

January 19th, 2026 Institute Day

7:30-7:45 a.m. Arrival & [Sign-In](#)

Coffee, Water and Snacks in Library Commons

7:45 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. [Trauma Informed Care](#) with Blake Mack - Robert Young Center - Theater

10:15 - 11:00 a.m. GEA Meeting Q & A - Theater

LUNCH PROVIDED by PTA at GHS 11:15 a.m. -12:00 p.m.

Breakout Sessions @ GHS ([Map](#))

Coffee, Water and Snacks in Library Commons

Session 1 12:10-1:10 p.m.	Session 2 1:15- 2:15 p.m.	Session 3 2:20-3:20 p.m.
AI for ELA Roundtable (GHS English Department Only) Rm. 43	Assistive Technology: Requirements for Special Education Rm. 43	Game-Based Strategies to Support Social-Emotional Learning Rm. 43
Google and Curriculum Organization Rm. 2	AI Integration in Education Rm. 2	Gamified Learning Rm. 2
Sourdough Bread Rm. 24	Sourdough Bread Rm. 24	Beginner Watercolor (Cancelled) Rm. 24
Socratic Seminars Rm. 41	Ganva (Cancelled) Rm. 41	Universal Design for Learning Rm. 41
Effective Notetaking Rm. 26	Supporting Student Medical Needs Within Our Schools (Cancelled) Rm. 26	Creative Mindfulness Rm. 25
Curriculum Work Room Rm. 32	Curriculum Work Room Rm. 32	Curriculum Work Room Rm. 32
Open Tech Library Commons	Open Tech Library Commons	Open Tech Library Commons
Difficult Conversations: Parent Edition (Cancelled) Rm. 17	Difficult Conversations: Parent Edition (Cancelled) Rm. 17	BreakoutEdu Rm. 17
Free Database Access for grades K-12+ Library	Discover Library Websites Library	Xello College & Career Readiness Updates Library
Comedy Theater	Yoga Concert Hall Stage	Comedy Theater
I Like Big Bins, and I Cannot Lie! Rm. 34	I Like Big Bins, and I Cannot Lie! Rm. 34	Pickleball (New! Session) GFAC

3:20 - 3:30 p.m. [Sign out](#) online & complete survey [\(Download/Print EOC\)](#)

Done AI for ELA Roundtable (*GHS English Department, Rm. 43, Session 1*) **ALL GHS English Department members must attend this session.** Red Light, Green Light - no not the game, but when do we find the use of AI acceptable in the writing process and when it should be avoided?

DONE AI Integration in Education (*Javier Reyes, Rm. 2, Session 2*) Explore practical, classroom-tested strategies for using AI tools to enhance instruction, streamline planning, and support student creativity.

DONE Assistive Technology: Requirements for Special Education (*Monica Furlong, Rm 43, Session 2*) This session will provide information about the legalities of assistive technology implementation for students with IEPs. Learn about the different types of AT for students with disabilities, how to document in the IEP effectively, and what AT tools are accessible for staff and students. Learn the SETT Framework for deciding what AT students need and delve into different AT tools online.

SARADONE - BreakoutEdu (*Nicki Ruthai, Rm.17, Session 3*) BreakoutEdu is an educational game-based learning platform that harnesses the excitement of escape rooms and infuses them with academic content for the classroom. We'll play a round, and then brainstorm how you might use this in your classroom!

~~**Canva**~~ (~~*Jacque Kelly & Lauren Schmidt, Rm. 41, Session 2*~~) Tired of your boring agendas or newsletters? Liven up your daily classroom routines with Canva. **(Cancelled)**

DONE Comedy (*Josh Plant, Theater, Sessions 1 and 3*) Step into a lighthearted mental reset as we unwind with a curated collection of stand-up and sketch comedy clips designed to help you relax, laugh, and recharge. This session offers a guilt-free brain break where the only objective is to enjoy the moment and leave feeling refreshed.

DONE Creative Mindfulness (*Kim Windisch, Rm. 25, Session 3*) This artistic session will walk you through 2 creative methods that embrace all skill levels while getting lost in a meditative process of creating. The first method is using a neurographic art approach (discovered by Pavel Piskarev, philosopher, psychologist, architect, and professor in 2014) that allows your brain to relax and flow while using line, shape and color. We will use ink and watercolor. The second method is mixed media collage. We will focus on breaking the fear of a "blank canvas" with this fun and playful art approach using a variety of materials.

Done Curriculum Work Room (*Self-Guided, Rm. 32, Session 1,2, & 3*) Need some additional time wrapping up work from this morning, or just need a quiet space to tackle your next curriculum work goal? Come use this space to get it done.

