CONFRATUTE STRANDS AND DESCRIPTION

Participants are encouraged to bring laptop computers or personal devices to all sessions.

STRAND BLOCK A: 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM, Tuesday - Friday

1. SCHOOLWIDE ENRICHMENT MODEL (SEM)—Joseph Renzulli & Sally Reis, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT.

The general session of this strand (Tuesday) will provide an overview of The Schoolwide Enrichment Model (SEM), and the breakout sessions (Wednesday-Friday) will focus on specific strategies for implementing the SEM in a variety of schools with students of different ages and demographic backgrounds. The model, based on over 40 years of research and development, is a comprehensive system for infusing “high-end learning” into total school improvement efforts while simultaneously challenging high achieving students. Specific strategies include the development of Total Talent Portfolios, Curriculum Modification Techniques, and Enrichment Teaching and Learning. Three books are recommended for all participants in this strand and are available at a greatly discounted rate at Confratute.

Breakout SEM Strands (Wednesday, Thursday, & Friday)

1A1. ELEMENTARY I—Laurel Brandon, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT.

This strand is intended for elementary gifted/enrichment specialists who will be working primarily with high potential and gifted and talented (talent pool) students in an SEM context. We will discuss and simulate the specialist’s role in an SEM school, including organizing Type I and II experiences and Enrichment clusters for all students, creating the talent Pool, and working with individuals and small groups on Type III experiences. We will also practice supporting classroom teachers with Curriculum Compacting.

1A2. ELEMENTARY II—Melissa Thom, Bristow School, West Hartford, CT.

This hands-on strand will explore the infusion of the SEM into regular education classroom practices and school-wide initiatives. Participants will expand their knowledge of Type Is/IIs/Ills and Enrichment Clusters as we discuss each component, examine organizational aspects and support documents, and share tips and tricks for implementation. After this session, participants will have the information and tools they need to go back to their settings and begin implementing this meaningful learning with students.
1B. MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL—Carla Brigandi, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV.
This breakout strand is a hands-on session designed to deepen middle and secondary school teachers’ understanding of the SEM and share strategies on how to implement components of the SEM, including curriculum compacting, Type I, Type II, and Type III Enrichment, and Enrichment Clusters. Participants will also consider implementation strategies for homogenously grouped settings and infusion into general education classroom curricula. In keeping with the SEM, this session demonstrates effective pedagogy that both challenges and engages middle and secondary school students who demonstrate gifted behaviors.

1C. PRINCIPALS & COORDINATORS - Building the Culture for Successful Schoolwide Enrichment Implementation—Michele Femc-Bagwell, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT & Lauren Rodriguez, Southeast Elementary, Mansfield, CT.
This strand is for administrators or gifted coordinators who are at any stage of the process for implementation of the Schoolwide Enrichment Model. Beginners will learn how to start and access key ideas, and veterans will provide experience and develop strategies for improvement. SEM is a pathway to increase student achievement and engagement while fostering a growth mindset in all students. In this strand, you will learn how SEM improves the culture and entire system of teaching and learning in your school, identify effective approaches to professional development for establishing an SEM culture, and understand how SEM encourages a personalized approach through the use of gifted strategies for all students.

2. Challenging Students with Engaging Questions—Erik Francis, Maverik Education LLC, Scottsdale, AZ.
What is a good question—or rather, how do good questions challenge students to demonstrate different levels of thinking and communicate their depth of knowledge? Learn how to create a culture of inquiry by rephrasing the performance objectives of academic standards and learning targets into good questions that will prompt and encourage students to think deeply, express and share the depth and extent of their learning, and develop their talents and learning into personal expertise.

3. Meeting the Needs of Your Student Mathematicians (Grades K-8)—Janine Firmender, Saint Joseph’s University, Philadelphia, PA.
Engaging students in the practices of professionals in a discipline – in this case mathematics – has long been a recommended practice in the field of gifted education. Both the National Council for Teachers of Mathematics and the Common Core Standards specify that mathematical practices are essential elements of mathematics education for all students. With these recommendations in mind, this session will encourage participants to consider how to integrate the processes and practices in instruction to promote the development of mathematical talent. Through the analysis of engaging student tasks, participants will explore the integration of the practices such as problem solving, reasoning, communicating, and constructing arguments in mathematics, and using mathematical representations.
4. **Differentiating Curriculum AND Instruction**—Sandra Kaplan, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA.

