into powerful data adventures in PK-1 classrooms! Dive into hands-on experiences and make-and-take activities that build early math skills through sorting, graphing, and Math Talks. Leave with ready-to-use, engaging ideas that transform data into meaningful, playful, and fun learning for young learners.

E5

Kim Adams, M.A.

Play Advocate, EC Educator & Speaker
Palo Alto

Play It Forward: The Urgency of Play in Early Learning

This interactive session explores the urgent need to restore play in early learning. Grounded in research and real-world practice, it examines the impact of play loss on development and well-being, and equips educators with strategies to advocate for, design, and protect play as the foundation for development and learning.

www.playbarronpark.com

E6

Allyn Fisher & Shelly Scheafer

EC Educator/Sr. Manager of Content Development
Bend & Portland, OR

Shapes Alive!

Shape and space are fundamental to children's lives and play an important role in their early math learning. Discover routines, activities, games, stories, and songs that help young children learn the language of position and location while developing the ability to understand and manipulate objects and shapes in space.

E7

Emily Grunt

Director of Early Learning
Alameda

Read It Again:
The Power of Repeated and Dialogic Read-Alouds

In this interactive session, explore key elements of effective read-alouds and examine benefits and challenges of intentional dialogue. Analyze high-quality practices, experience repeated readings, and select meaningful texts. The workshop includes hands-on practice with explicit vocabulary instruction to strengthen comprehension and support children's language and literacy development. *https://www.collaborativeclassroom.org*

E8

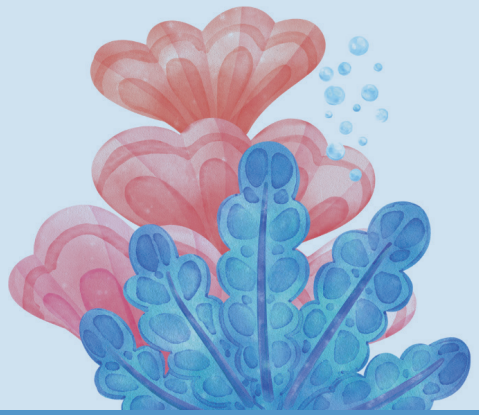
Meghan Sanchez

CTI Teacher Training Consultant
Truckee

Planning with Purpose: Maximizing Your Anchor Texts

Dive into the deep sea by planning a purposeful read aloud of *Search for a Giant Squid* by using discussion protocols for robust discourse. Explore how explicit attention to text structure supports comprehension and locating key information. Use graphic organizers and attend to sentence-level writing to enhance comprehension for students.

https://chartwellteachinginstitute.org



Want to view the Young Children's Art Exhibit and browse commercial exhibits at your leisure? Choose E10.

Session F • Sunday 11:30am-12:45pm

F1

Jake Daggett
Foundational Literacy Director
Milwaukee, WI

Management Moves:
Strategies for 100% Classroom Engagement
We know motivation is a key factor for academic success and increased executive functioning. Explore some kinesthetic ways to incorporate TPR, rhythm, and movement in your K-2 lessons with some new moves, grooves, and whole-body engagement with Jake!
https://www.engagewithjake.com

F2

Jackie Kops
Preschool Teacher
Fenton, MO

Raising Young Scientists:
Investigating in the Science Center
Dive into how to intentionally plan fun, hands-on science investigations at the science table. Get students investigating, interacting with each other, and problem solving even when the teacher is not by their side at the science center. Plus, learn the essential items you need to set up an amazing science center for your little scientists.
https://pocketofpreschool.com

F3

Edith Garner
DREME Research Assistant, Vanderbilt University
Nashville, TN

Math Activities that Teachers (and Children) Love
Put more math learning opportunities into your day! Discover math activities developed by researchers with teachers for preschool classrooms. Free and easy to use. Can be implemented across the day. Supplements all formal curricula. Fun and engaging, focused on all math areas and executive function development. Confidence boosting for teachers!
www.preschoolmath.stanford.edu

F4

Lynn Rule
MathRack
Rice Lake, WI

Developmental Progression to Automaticity with One Mathematical Tool
Automaticity through understanding, not memorization, can be accomplished with the support of literacy and one mathematical tool...the MathRack. Participants will understand the developmental progression of understanding math facts by thinking flexibly like a mathematician. Where to begin? Literacy to support mathematical situations! A step-by-step approach with creativity incorporated.
www.mathrack.com