~~**Difficult Conversations: Parent Edition**~~ (~~*Brian Hofer, Rm. 17, Sessions 1 & 2*~~) In this session, you will learn practical strategies and receive a template for difficult conversations that has been developed using over 25 years of experience in education and coaching. Designed for teachers and school staff, this session offers actionable tips to navigate the in challenging conversations with parents confidently and effectively, helping to build understanding, maintain professionalism, and foster positive relationships. **(Cancelled)**

SARADiscover Library Websites (K-5): (*Jeanne Brucher, Library, Session 2*) We have updated your elementary library sites to Destiny Discover. Learn about how to access the pages, what you can find, and brainstorm with the middle/high school librarian to see how we can make these pages more useful to elementary staff and students.

Effective Notetaking (*Instructional Coaches, Rm. 26, Session 1*) This session explores practical strategies to help secondary students take purposeful, organized notes that deepen understanding.

SARAFree Database Access for grades K-12+ (*Jeanne Brucher, Library, Session 1*) Learn about the IRIS database package that the Illinois State Library provides to all schools in the state. Find ebooks for elementary, novel read-alikes for middle school, mechanical manuals for CTE, test prep for high school, or free academic journals for your grad classes. It's all there, and it's all free!

DONE Game-Based Strategies to Support Social-Emotional Learning (*Social Work Department, Rm. 43 Session 3*) This session gives teachers time to engage in social-emotional learning through play. Teachers will have the option to play games and reflect on the communication, problem-solving, teamwork, flexibility, and emotional regulation skills embedded in game-based activities. This activity highlights how games can be used as meaningful SEL tools, promote staff connection, and model the value of intentional SEL breaks for both teachers and students.

Done Gamified Learning (*Javier Reyes, Rm. 2, Session 3*) Learn how to design and facilitate interactive sessions that use board games and LEGO-based activities to teach grammar, vocabulary, and collaborative problem-solving. These resources are student-approved, highly adaptable, and perfect for boosting engagement across grade levels and content areas.

DONE Google and Curriculum Organization (*Javier Reyes, Rm. 2, Session 1*) Learn practical ways to organize and streamline curriculum in Google Classroom. This session will highlight strategies for structuring units, managing assignments, and keeping resources accessible so teachers can save time and students can navigate learning with ease.

DONE I Like Big Bins, and I Cannot Lie! (*Skyler Schneider & Paige Panicucci, Rm. 34, Sessions 1 and 2*) Dive into the what and why of sensory and STEM bins.

DONE Open Tech (*James Roodhouse & Bill Eaker, Library Commons, Session 1, 2, & 3*) Have questions about apps, Google tools, or tech in general? Drop by our Open Tech PD breakout session! This informal, hands-on time is perfect for exploring new tools, troubleshooting issues, or brainstorming ways to integrate tech into your teaching. Bring your questions, your device, and your curiosity—we're here to help!

DONE Pickleball (*Todd Ehlert, GFAC, Session 3*) Come have fun and play Pickleball! (**Note:** Wear gym shoes & exercise apparel)

DONE Seminars (*Andrea Snook, Rm. 41, Session 1*) Looking for strategies to build stronger discussions and deeper critical thinking? This session will introduce **Socratic Seminars** as a powerful, student-centered approach to analyzing texts and engaging in meaningful dialogue. Participants will learn how to structure a seminar, prepare students, and use tools like note-taking guides and rubrics to support accountability and high-quality conversation. You'll leave with practical tips and ready-to-use resources that can elevate academic discourse in any classroom.

DONE Bread (*Tasha Moe & Sara Wirth, Rm. 24, Session 1 & 2*) Sourdough sounds fancy, but it's just bread made with natural yeast instead of the store-bought packet. Learn the basics and start your sourdough era!

~~**Supporting Student Medical Needs Within Our Schools**~~ (*Jessica Jansen, Rm. 26, Session 2*) With the increasing needs and complexities of student needs, join Nurse Jansen for a Q&A session to learn more and discuss how you can best support student needs. (**Cancelled**)

SARAU DL: Small Shifts, Big Impact (*Cassie Hanson, Rm. 41, Session 3*) Ever wonder how to design lessons that work better for *more* students without adding more to your plate? In this session, we'll break down what Universal Design for Learning (UDL) really is, take a moment to reflect on where your current mindset falls, and walk through the UDL framework in a clear, practical way. You'll leave with one simple, ready-to-use UDL planning tool you can try right away — no overhaul required.

SARA Xello College & Career Readiness Updates (6-12): (*Jeanne Brucher, Library, Session 3*) Whether you are new to the district or have used Xello before, see how Xello can support students' post-high school exploration. Since initial

training for teachers years ago, Xello has offered more guidance to developing plans, financial planning, and a fun new "real life" budgeting simulation.

DONE Yoga (*Quincy McSweeney, Concert Hall Stage, Session 2*) So often we are bogged down with what's going on in our minds. The stress we feel starts in our minds, and if it isn't dealt with, will take hold in our bodies. Through grounding, breathing, and body-fulness (instead of mindfulness) exercises, we can purge some of the stress our bodies have stored, and make room for what really matters: being human, in a human body. Take some time to reconnect your mind to your body, and join me on a slow, relaxing journey through a low-impact, high reward body-fulness session!