Approaches to differentiating curriculum using a variety of models such as depth and complexity and the continuum of differentiation will include a series of games that can be used by teachers and/or students to appropriately modify the core curriculum. A focus on differentiating instruction with a variety of newly field tested instructional strategies will be introduced to support differentiated curriculum.

5. **Learning to Think, Thinking to Learn: Strategies to Promote Deeper Thinking, Inquiry, and Reasoning**—Jann Leppien, Whitworth University, Spokane, WA.

A focus on developing thinking skills enables students to take charge of their own learning, deepen their understandings, and become more engaged. To cultivate student thinking and alertness to cognition requires tools and strategies for educators to use in their classrooms. This session will focus on the varied practices/strategies/and routines that can be used to deepen understanding and foster the desire for students to make their thinking visible as they interact with peers. Participants will work on developing learning prompts that escalate the level of critical thinking and enhance student discourse as they interact with meaningful content and engage in deeper learning.

6. **Rigor Not Rigor Mortis: Escalating ELA, Literacy & Thinking for High-Ability Students**—Susannah Richards, Eastern Connecticut State University, Willimantic, CT.

What are the characteristics of an effective and relevant ELA curriculum for high ability language users? This strand highlights dozens of effective practices for escalating ELA and literacy instruction for both expressive (speaking and writing) and receptive (listening and reading) literacies. The focus is on relevant literacy experiences that increase students' skills and content knowledge. Strategies for literary discussion that focus on big ideas and not specific texts, suggestions for response to text, incorporating diverse voices into established “canons”, and examples of writing for authentic audiences will be incorporated throughout the strand. Technologies and model literacy experiences will be highlighted throughout the strand with examples of a variety of high-quality texts featuring complex language structure, great vocabulary, complex characters, and/or complex ideas.

**STRAND BLOCK B: 1:30 – 3:00 PM, Monday - Thursday**

7. **Brains Wired Differently: Understanding and Supporting 2e Students**—Susan Baum, 2e Center for Research and Professional Development, Studio City, CA.

Brains wired differently: Understanding the twice-exceptional learner. So many bright learners have brains that are wired differently resulting in extraordinary gifts and talents and perplexing challenges at the same time. Their unique brain wiring requires strategies that are not only dually differentiated but strength-based and talent-focused as well. In this session you will learn how to meet the needs of bright students with ASHD, ASD, or Dyslexic brain wiring. You will learn many practical strategies how to create a 2e friendly environment poised to help 2e youngsters thrive. Who are these students? Where does their learning breakdown? How do we identify strengths, interests, and talents? How can we use talent development and enrichment to build executive function and social and emotional regulation?
If you like interactive activities, opportunities for discussion, and learning creative options, then this strand is for you.

8. **Hands-On Enrichment in Science**—*Richard Bothmer, Lively Science Consulting, Brookline, NH.*

Are you scientifically challenged? Wonderful! We want you! Together we will dispel any science anxiety and replace it with scientific enthusiasm. The emphasis of this strand will not be on science facts, but on how science works. We’ll do lots and lots of labs. Some real...some, well, fabulous, such as when you trap and dissect a snorg. Don’t plan on sitting down much. We’ll be out and about finding fascinating science everywhere. Bring your traditional five tangible senses and your five intangible senses: Sense of Curiosity, Wonder, Imagination, Adventure, and Respect. Students walk into our classes loving science and it is our responsibility that they walk out the same way. We can do this. Piece of cake!

9. **Strategies for Teaching Creative and Critical Thinking in Your Classroom**—*Carla Brigandi, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV.*

Critical and creative thinking are increasingly being recognized as learning and innovation skills necessary for student success in learning and life. But how do we define these terms, and more importantly, how do we operationalize them in our classrooms? In this session, participants will learn techniques that support the development of creative and critical thinking in themselves and in their students, as well as pedagogical approaches for infusing techniques into regular classroom practice. This is an interactive session, so come ready to engage!

10. **From Inspiration to Exhibition: Facilitating Type III Projects**—*Janine Firmender, Saint Joseph's University, Philadelphia, PA.*

Through Type III Enrichment students have the opportunity to make a positive change in their school, community, or the world. But how can we inspire our students to tackle real-world problems and persevere throughout the process? In this strand, we will explore how teachers can facilitate students’ work on Type III projects from “bright idea” to creation. Along the way, we will discuss the incorporation of technology, goal setting, research, interviewing skills, and more that are essential to facilitating successful Type III projects! (Computer or other device strongly recommended.)