F5

Michele Bradley & Brenda Cuevas
ECE Teacher/Paraprofessional & Play Advocates
Ceres

Managing Behaviors and Meeting Standards Through Play-Based Learning Centers
This presentation explores how PK, TK, and kindergarten standards can be effectively met through play-based learning centers. It highlights practical strategies for integrating academics into play while fostering engagement, independence, and collaboration. We will examine how purposeful play positively impacts student behavior, self-regulation, and the overall classroom environment.
https://allaboutyoungchildren.org

F6

Holly Britton
Handwriting Instruction Specialist
Sonora

Head to Hand:
Handwriting Instruction that Aids Learning
This session explores the critical head-to-hand connection - the integration of language, memory, and motor movement that underpins writing development. We'll examine how handwriting supports language acquisition by strengthening phoneme-grapheme connections and discuss how the two key components of handwriting - motor and cognitive skill - work to develop writing fluency. *www.squigglesquad.com*

F7

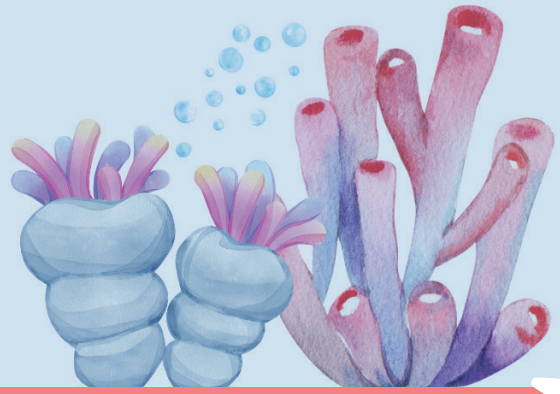
Alexus Mozell
Founder, Nurturing Amir Co.
Long Beach

Building Calm and Confidence Through 123 Mindfulness Practices
Children's author Alexus Mozell presents *123 Mindfulness with Me*, a framework for integrating mindfulness and SEL into kindergarten classrooms. Educators will learn simple counting, breathing, and affirmation routines to support emotional regulation, focus, and confidence. Attendees will gain practical strategies to create calm, supportive, and emotionally safe learning environments. *https://nurturingamir.co*

F8

Caitlin Liu
Early Elementary Art Teacher
Daly City

From Scribbles to Skills:
Month-by-Month Projects for Kindergarten Art Development
Discover how kindergarten artists grow from early scribbles to purposeful creations across the year. This session explores the progression of art skills young learners develop and provides month-by-month, developmentally appropriate projects that intentionally build those skills. Walk away with practical, ready-to-use ideas to support confident, creative growth.



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Registration

PRE-CONFERENCE INSTITUTE: January 15, 2027
CALIFORNIA KINDERGARTEN CONFERENCE: January 16-17, 2027

❑ This is my first time attending the California Kindergarten Conference

• please type or PRINT clearly in ink •

Name_____ CKA Member #_____

Work ph_____ Cell ph*_____ **Home** email*_____

Home address_____ City_____ State___ Zip_____

Grade/position_____ School_____

School district_____

Cell phone and home email required.

2027 California Kindergarten Conference

Please indicate your 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choices for each session by numerals.
Each session is limited. Assignments are made in the order received.

Your t-shirt size*: ❑ S ❑ M ❑ L ❑ XL ❑ 2XL ❑ 3XL ❑ 4XL **T-shirt sizes are not guaranteed.*

	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice
SESSION A Sat. 11:00am-12:15pm	☐	☐	☐
SESSION B Sat. 1:45-3:00pm	☐	☐	☐
SESSION C Sat. 3:15-4:30pm	☐	☐	☐
Sat. 7:00pm • The Deep Sea Disco			
Sun. 7:45-8:15am • CKA Annual Meeting			
SESSION D Sun. 8:30-9:45am	☐	☐	☐
SESSION E Sun. 10:00-11:15am	☐	☐	☐
SESSION F Sun. 11:30am-12:45pm	☐	☐	☐
1:00-1:30pm • Wrap Up Session			

❑ **American with Disabilities Act -** If you have special requirements, please check this box. We will contact you for details.

