

# NIET 2026

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

GENERATING EXCELLENCE  
IN EVERY SCHOOL



# WELCOME.



**R**ecognizing and celebrating excellence is a powerful motivator for positive action, but generating excellence requires systems and structures for continuous improvement. As states take the lead in driving educational reform, NIET has been a key accelerator in the development of policies and practices that generate innovation and improvement. The rapid growth in student outcomes—or “southern surge” in NAEP growth scores this year—demonstrated the impact of these strategies at scale. Success is built on a foundation of support that produces actionable information to strengthen instruction, creates positive school learning environments, and grows student learning. Our two days of learning together during this year’s conference are designed to transfer back and impact educators and students in your schools, districts, and states—generating excellence in every school.

## BREAKOUT SESSION DESCRIPTIONS:

### STRAND 1

## Generating Instructional Success

### Instructional Planning for Literacy Foundations (3-12)

Addressing foundational literacy in the upper grades ensures all students can fully access rigorous content. This session focuses on practical strategies for intentional planning and instructional decision-making to address the foundational literacy needs of students across grades 3-12 using high-quality instructional materials.

### Content-specific Support for CTE Classrooms

Defining instructional effectiveness in career and technical education (CTE) requires content-specific support that honors the unique demands of technical and non-core classrooms. Join this session to explore how the NIET Teaching and Learning Standards connect to CTE practices and support both technical rigor and student outcomes.

### Deepening Conceptual Understanding in Mathematics

Conceptual understanding is essential for helping students uncover the purpose of mathematics, build meaningful connections, and apply their knowledge flexibly in new contexts. In this session, participants will explore strategies to deepen conceptual understanding and develop plans for incorporating content-specific approaches into daily instruction.

### Fostering Purposeful and Resilient Learners

Providing students with a clear learning purpose and opportunities for collaboration promotes deeper engagement and ownership. Participants in this session will examine how intentional leader actions build student resilience, stamina, and confidence, contributing to long-term success.

## Generating Coaching and Support

### Coaching for Learner Autonomy

Releasing responsibility to students is essential to empowering them to think critically, make decisions, and take ownership of their learning. Through practical coaching techniques and examples, participants will enhance their ability to support teachers in creating classrooms where students take an active role in their learning journey.

### Elevating Teacher Agency Through Coaching Conversations

Evidence-based coaching empowers teachers to take charge of their growth, enhance their voices, and take ownership of lasting improvement. Participants in this session will gain tools to foster engagement and cultivate a culture where every voice contributes to collective success.

### Collaborative Coaching to Bridge Content and Instructional Practice

Supporting teachers outside of our own content expertise is a necessary part of effective coaching practice. In this session, participants will learn collaborative coaching strategies that strengthen teacher content knowledge, guide teachers' instructional decisions, and deepen pedagogical thinking through the use of high-quality instructional materials (HQIM).

### Coaching That Balances Trust and Challenge

Effective coaching involves creating a safe and reflective space where teachers feel supported to examine their practice while being challenged to grow. Join this session to explore coaching strategies that balance challenge with support and use student learning data as a catalyst for critical dialogue and collaborative problem-solving.

## Generating Early Career Teacher Success

### Supporting Real-time Instructional Adjustments

Early career teachers often need structured support to recognize and act on students' needs in the moment. This session introduces participants to a scaffolded coaching strategy that helps teachers practice and refine real-time adjustments, building confidence and instructional precision over time.

### Applying UDL Through NIET's Teaching and Learning Standards

Understanding Universal Design for Learning (UDL) strategies to effectively meet the diverse needs of learners while adhering to state standards is essential to lesson delivery for early career teachers. Participants will explore strategies that align UDL with NIET's Teaching and Learning Standards, helping teachers create accessible lessons with meaningful learning across content areas.

### Adopting an Asset-based Mindset

For early career teachers, building a positive classroom culture begins with viewing every student through the lens of their strengths. This session will help participants confront misconceptions and reframe challenges into opportunities to foster growth, possibility, and a culture of success.

### Strengthening Student Clarity With HQIM

Connecting high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) to NIET's Teaching and Learning Standards for presenting instructional content elevates the instructional effectiveness of early career teachers. In this session, participants will utilize specific descriptors to support teachers in using HQIM to deliver lessons that provide explicit performance expectations during daily lessons.

