



2026 Annual State Hybrid Conference Agenda

Conference Title: Reaching New Heights Together

Date: March 27, 2026

Time Zone: Mountain Standard Time (MST)

Format: In-Person & Virtual (Hybrid)

Location: [Glendale Community College](#) (6000 W Olive Ave, Glendale, AZ 85302) + Zoom

WIFI Guest Network: AZCEC **Password:** GoGauchos26!

8:00–8:30 AM | Check-In & Networking

In-Person: Registration Desk & Networking ([Student Union](#))

Virtual: Main Zoom Room

Zoom Link: [Click HERE](#)

8:30–10:00 AM | Welcome & Opening Keynote (Hybrid)

Relate to Elevate: The Power of Connection in Exceptional Education

Presenter: Tessa Brock

In-Person: [SU 104](#)

Zoom Link: [Click HERE](#)

10:00–10:30 AM | Break

In-person: Refreshments & exhibitor booths

Zoom Link: [Click HERE](#)

10:30-11:30 AM | In Person Breakout Session 1

Breakout	Title	Location	Zoom Link
1A	Relate to Elevate: The Power of Connection in Exceptional Education	SU 104	Click HERE
1B	Language as Intervention: Listening, Speaking, And Collaborating With Flexibility In Special Education	MA 128	
1C	Make It Make Sense! Adapting Curriculum Tasks for Every Learner	MA-142	
1D	Teaching Self-Regulation Strategies as cognitive and metacognitive strategies to support learning and independence	NU-104	

10:30-11:30 AM | Virtual Breakout Session 1

Breakout	Title	Location	Zoom Link
1E	Small Shifts, Big Impact: Practical Classroom Management That Works	Zoom	Click HERE
1F	Unlocking Built-In Accessibility: Hands-On UDL Strategies with Apple, Microsoft, and Google	Zoom	Click HERE
1G	Improving Reading Fluency: Practical Strategies Based on High Leverage Instructional Practices	Zoom	Click HERE

11:30–11:45 AM | Break

In-person: Refreshments & exhibitor booths

Zoom Link: [Click HERE](#)

11:45–12:45 PM | Breakout Session 2 (In Person and Zoom)

Breakout	Title	Location	Zoom Link
2A	Resource Roundup (Meet our Sponsors)	SU 104	Click HERE
2B	The Power of the PWN: Telling the Story Behind Your Decisions KIM with MARIA	MA-142	Click HERE

12:50 – 1:40 PM | Lunch Break

In-Person: Catered lunch & networking

Virtual: Networking rooms & on-demand videos

Zoom Link: [Click HERE](#)

1:45 - 2:45 PM | In Person Breakout Session 3

Breakout	Title	Location
3A	Small Shifts, Big Impact: Practical Classroom Management That Works	SU 104
3B	Unlocking Built-In Accessibility: Hands-On UDL Strategies with Apple, Microsoft, and Google	MA-142
3C	Improving Reading Fluency: Practical Strategies Based on High Leverage Instructional Practices	NU-104

1:45-2:45 PM | Virtual Breakout Session 3

Breakout	Title	Location	Zoom Link
3D	Teaching Self-Regulation Strategies as cognitive and metacognitive strategies to	Zoom	Click HERE

support learning and
independence - KIM with Sharon

3E	Make It Make Sense! Adapting Curriculum Tasks for Every Learner - BROOKE	Zoom	Click HERE
3F	Language as Intervention: Listening, Speaking, And Collaborating With Flexibility In Special Education- TINA	Zoom	Click HERE

2:45–2:55 PM | Break

In-person: Refreshments & exhibitor booths

Zoom Link: [Click HERE](#)

3:00–4:00 PM | Breakout Session 4 (Hybrid)

Breakout	Title	Location	Zoom Link
4A	Panel Discussion TINA	SU 104	Click HERE
4B	Hot off the Bench: This Year's Must-Know Education Cases KIM	MA-142	Click HERE

4:10–4:30 PM | Closing Session (Hybrid)

Turning Plans into Practice TINA with JAY ROOM HOST

In-Person: [SU 104](#)

Zoom: [Click HERE](#)

Participant Notes

- In-person attendees should arrive at breakout rooms 5 minutes early.
- Virtual attendees should bookmark Zoom links in advance.
- Hybrid sessions will include a moderator to support both audiences.
- Certificates will be emailed after the conference.

The General Meeting will be held in Room SU104 Glendale Community College (6000 W. Olive Ave. Glendale, AZ 85302) Zoom: [Click HERE](#) KIM with JAY CO-HOST

Keynote Description

Title: Relate to Elevate: The Power of Connection in Exceptional Education

Presenter: Tessa Brock

Description: In exceptional education, connection isn't a soft skill — it's a survival skill. Every breakthrough begins with trust. Every behavior is communication. And every student's success is shaped by the relationships around them. In this energizing keynote, Tessa Brock blends humor, honesty, and heart with practical insights from brain science, trauma-informed practices, and her own decades of experience walking alongside educators. Together, we'll explore what it really means to "reach new heights" — not through hustle and exhaustion, but through alignment, relational safety, and the power of we. Attendees will walk away feeling seen, strengthened, and reconnected to the purpose behind their practice, with practical strategies to elevate students, teams, and themselves.

