

CESA 5 Paraprofessional Summit

Monday, August 3, 2026

Main Room Entrance	Check-In, CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST 7:45a-8:30a				
Sandstone 2/7	8:30a-9:15a	Keynote: Improvisation to Improve Student Interaction ~ Katlin Hall			
	9:30a-10:30a Session 1	10:45a-11:45a Session 2	11:45a-12:45p	1:00p-2:00p Session 3	2:15p-3:15p Session 4
Tundra C/D	<u>The Anxious Generation: Promoting Digital Health and Well-Being</u> Jake Boll	<u>When It Looks Like Behavior, It's Often Survival: Reading PTSD and Autism in the Classroom</u> Candice Viero	L U N C H	<u>The Crisis Cycle and De-escalation Strategies: In the Moment De-escalation</u> Annette LaVia	<u>Social Coaching and Instruction</u> Annette LaVia
Tundra E/F	<u>The Role of the Paraprofessional in an Equitable and Inclusive Classroom</u> Maggie Trendera	<u>Regulation Through Movement</u> Brooke Penoske		<u>Tech Tools for Differentiation and Accessibility</u> Jake Boll	<u>Shifting the Narrative: The Power of Re-Storying Our Students and Ourselves</u> Amanda Semrad
Sandstone 8/9	<u>Setting Boundaries for the Upcoming School Year</u> Sara Kettleison	<u>Using Expectations to Build Student Skills</u> Sara Kettleison		<u>Proactive Group Management for the Playground</u> Maggie Shanahan	<u>Game Facilitation</u> Maggie Shanahan
Sandstone 3	<u>Chaos to Calm: Teaching Skills Instead of Always Managing Behavior</u> Katie Berg	<u>Executive Functioning: What's the Support?</u> Katie Berg		<u>Working with Students with Challenging Behaviors</u> Tammy Van Vleet	<u>Mandatory Reporting</u> Tammy Van Vleet

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~ Breakout Session Descriptions (by title) ~

Chaos to Calm: Teaching Skills Instead of Always Managing Behavior

Katie Berg—Supporting Neurodiverse Students Statewide Coordinator

Moving from different stages of classroom chaos to a state of calm requires a fundamental shift from traditional behavior management to a skill-based approach. Traditional methods often rely on using punitive consequences, rewards, and punishments to control students from the outside, which can fail to build deep skills or internal control. Join us as we learn to view behavior as communication. By pivoting from compliance-only methods to neuro-affirming practices, we can prioritize social skills, regulation, and skill-building. While our goals for our students remain the same, our path to achieving them has evolved.

- Explore the neurological foundations of behavior to understand how neuro-affirming practices shift the focus from external management to internal skill-building.
- Participants will reflect on their reactive patterns and identify opportunities to shift their practice, recognizing that if we don't change, nothing changes.
- Learn to deconstruct challenging behaviors through a critical lens, identify teachable skills, and establish adult support systems that prioritize regulation over reaction

Executive Functioning: What's the Support?

Katie Berg—Supporting Neurodiverse Students Statewide Coordinator

Participants will learn about how the brain works and how we can adjust to meet students where they are. Executive functioning is the ability to organize cognitive processes. This includes the ability to plan, prioritize, pause, and resume activities, shift between activities, and monitor one's behavior. It affects everything we do, so when a student has differences in these processes, it can create barriers to their access, engagement, and educational progress. During this learning event, we will focus on how to support rather than "fix" these differences to help students be the best they can be.

Objectives:

- Gain a basic understanding of processing
- Moving from "fix" methods to supportive methods
- Expanding participants' knowledge of strategies to support executive functioning differences

Game Facilitation

Maggie Shanahan—Program Specialist, Playworks Wisconsin

This workshop teaches participants how to effectively facilitate games, transition between activities, and build cooperation among kids. Participants will learn a variety of new playground games and prepare to teach them at their school.

Mandatory Reporting

Tammy Van Vleet—CESA 5 Curriculum Specialist

Protecting the well-being of every student begins with empowering the adults they trust most. As school employees are often the first to observe signs of student safety concerns, having a clear and confident understanding of mandatory reporting requirements is both a legal obligation and a moral responsibility. Attend this session to recognize subtle indicators of abuse and neglect, understand the specific procedures for compliance with state regulations, and navigate the reporting process confidently and securely.