## Generating School Leadership

### Supporting Instructional Precision

Supporting effective instruction requires more than well-planned lessons—it demands precision and attention to detail. In this session, participants will explore how the instructional leadership team (ILT) strengthens teachers' skills in instructional clarity, standards alignment, and responsiveness to student needs through intentional coaching.

### Sustaining ILT Impact With Continuous Data-informed Decisions

High-impact leaders utilize mid-cycle data to refine their long-range plans and sustain momentum toward achieving school goals. Join this session to analyze evidence of school goal attainment to identify areas for improvement, make data-driven adjustments, and align Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) learning with the demonstrated impact of Cluster learning.

### Collective Leadership for Aligned School Plan Implementation

Sustaining progress toward school goals requires an intentional, collaborative approach to leadership development and support. In this session, participants will explore collective Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) strategies and design opportunities for leaders to build one another's capacity throughout the year.

### Generating a Culture of Learning

Effective instructional leaders foster an environment that promotes continuous learning, collaboration, and professional growth. Participants will explore strategies to support teacher development, foster shared accountability, and engage in actions that promote evidence-based decision-making across a school.

## Generating Teacher Leadership

### Differentiating Cluster Learning Using HQIM

Being intentional about where teachers are in their high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) implementation journey allows leaders to tailor support to strengthen student outcomes. Participants will use NIET's Teacher Learning Progression on Curriculum to design differentiated Cluster learning that advances effective instructional practices.

### Strategic Communication for Instructional Impact

Effective instructional leadership relies on clear and responsive communication. This session will equip participants with strategies to identify and apply tailored communication methods that align with teachers' needs, fostering a culture of shared accountability and learning that supports every teacher's development.

### Making Teacher Leadership Thinking Visible

Leaders who can identify and articulate the thinking behind their actions build the capacity of others and strengthen collective efficacy. In this session, participants will reflect on their leadership practices, connect them to teacher leadership roles, and plan to communicate the thinking behind their actions to develop teachers and peers.

### Building Teacher Ownership of Cluster Learning

When teachers take ownership of the Cluster learning process, they become active decision makers who connect student data to Cluster cycle goals. Participants will explore how to use student evidence to guide reflection and collaborative problem-solving that aligns instructional decision-making to Cluster cycle goals.

## Panel Sessions

### Generating Excellence through 24/7 Coaching and Support

**MODERATOR:** STEPHANIE MOSQUEDA

This panel explores how districts and schools are leveraging NIET’s online platform to support observation, feedback, and professional learning aligned with the instructional needs of educators. Panelists will discuss how quality examples of instruction can streamline coaching cycles and improve practice across schools resulting in targeted growth for teachers and leaders.

### Generating Coherent Systems for HQIM Implementation

**MODERATOR:** VICKY CONDALARY

Implementing high-quality instructional materials requires more than adoption; it depends on coherent systems that align leadership, professional learning, coaching, and instructional expectations. In this panel, state, district, and school leaders share how they align HQIM, collaboration, and feedback to support high-fidelity implementation across schools.

### Generating Excellence Through Strategic Staffing

**MODERATOR:** KRISTAN VAN HOOK

Strategic staffing solves many challenges at once by aligning systems and structures to take full advantage of the instructional expertise and leadership potential of teacher leaders. Join our panel of experts to learn how they are maximizing resources more strategically to achieve better outcomes for students with their existing budget.

### Excellence in Action: NIET Award Winners

**MODERATOR:** DR. DAVITA LANCELIN

A valued tradition at NIET’s conference is honoring schools and districts that are exceptional models for building educator excellence and advancing student success. We invite you to learn from recent winners of the NIET Founder’s Award and District Award of Excellence for Educator Effectiveness.

## Bubble Sessions

Bubble sessions allow educators to observe a collaborative learning opportunity modeled by school and district leaders and facilitated by NIET leaders. In these sessions, educators are seated around a center table where the meeting will occur, with participants surrounding them in a “bubble” to observe. Throughout the meeting, there will be “step-outs” where participants will reflect on what they are observing, and facilitators will unpack what they are learning. These sessions will each highlight a different collaborative learning opportunity: Cluster/PLC meeting, Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) meeting, and District Instructional Leadership Team (D-ILT) meeting.

