

Block I- Friday Evening (7:00 – 8:10 PM) Professional Learning Breakout Sessions

A. SLAY! Sustaining Learning, Authentic You

What if joy wasn't an extra in teaching, but the strategy? In this uplifting and pedagogically grounded breakout session, 2026 Pennsylvania Teacher of the Year Maddie Loring invites future educators to rethink what powerful teaching really looks like. Drawing from real classroom practice, community-based learning, and the belief that public education blooms when teachers are unapologetically themselves, this session explores how sustainable, joyful instruction leads to deeper student engagement and lasting impact.

Ms. Madeline Loring, 2026 PA Teacher of the Year

B. Every Behavior Tells a Story: Helping Students Write a Better One

Behind every behavior is a story—one that often goes untold unless we take the time to listen. This session invites educators and support staff to look beyond the surface of challenging behaviors and uncover the experiences, needs, and skills that drive them. This training will explore: the link between behavior, communication, and unmet needs; how trauma, regulation challenges, and skill deficits impact student actions; practical, compassionate strategies for responding to behavior with intention; and ways to build trusting relationships that foster new, positive behavioral "chapters". By shifting from a mindset of managing behavior to understanding it, we empower students to rewrite their stories—and redefine their success.

Mrs. Pamela Watts, PSEA Director of Education Services, Special Education

C. Every Child, Every Day: Cultivating Classrooms Worthy of Children

Reimagine classrooms where every child feels seen, valued, and empowered. This session explores culturally responsive, inquiry-driven practices that build identity, curiosity, confidence, and student voice. Discover how small, intentional, high-impact moves can create classrooms worthy of every child, every day.

Ms. Krishawna Goins, Recruitment & Student Engagement Officer, Penn State University

D. Landing That First Teaching Job!

This session will review the different aspects and techniques one can use to land one's first teaching job. Topics covered include: Resume development, Job Search Plan of Action, Interview Strategies and Procedures, and General Helpful Hints and Tips.

Dr. Vincent Citarelli, Garnet Valley School District Assistant Superintendent of HR

E. AI in the Classroom Today for New & Early Career Educators

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is reshaping the educational landscape at an unprecedented pace, and we must ensure educators—not algorithms—remain at the center of teaching and learning. This interactive session will provide best practices for teacher and student-facing-AI-use while engaging in reflection around AI literacy, equity, and professional learning to empower new educators to protect what matters most - the human connection at the heart of education.

Dr. Christopher M. Clayton, NBCT, Ph.D., PSEA Director of Education Services

Block II- Saturday Morning (9:45 – 10:55 AM) Professional Learning Breakout Sessions

A. Understanding Your Future Contract and Responsibilities through Scenarios: Avoiding Career-Killing Landmines in Your First Three Years of Teaching

This workshop will focus on the transitions from SPSEA to PSEA membership and why it is important to grasp the differences. Students will role-play administrators and/or teachers and discuss the priorities and agendas of each through hypothetical scenarios that could occur in the first three years of teaching. Please note: If you have taken this workshop before, the scenarios have been updated.

Ms. Jennifer Wahl- 2018 PA ToY & Dr. Craig Miller, PA College Of Technology

B. Critical Thinking Across the STEM Curriculum

In our increasingly technological world, critical thinking and creative problem-solving are more important than ever. Learn how STEM activities can help your students develop these skills in all curriculum areas. This session is geared toward future elementary teachers, but all attendees will find ideas to enhance their classroom practices.

Mr. Mike Soskil, 2017 PA Teacher of the Year

C. You've Got This! Success & Happiness in Your First Years Teaching

In your first years teaching, there will be expected and unexpected things that will likely happen. During our time together, we will uncover proactive techniques to establish effective conditions in your classroom as well as talk about the inevitable challenges of the first few years and ways to navigate them.

Ms. Suzanne Dailey, NBCT, Central Bucks School District, Instructional Coach

D. Beyond the Bell: Building Impact That Extends Beyond the Classroom

Many future educators enter the profession because they want to make a difference—but what does that really look like beyond teaching content? This session invites you to explore how teachers lead, mentor, and advocate both inside and outside the classroom. Through reflection, discussion, and real-world examples, participants will consider meaningful ways to make an impact early in their careers while also learning how to set healthy boundaries. Attendees will leave with a broader understanding of teacher leadership and a clearer sense of how they can shape their future profession with purpose and confidence.

Mr. Leon Smith, 2025 PA Teacher of the Year

E. New & Early Career Educators Panel

Panelists will discuss different avenues that emerge in your first year OUT of college as an educator, including the job search process, interviews, subbing, etc.

New & Early Career Educators SPSEA Alumni Panel

Block III- Saturday Afternoon (1:50 – 3:00 PM) Professional Learning Breakout Sessions

A. Advocacy Through Storytelling

Stories change minds. The real impacts on our campuses, communities, and states are not always understood by those who make decisions that impact up every day. Your story, your experience, and your voice are necessary to change the minds and actions of others. Join this session where we will dig into the importance of sharing our stories, how to do so, and who to share our stories with. We'll conclude by writing postcards, emails, or call scripts to contact decision makers in our communities and the state.

Ms. Hannah St. Clair, NEA Aspiring Educator Program Chair

B. Contract Confidence: Understanding Your First Teaching Agreement

Teacher contracts can feel overwhelming, but understanding them is key to setting yourself up for success. In this session, we'll break down how to read a salary schedule, helping you map out your earning potential over time. You'll also learn how to navigate healthcare benefits, comparing options to make informed choices. Finally, we'll explore other work conditions and benefits like leave policies, contract days/hours, and more. Walk away with the confidence to understand, evaluate, and advocate for your contract.

Mr. Ryan Hardesty, 2023 PA Teacher of the Year

C. Teach Happier

Being an effective educator can take a lot of capacity and bandwidth in the first few years. In this interactive session, you will learn realistic and proactive strategies based in positive psychology that will help achieve work/life satisfaction

as we navigate this unique time of teaching and leading. We'll unpack fundamental understandings and then dig deeper to explore small shifts in thoughts, language, and actions. These small and manageable shifts, practiced over time, can increase your happiness at school and at home.

Ms. Suzanne Dailey, NBCT, Central Bucks School District, Instructional Coach

D. Advice, Tips, and Strategies from the 2017, 2018, 2025, & 2026 PA Teachers of the Year!

Participants will be able to ask questions and receive sage advice, techniques, stories, and strategies from the 2017, 2018, 2025, and 2026 PA Teachers of the Year! How awesome is that?!

Mr. Mike Soskil, Ms. Jen Wahl, Mr. Leon Smith, & Ms. Madeline Loring

E. Understanding and Implementing Behavior Support Plans

This training provides educators with a foundational understanding of Behavioral Support Plans (BSPs). Participants will learn how BSPs are developed, key components of effective plans, and their critical role in supporting students with disabilities. The training emphasizes proactive strategies, data collection, collaboration with the educational team, and practical techniques for promoting positive behavior and safety in the classroom. This session equips participants with the tools and knowledge needed to effectively create, implement and support individualized behavioral interventions.

Mrs. Pamela Watts, PSEA Director of Education Services, Special Education

