



2025 Winter Symposium

“Bringing Our Curriculum to Life”

Monday, February 17th

Shifting Math Classroom Practices to Lead to Mathematical Proficiency

Presenter: Traci Gardner, Director of Mathematics, DESE

Target Audience: Curriculum Directors, Administrators, Instructional Coaches, Secondary Teachers

Session Description: A written curriculum is only as good as its implementation. During this session we will be examining K-12 PLDs to analyze the movement from basic to proficient. Then make connections to Mathematical Practices and Teaching Practices that promote shifts in student’s proficiency.

Q&A on Competency Based Learning

Panel Discussion

Session Description: You’ve got questions, they have answers (maybe!). During this Q&A session, districts who have implemented Competency Based Learning will be present to briefly share their journey and to answer questions you might have related to Competency Based Learning and its implementation.

Keynote Address: Bringing Leadership to Life

Presenter: Alex Demczak

Target Audience: Curriculum Directors, Administrators, Instructional Coaches, Secondary Teachers

Session Description: What does it mean to be a leader and how can you bring your leadership to life? Join us during our keynote sessions as Alex Demczak shares insights on how to build trust and create success. Participants will have time to reflect on the information shared and will walk away with durable, reliable, and powerful strategies to help their teams succeed in their local school districts.

Using Primary/First-Hand Sources of Missourians to Bring ELA Nonfiction to Life

Presenter: Kayla Stewart, Director of English Language Arts, DESE

Session Description: Bringing interdisciplinary lessons to the classroom is a natural occurrence when incorporating primary sources from the Missouri State Library and beyond. Photographs, military draft records, maps, art, and music inspire students to be detectives while using those critical thinking skills addressed in Missouri Learning Standards. Artifacts from Missourians bring non-fiction and ELA to life while bridging the cross-content gap.



Tuesday, February 18th

Addressing the Needs of Secondary Teachers and Students

Presenter: Olivia Apsher, Director of Early Literacy, DESE

Session Description: In this session, you will learn about the efforts that DESE's Office of Literacy is making to address adolescent literacy. Information will be provided about a statewide literacy professional learning opportunity for educators of grades 6-9. Resources and strategies for adolescent literacy will also be shared.

Using Missouri Museums to Enhance Your Social Studies Experience

Presenter: Rhett Oldham, Director of Social Studies, DESE

Session Description: In this session, educators will get an inside look at the Missouri Museum Initiative. The Missouri Museum Initiative is a program that is designed to connect Missouri social studies teachers with Missouri museums around the state of Missouri. Locations have been chosen based on RPDC regions, so teachers have the opportunity to explore primary source documents and archives close to their school. Educators will examine the bell ringer lessons created by teachers and also see how they can develop a museum partnership locally.

DESE Assessment Updates

Presenter: Shaun Bates, DESE Coordinator of Standards, Curriculum, and Assessment

Session Description: MAP season is just around the corner. Make sure you stay until the very end so you can join us as Shaun Bates provides up-to-date information related to assessments and other pertinent DESE items.