11. **Enrichment Clusters: A Practical Plan for Real-World, Student-Driven Learning**—*Marcia Gentry, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN.*

In this hands-on, interactive strand, participants will learn how to develop, organize, and implement one very exciting component of the Schoolwide Enrichment Model. Enrichment Clusters afford time to come together to pursue authentic interests, solve problems, and create products and services for real audiences using advanced content and methods. Information from practitioners in every phase of implementation will be shared and will include a nuts and bolts, how-to-do-it question and answer session. Participants will be ready to return to their schools and put this program into motion. The book, *Enrichment Clusters: A Practical Plan for Real-World, Student-Driven Learning,* is strongly recommended for this strand and can be purchased at Confratute.
12. Curriculum Compacting and Differentiation in the Mixed-Ability Classroom (Grades K-6) Cindy Gilson, University of North Carolina, Charlotte, NC.

Are you searching for practical strategies and resources for teaching and reaching your most advanced K-6 learners? Then join us for an interactive strand focused on curriculum compacting and differentiation strategies for the mixed-ability classroom. Compacting is an effective tool for managing and organizing differentiation in any classroom or as a part of the Schoolwide Enrichment Model. Teachers will learn how to identify unnecessary curriculum content that can be eliminated and replaced with differentiated curriculum, assessments, and enrichment to enhance students’ strength areas and excitement for learning! Major topics include (1) techniques and materials for curriculum compacting, (2) enrichment activities matched to students’ ability and interests, (3) differentiation with technology, and (4) acceleration. The facilitator will differentiate for participants’ specific interests. The text, Curriculum Compacting: A Guide to Differentiating Curriculum and Instruction Through Enrichment and Acceleration, is recommended for participants taking the strand and can be purchased at Confratute.


In this strand we will explore several options for designing and implementing effective gifted and talented programs. Is identification the first step in this process? Should you adopt or adapt a curricular model? Or should you determine potential program content or curricular options? Each phase of program design and development requires team decision making from school district representatives to ensure that the gifted and talented program is integral to the district’s mission. One approach to designing effective and defensible gifted programs is to use the National Association for Gifted Children’s Pre-K-Grade 12 Programming Standards. The gifted programming standards focus on student outcomes and evidence-based practices in learning and development, assessment, curriculum planning and instruction, learning environments, programming, and professional development. The standards serve as a template for designing new programs and re-designing current programs. Learn how to develop model gifted and talented programs for your students by capitalizing on best practices.

14. Helping Bright Kids Face Challenges with Grace and Grit—Thomas Hébert, University of South Carolina, SC.

Bright students need to develop self-understanding and learn how to face the challenges of adolescence with self-assurance and determination. Teachers can help them reach that understanding and develop confidence and grit through effective classroom strategies. This strand offers an overview of the social and emotional issues facing talented students and how teachers can address their needs. Through discussions, case studies, online resources and exploration of contemporary media, teachers will gain a better understanding and learn methods to support their students’ emotional well-being and determination to succeed.
15. **Storytelling, Mime and Movement: Making Learning Creative and Kinesthetic**—Gail Herman, *Storytelling and Movement Arts, Easthampton, MA.*

In this strand learn to help your students find meaning kinesthetically through vocal expression, mime, and movement during classroom explorations with reading, writing and speaking story narratives, even in social studies. Creative and expressively talented students as well as twice exceptional students will thank you! You will participate in stories for hand puppets and teach vocal expression and MIME through stories of kindness and concern; create creative movement story lessons for math and needed breaks; help students create circle stories for science and fantasy; learn physical activities to help students develop and write character details (e.g. in pet stories). Explore folk percussion instruments to augment meaning and ambience in their stories and teach students to hear between the lines as they read. Remember, meaning, memory, movement and emotion are interconnected. Allow students to transfer core concepts from one medium to another for in depth learning and to show what they know.

16. **Designing Personalized Learning Experiences** —Brian Housand, *East Carolina University, Greenville, NC.*

A Type I Experience has the potential to supercharge students’ innate curiosity and propel them toward a lifetime of inquiry and investigation, but how do we effectively tap into students’ interests and purposefully construct a learning environment that promotes creative productive giftedness? In this brand new strand, we will explore ways to leverage readily available technology and resources to build meaningful Type I Experiences. We will begin by first going through a Type I, and then, we will deconstruct it to reveal a blueprint of what makes learning memorable. From there, we will collectively design a series of personalized learning experiences that you can take home and implement in your own learning environment.