### Participants will:

- » Identify key elements of high-quality Cluster/PLC, ILT, or D-ILT meetings that build educator capacity to improve instructional practice.
- » Analyze how Cluster/PLC, ILT, or D-ILT meeting structures can accelerate educator impact.
- » Determine the next steps for creating or strengthening Cluster/PLC, ILT, or D-ILT meeting structures in their district or school.

### District Instructional Leadership Team in a Bubble

**Team:** East Baton Rouge Public Schools, LA

**Facilitated by:** *Tracy Hypolite and Nicole Bolen*

### Instructional Leadership Team in a Bubble

**Team:** Horizon Honors Schools, AZ

**Facilitated by:** *Pilar Holtrop and Patti Cruz*

### Cluster/PLC Meeting in a Bubble

**Team:** Hamilton Southeastern Schools, IN

**Facilitated by:** *Angelina Burrows and Jen Oliver Brady*

### Instructional Leadership Team in a Bubble

**Team:** Ascension Public Schools, LA

**Facilitated by:** *Theresa Hamilton and Christina Hulin*

# WEDNESDAY, April 1, 2026

ROOMS	10:00 - 11:15 AM	1:15 - 2:30 PM	2:45 - 4:00 PM
	<b>Breakout Session A</b>	<b>Breakout Session B</b>	<b>Breakout Session C</b>
<b>Galerie 1</b>	Coaching That Balances Trust and Challenge Carrie Pullins & Tad Savage	Content-specific Support for CTE Classrooms Christina Hulin & Starla Collins-Ross	Coaching That Balances Trust and Challenge Carrie Pullins & Tad Savage
<b>Galerie 2</b>	Instructional Planning for Literacy Foundations LaDazha Ford & Betsy Fera	Coaching for Learner Autonomy Brandy Brown & Christa Stewart	Instructional Planning for Literacy Foundations LaDazha Ford & Betsy Fera
<b>Galerie 3</b>	Supporting Instructional Precision Tiffaney Kelly & Jessica Worthington	Building Teacher Ownership of Cluster Learning Laura Tew & Jodi Leckbee	Supporting Instructional Precision Tiffaney Kelly & Jessica Worthington
<b>Galerie 4</b>	Deepening Conceptual Understanding in Mathematics Amy Gayle	Elevating Teacher Agency Through Coaching Conversations Keely Potter	Strengthening Student Clarity With HQIM Andrea Divine
<b>Galerie 5</b>	Differentiating Cluster Learning Using HQIM Rossette Osamba & Abigail McKamey	Collective Leadership for Aligned School Plan Implementation Karen Grose & Angie Kendall	Differentiating Cluster Learning Using HQIM Rossette Osamba & Abigail McKamey
<b>Galerie 6</b>	Collaborative Coaching to Bridge Content and Instructional Practice Jill Crossley & Byrian Collins	Deepening Conceptual Understanding in Mathematics Theresa Hussey & Shayla Canady	Collaborative Coaching to Bridge Content and Instructional Practice Jill Crossley & Byrian Collins
<b>Studio 2</b>	Adopting an Asset-Based Mindset Erin Foster & Marquita Jackson	Applying UDL Through NIET's Teaching and Learning Standards Kathleen Deleon & Kennette Bardell	Adopting an Asset-Based Mindset Erin Foster & Marquita Jackson
<b>Studio 3-4</b>	Sustaining ILT Impact With Data-informed Decisions Tiwanaha Washington & Melissa Blossom	Strengthening Student Clarity With HQIM Jennifer Board & Robert Stell	Sustaining ILT Impact With Data-informed Decisions Tiwanaha Washington & Melissa Blossom
<b>Studio 7-8</b>	Supporting Real-time Instructional Adjustments Danielle Chretien & Jennifer Woods	Making Teacher Leadership Thinking Visible Sandra Walker-Parker & Jill Crain	Supporting Real-time Instructional Adjustments Danielle Chretien & Jennifer Woods
<b>Studio 9</b>	<b>PANEL SESSION:</b> Generating Excellence Through 24/7 Coaching and Support Stephanie Mosqueda	<b>PANEL SESSION:</b> Generating Coherent Systems for HQIM Implementation Vicky Condalary	
<b>Salon A-C</b>	Elevating Teacher Agency Through Coaching Conversations April Woolard & Tanjela Sims	Fostering Purposeful and Resilient Learners Claire Murray & Robin Variest	Elevating Teacher Agency Through Coaching Conversations April Woolard & Tanjela Sims
<b>Salon D-E</b>	<b>BUBBLE SESSION:</b> District Instructional Leadership Team East Baton Rouge Public Schools, LA Tracy Hypolite & Nicole Bolen	<b>BUBBLE SESSION:</b> Instructional Leadership Team Horizon Honors Schools, AZ Pilar Holtrop & Patti Cruz	<b>BUBBLE SESSION:</b> Cluster Meeting Hamilton Southeastern Schools, IN Angelina Burrows & Jen Oliver Brady
<b>Salon F-H</b>	Strategic Communication for Instructional Impact Sarah Jolly-Swift & Dena Rooks	Generating a Culture of Learning Elizabeth Miller & Tasha Dawson	Strategic Communication for Instructional Impact Sarah Jolly-Swift & Dena Rooks