Proactive Group Management for the Playground

Maggie Shanahan—Program Specialist, Playworks Wisconsin

This workshop explores five key group management strategies that adults can use to set students up for successful group behavior at recess. Participants will practice and game plan for implementing these strategies at their school.

Using Expectations to Build Student Skills

Sara Kettleson—CESA 5 Curriculum Specialist

This interactive session provides participants with an opportunity to reflect on the expectations they hold for the students they support, whether in a classroom or one-on-one setting. Through a guided activity and collaborative discussion, participants will examine how their responses to student behavior can reinforce positive choices, celebrate growth, and use appropriate consequences as opportunities to teach and strengthen social, emotional, and behavioral skills.

Setting Boundaries for the Upcoming School Year

Sara Kettleson—CESA 5 Curriculum Specialist

This reflective and practical session provides educators with the opportunity to define their professional boundaries, identify areas for growth, and explore why boundaries are essential for a healthy and effective school year. Participants will practice what clear, confident boundaries sound like and engage in an adaptable activity for students, leaving with tools to start the year with clarity and confidence.

Shifting the Narrative: The Power of Re-Storying Our Students and Ourselves

Amanda Semrad—CESA 5 Curriculum Specialist

Participants will understand the concept of re-storying, recognize its impact on student success, and leave with practical tools to reframe challenging behaviors and combat their own professional burnout.

Social Coaching and Instruction

Annette LaVia—CESA 5 In-district Special Education Director

Participants will learn and apply coaching instruction strategies to support learners' regulation across all ages.

Tech Tools for Differentiation and Accessibility

Jake Boll—CESA 5 Curriculum Specialist

Interested in some more advanced differentiation tools for your students? Join us as we explore built-in Chromebook features and AI tools to make learning accessible to all. Bring a Chromebook if you can, so you can experience these tools from your students' perspective!

The Anxious Generation: Promoting Digital Health and Well-Being

Jake Boll—CESA 5 Curriculum Specialist

Technology provides many opportunities and sources of enjoyment, but knowing how to segment use based on our own and others' needs is key to a healthy, balanced life. Educators, especially in 1:1 schools or classrooms, need to ask how much screen time is appropriate for students and evaluate how students use technology. This session will discuss the current digital landscape and share resources to support student online health and digital safety.

The Crisis Cycle and De-escalation Strategies: In the Moment De-escalation

Annette LaVia—CESA 5 In-district Special Education Director

Participants will review the crisis cycle and learn in-the-moment de-escalation strategies to help students and staff return to regulated, responsive states.

Regulation Through Movement

Brooke Penoske—Founder & CEO, Innovative Growth

Paraprofessionals play a vital role in supporting students with diverse needs. In this breakout session, participants will explore how movement can be a powerful tool for supporting regulation, attention, and engagement. We will walk through real-life examples and discuss how to apply these strategies in everyday school settings. You will learn simple, effective ways to help students regulate their bodies while also supporting your own regulation. Participants will also leave with a small packet of tools and resources to support them throughout the school year.

The Role of the Paraprofessional in an Equitable and Inclusive Classroom

Maggie Trender—CESA 5 Curriculum Specialist

As a paraprofessional, you can often be the secret ingredient that holds a classroom together. But are you being used to your full potential? This session celebrates the vital role of the paraprofessional in ensuring every student feels like they belong and can succeed. We'll consider how to shift the role of the para from a student "helper" to a key partner who uses your strengths to support student growth, empower student independence, and contribute to a truly inclusive environment.

When It Looks Like Behavior, It's Often Survival: Reading PTSD and Autism in the Classroom

Candice Viero—Trauma Specialist and Coach

Paraprofessionals spend more one-on-one time with dysregulated students than almost anyone else in the building. This session gives them a clear way to tell the difference between trauma responses, autistic regulation, and the overlap zone where the two look nearly identical, plus practical co-regulation and language tools they can use the next school day.

Working with Students with Challenging Behaviors

Tammy Van Vleet—CESA 5 Curriculum Specialist

Tired of reactive responses to challenging behaviors? This session will equip you with proactive and responsive strategies rooted in understanding the "why" behind student actions. Learn practical techniques for de-escalation, building positive relationships, and implementing individualized supports that address the underlying needs driving challenging behaviors. Leave with actionable tools and a framework to create a more positive, predictable learning environment for all students.