17. **Early Childhood Education for High Potential and Gifted Students**—Sandra Kaplan, *University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA.*

In this strand you will learn how to investigate and field test non-traditional methods to recognize and respond to diverse K-2 grade students who demonstrated advanced needs, abilities and interests. Several innovative methods will be introduced, demonstrated, and discussed.

18. **Integrating Arts and Creativity to Develop Talents in Young Artists**—Benjamin Lacina, *St. Paul Public Schools, Saint Paul, MN.*

Attending to the creative and artistic talents and needs of young people can feel like less of a priority with the demands to meet standards in core academic areas, yet research shows that integrating the arts into the regular curriculum has a positive impact on schools, improving student affect, achievement, and engagement. This strand provides hands-on examples of arts integrated strategies, lessons, and activities that connect the habits of mind of creative engagement with process skills embedded in core academic standards. In addition, participants will learn how the arts build personal, relevant, and authentic connections that can help foster a more positive and creative school-wide culture.
19. Quality Curriculum and Instruction to Advance Student Potential: A Look at Essential Elements—Jann Leppien, Whitworth University, Spokane, WA.

A general principle of education is that curriculum should address and thus respect individual learner characteristics. Curriculum designed to be a catalyst for developing student potential must be flexible enough to provide appropriate challenge and support. This strand will share examples of curricular planning tools, instructional pedagogies, and practices that can be used to design curricular options to advance student potential. Participants will be introduced to several models that help in the development of more authentic curricular experiences in which young people are thinking, feeling, and doing what practicing professionals do when they explore the content and methodology of a discipline. Participants will work on the development or revision of an instructional unit using templates to scaffold the planning process. Please bring a unit idea and a computer as we will work to revise an existing unit of study.


“This isn’t how I did math when I went to school.” Adults often remember the know how (procedures) not the know why from their early math experience. In this strand, the presenter will share creative ways that the teacher can help not just their talented learners but all learners understand the “know why” or conceptual knowledge of mathematics. Participants should come prepared to laugh and have fun with the hands-on math activities.

21. Books as Hooks for Igniting, Delighting and Cultivating Lifelong Learners—Susannah Richards, Eastern Connecticut State University, Willimantic, CT.

This strand includes an overview of trade books that invite readers to explore and cultivate interests and ideas. In addition to the dozens of books and book lists that will be highlighted, emphasis will be on how to use books to meet the needs of students with advanced potential. Featured books will include recently published fiction and non-fiction books that lead to critical and creative thinking experiences. Discussion and activities will focus on identifying, evaluating, and incorporating children's and young adult books as vehicles for learning in ELA and the content areas. Given that many advanced students are fascinated by informational texts, a portion of the session will focus on how to incorporate informational books into the curriculum. Hundreds of books from a variety of genres and formats (biographies, poetry, concept books, collections, graphic novels, technically-engineered, etc.) will be highlighted throughout the strand.

22. Infusing the SEM: Head, Heart, Gut—Nicole Waicunas, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT.

What does it mean to use head, heart and gut in a classroom? This strand is intended for educators who want to learn about using the gifts and talents of their students, themselves as educators, parents, and community members in the classroom to best serve the needs of their students. The SEM is the vehicle to provide the tools and resources to every student, teacher, parent, school, and community. The courage to find these talents and gifts in children requires nurturing and creative classrooms. Differentiating so that self-efficacy can be established and meeting the social and emotional needs of students are the baselines that allow students to take risks and step into the components of the SEM with curiosity,
interest, and self-regulation. Come and share in the journeys of teachers and students who make the head, heart, and gut connection. Then, share with your colleagues and one another, how you, too, can nurture this growth for yourself and your students.

23. **The Scholar Identity Model (tm): Motivating High Ability Underrepresented Underachievers** — *Gilman Whiting, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN.*

This foundational and flexible model has applications for all gifted, creative, and talented youth. Although initially developed for and successfully used with gifted, Black male students. It is grounded in a psycho-social model and institute designed to create entire systems that researcher and author Gilman Whiting calls a Scholar Identity (SIM). A scholar identity is defined as one in which culturally, linguistically, and racially diverse students view themselves as academicians, as studious, as competent and capable, and intelligent or talented in academic settings. Workshop participants will engage in an action-packed strand. Taking away the understanding that through role modeling and expert facilitation, and teacher expectations, students can develop the models 9 constructs: self-efficacy, future orientation, willingness to make sacrifices, internal locus of control, self-awareness, achievement, affiliation, academic self-confidence, race consciousness, and the critical tools to understand and question discordant ideas about masculinity. Participants will consider context-relevant, site-specific applications and pedagogical curricular implementation for the classroom.