In Person Breakout Session 1 Descriptions

Title: Relate to Elevate: The Power of Connection in Exceptional Education(**Hybrid**)

Presenter: Tessa Brock

Description: Continued Conversation from Keynote

Title: Language as Intervention: Listening, Speaking, And Collaborating With Flexibility In Special Education

Presenter: Jessica Matus

Description: This interactive session introduces functional and flexible collaboration practices for interdisciplinary teams in special education. Through experiential activities, participants explore listening, speaking, perspective-taking, and reflective awareness strategies that help teams stay grounded, aligned, and responsive while supporting students who have disabilities. All practices are practical, accessible, and immediately useful.

Title: Make It Make Sense! Adapting Curriculum Tasks for Every Learner

Presenters: Heather Hall

Description: Turn ordinary lessons into extraordinary learning! Discover how to adapt curriculum tasks for every learner using simple, high-impact strategies aligned with HLP 13. Walk away with ready-to-use templates, visual supports, and creative ideas that make differentiation doable—and fun—in any classroom.

Title: Teaching Self-Regulation Strategies as cognitive and metacognitive strategies to support learning and independence

Presenter: Dr. Patricia Noonan

Description: As educators, we want to develop resilient learners who apply strategies to self-regulate and persevere. Self-regulation is a proactive, self-directed process for attaining goals, learning skills and managing emotional reactions. Join us to learn three instructional strategies to help students plan, monitor their progress, adjust and reflect. The AZ College

and Career Competencies Project will share numerous examples from PreK through high school classrooms. Free tools and resources will be shared, including curriculum, online student assessments and process tools.

Virtual Breakout Session 1 Descriptions

Title: Small Shifts, Big Impact: Practical Classroom Management That Works

Presenter: Carrie Brandon

Description: Discover easy to learn and implement, research-based strategies aligned with HLP 7 and HLP 8 to increase engagement and reduce disruptions. Learn simple, high-impact practices that strengthen classroom management, promote positive behavior, and maximize learning time, creating safe predictable environments for students and teachers.

Title: Unlocking Built-In Accessibility Hands-On UDL Strategies with Apple, Microsoft, and Google

Presenters: Emily Gaylord, Laura Wooten-Lafranier, and Cecilia Dey.

Description: Join the Arizona Department of Education Assistive Technology team for an interactive session exploring built-in accessibility features in Apple, Microsoft, and Google platforms. Using the UDL framework, participants will discover the keys to reducing learning barriers. Bring your device or use ours for hands-on practice and classroom-ready strategies.

Title: Improving Reading Fluency: Practical Strategies Based on High Leverage Instructional Practices

Presenter: Sarah Jane Schonour

Description: This session explores three evidence-based strategies—teacher modeling, repeated reading, and progress monitoring—that strengthen fluency and lead to improved comprehension. Participants will learn how to support students with disabilities in their reading achievement across diverse educational settings. Participants will experience an interactive simulation illustrating the impact of these strategies.

Breakout Session 2 (Hybrid) Descriptions

Title: Resource Roundup!

Presenter: Jay Johnson and Robyn Daliri

Description: During the session, providers (e.g., related service agencies, mental health organizations, transition services, family support organizations, vendors, and community nonprofits) each share a brief, focused overview of their services. Providers highlight: The students and families they serve, referral processes and eligibility criteria, and how educators can collaborate with them to support IEP goals and student outcomes.

Title: The Power of the PWN: Telling the Story Behind Your Decisions

Presenter: Heather Pierson

Description: In this engaging session, an experienced special education attorney will break down Prior Written Notice in a way that feels practical, clear, and empowering for teachers. Participants will learn how PWN serves as the narrative of your professional decisions—capturing the “why” behind your actions, supporting compliance, and

strengthening communication with families. Through real-world examples and easy-to-apply strategies, you'll walk away with a better understanding of how to write PWNs that are accurate, defensible, and reflective of the thoughtful work you do every day.

In Person Breakout Session 3 Descriptions

Title: Small Shifts, Big Impact: Practical Classroom Management That Works

Presenter: Carrie Brandon

Description: Discover easy to learn and implement, research-based strategies aligned with HLP 7 and HLP 8 to increase engagement and reduce disruptions. Learn simple, high-impact practices that strengthen classroom management, promote positive behavior, and maximize learning time, creating safe predictable environments for students and teachers.

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Breakout Session 4 (Hybrid)

Title: Panel Discussion (Panelists: Arizona Department of Education, Education Forward, and Encircle Families)

Presenters: Jay Johnson and Robyn Daliri

Description: Through guided discussion and audience questions, participants will gain a clearer understanding of how policy, advocacy, and family engagement intersect to support effective special education. The panel will also highlight practical strategies for collaboration, referral pathways, and ways educators can leverage these organizations to improve case management and student outcomes.

Title: Hot Off the Bench: This Year's Must-Know Education Cases

Presenter: Heather Pierson

Description: Join an experienced education attorney for a fast-paced, insightful look at the most significant court decisions impacting schools this year. This session breaks down key cases in clear, practical terms, highlighting what they mean for your daily work, your decision-making, and your responsibilities under the law. Teachers and administrators will leave with a stronger understanding of current legal trends, emerging risks, and how to stay proactive and compliant in an ever-changing educational landscape.