❑ **I wish to submit my students' art in the Young Children's Art Exhibit.**

• OFFICE USE ONLY •

REG_____

PAYMENT_____

REGISTRATION FEES

PreConference Institute ❑ I will attend the Art Party ***FREE***

$176 Registration $

**Please note the registration fee includes the discounted cost of Dan's newest book to complement the content of the workshop.

2-Day Conference Registration ❑ Presenter ***FREE*** ❑ Principal ***FREE***

Early Bird through November 1
$345 CKA Member / $395 Nonmember*
Regular Pricing
$395 CKA Member / $445 Nonmember* $

1-Day Conference Registration ❑ Presenter ***FREE*** ❑ Principal ***FREE***

Early Bird through November 1
$255 CKA Member / $305 Nonmember*
Regular Pricing
$305 CKA Member / $355 Nonmember* $

❑ I will attend Saturday, 7:00pm "The Deep Sea Disco!"

❑ I will attend Sunday, 7:45am CKA Annual Meeting

*Please apply $50 of my nonmember registration towards CKA membership or membership renewal. ☐

TOTAL FEES $

PAYMENT INFORMATION

❑ Check enclosed - made payable to CKA

❑ Purchase order attached

❑ Charge: ❑ Amex ❑ MasterCard ❑ VISA

Card No.:

Exp. Date_____ Card Security Code:_____

Name on card_____

Signature_____

Billing address_____

_____

Please Note: Any pictures taken during conference weekend can be used for promotional materials.

The Fine Print

Credit Course Information

EARN 1-3 GRADUATE-LEVEL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SEMESTER UNITS/CREDITS FOR ATTENDANCE AT THE CALIFORNIA KINDERGARTEN CONFERENCE

Courses4Teachers/University of the Pacific is offering a special discount for the California Kindergarten Conference after attending each day! Each day you attend, you can register for 1 Graduate-Level Professional Development Semester Unit/Credit for only $70 (a $29 savings)!

Note: These units/credits are designed as professional development for salary advancement and/or to renew credentials. These units/credits are not applicable towards attainment of a master's or higher degree with the University of the Pacific.

To be awarded these units/credits, you will need to do the following:

1. Receive a certificate of completion from the CA Kindergarten Conference.

2. Register online at: https://courses4teachers.net/workshops-conferences-trainings-webinars/california-kindergarten-conference/ for the amount of units specified on your certificate of completion and attach it to the form.
*The course titles you choose to register with us will be on your official transcript as a grade of A. If you need course descriptions for district prior approval, please contact Courses4Teachers: courses4teachers@courses4teachers.net

Please note: It typically takes 2-4 weeks to obtain an unofficial and official transcript. E-transcripts are now available.

Hotel Info:

HYATT REGENCY SANTA CLARA

5101 Great America Parkway
Santa Clara, CA 95054
Toll free (800) 233-1234
santaclara.hyatt.com
Rates single/double $229



If making reservations by phone, you must identify yourself as a California Kindergarten Conference registrant to receive the discounted conference rate.

Don't want to wait for your reservation in the mail? For instant availability and confirmation, please register only at: https://bit.ly/CLARA27

Cancellation/Change date is Monday, January 11, 2027, by 3:00pm PST
Parking: $35 overnight charge, $20 day parking
Group rate is available until Tuesday, December 22, 2026 (based on availability).

Principals Attend FREE

Bring your principal to experience the joy of early childhood! They don't even have to pay! Principals attend the conference for free – make sure to check the box on the registration form and send it in together with a teacher's registration.

Registration Procedures

REGISTER ONLINE HERE or complete the registration form on page 14. Prior to the conference you will receive an email confirming your attendance.
GROUP DISCOUNT: Are you coming with 6 of your favorite colleagues? Groups of 7 or more from the same school district receive $25 off each registration! Call the CKA office at 916-780-5331 for details.

Refund Policy

No registration refunds will be made under any circumstances. Registrations are fully transferable to a substitute registrant up to and including the day of the conference.
Note: In the event the conference is canceled due to circumstances beyond our control, registration fees will be refunded, minus a $20 administrative fee.