STRAND BLOCK C: 3:30 – 5:00 PM, Monday - Thursday

24. **Silk Screen Printing** — *Vidabeth Bensen, House of Life Prints Studio, Pittsboro, NC & Barbara Forshag, Amite, LA.*

Screen Printing is a medium that CAN be taught in all classrooms using the simple methods you will learn in this strand. It can enhance all aspects of the curriculum and students find it very enjoyable. Their own designs can be printed on t-shirts, cards, banners, and paper, many of which can be fundraisers. Attendance at the first session is essential as an overview of the process will be taught. The studio will then be open all day Tuesday to Thursday so participants can work individually or in small groups with the instructors. A $5 materials fee will cover the cost of supplies used during the strand. The strand is based on “A Simple Guide to Screen Printing,” written by the instructors.

25. **Challenging Talented Readers with the SEM-R** — *Rebecca Eckert, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT.*

Given the diverse skills and experiences that students bring with them into a classroom, what strategies and materials can teachers employ to increase reading achievement for everyone including talented readers? This seemingly simple question will serve as the springboard for a research-based strand that seeks to examine the importance of challenge in reading and offer several tested techniques for engaging talented readers and promoting enjoyment of reading for all students. The Schoolwide Enrichment Model Reading Framework (SEM-R) was developed to increase reading challenge and enjoyment for all students, and to provide the tools and techniques needed to promote continuous growth for talented readers in elementary and middle school classrooms. Participants will learn how to implement the SEM-R, and consider how best to employ its three phases to fit their context and student needs.
26. Access Denied/System Failure: Access, Equity, and Missingness in Gifted Education: Status and Actions—Marcia Gentry, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN & Gilman Whiting, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN.

Our recent analyses of the Office of Civil Rights census data concerning youth identified with gifts and talents provide evidence of persistent and even worsening underrepresentation of students from Black, Latino, Native, ELL, and low-income backgrounds. Results are presented in State Report Cards with access, equity, and missingness of students by race and income highlighted. Identification procedures continue to rely on 1) instruments that purport to measure ability 2) multi-step, and/or 3) multi-measure/matrix processes, all yielding disparate results; thus, perpetuating underrepresentation and segregation in programs for youth with gifts and talents. In this interactive strand, participants will examine their own practices and data, then consider actions and policies that can be implemented to more equitably recognize, identify, recruit, and retain diverse students in gifted education programs. Social justice, equity, inclusiveness, and culturally responsive practices can lead to the discovery and development of gifts, creativity, and talent among diverse youth.

27. Creating Positive Social Emotional Environments for Smart Kids—Thomas Hébert, University of South Carolina, SC.

Join us as we delve into learning four guidance strategies to create positive social and emotional environments for smart kids. Day one will involve training in the use of literature to guide students to self-understanding. Day two offers instruction on the use of film and online media to facilitate affective discussions. Day three features the use of biographical materials to inspire and guide students. We wrap up the strand on the final day with instruction on how to use photography to support identity development in smart kids. We'll have a great time in the four days we're together as we engage in work that is fun and fulfilling.


Organizing curriculum and instruction around a strong conceptual focus promotes depth in thinking, rich questioning, and opportunities for authentic connections across disciplines. In this strand, we explore specific strategies for engaging students in constructing meaning around big ideas, with applications across grade levels and subject areas.


The circular protractor and straightedge are powerful mathematical tools for any teacher who teaches geometry. Basic design techniques, measurement and geometry vocabulary can easily be integrated into the standard curriculum using these tools. It is also a way to integrate art into the mathematics curriculum and simultaneously turn those students on to math who are bored with the arithmetic part of mathematics. A circular protractor and straightedge will be provided for the participants to use along with pencils and colored pens/markers. If time allows, some mathematical origami will be tossed in the session. Last but not least the participants should bring their sense of humor to this strand.
Low motivation is among the most frustrating education issues facing parents and educators. Low motivation can limit students’ opportunities for long-term success and fulfillment, and impact society as a whole by reducing the pool of high ability individuals contributing their creative productivity to societal growth and development. In this strand we will discuss reasons talented students underachieve and review specific strategies that improve student achievement by increasing students' confidence and making learning more meaningful.