Conference Welcome and Opening 8:30 - 9:45 AM

Awards and Recognition Luncheon 11:30 - 1:00 PM

## LEGEND

- Strand 1:** Generating Instructional Success
- Strand 2:** Generating Coaching and Support
- Strand 3:** Generating Early Career Teacher Success
- Strand 4:** Generating School Leadership
- Strand 5:** Generating Teacher Leadership
- Strand 6:** Bubble Sessions
- Strand 7:** Panels

# THURSDAY, April 2, 2026

ROOMS	9:30 - 10:45 AM	11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	1:45 PM - 3:00 PM
	<b>Breakout Session D</b>	<b>Breakout Session E</b>	<b>Breakout Session F</b>
<b>Galerie 1</b>	Content-specific Support for CTE Classrooms Starla Collins-Ross & Kim Herring	Coaching That Balances Trust and Challenge Carrie Pullins & Tad Savage	Content-specific Support for CTE Classrooms Christina Hulin & Starla Collins-Ross
<b>Galerie 2</b>	Coaching for Learner Autonomy Brandy Brown & Christa Stewart	Instructional Planning for Literacy Foundations LaDazha Ford & Betsy Fera	Coaching for Learner Autonomy Brandy Brown & Christa Stewart
<b>Galerie 3</b>	Supporting Instructional Precision Tiffany Kelly & Jessica Worthington	Building Teacher Ownership of Cluster Learning Laura Tew & Jodi Leckbee	Building Teacher Ownership of Cluster Learning Laura Tew & Jodi Leckbee
<b>Galerie 4</b>	Strategic Communication for Instructional Impact Amber Flores	Supporting Instructional Precision Kristina Carssow	Sustaining ILT Impact With Continuous Data-informed Decisions Tracy Hypolite
<b>Galerie 5</b>	Collective Leadership for Aligned School Plan Implementation Karen Grose & Angie Kendall	Differentiating Cluster Learning Using HQIM Rossette Osamba & Abigail McKamey	Collective Leadership for Aligned School Plan Implementation Karen Grose & Angie Kendall
<b>Galerie 6</b>	Deepening Conceptual Understanding in Mathematics Theresa Hussey & Shayla Canady	Collaborative Coaching to Bridge Content and Instructional Practice Jill Crossley & Byrian Collins	Deepening Conceptual Understanding in Mathematics Theresa Hussey & Shayla Canady
<b>Studio 2</b>	Applying UDL Through NIET's Teaching and Learning Standards Kathleen Deleon & Kennette Bardell	Adopting an Asset-Based Mindset Erin Foster & Marquita Jackson	Applying UDL Through NIET's Teaching and Learning Standards Kathleen Deleon & Kennette Bardell
<b>Studio 3-4</b>	Strengthening Student Clarity With HQIM Jennifer Board & Robert Stell	Sustaining ILT Impact With Data-informed Decisions Tiwanaha Washington & Melissa Blossom	Strengthening Student Clarity With HQIM Jennifer Board & Robert Stell
<b>Studio 7-8</b>	Making Teacher Leadership Thinking Visible Sandra Walker-Parker & Jill Crain	Supporting Real-time Instructional Adjustments Danielle Chretien & Jennifer Woods	Making Teacher Leadership Thinking Visible Sandra Walker-Parker & Jill Crain
<b>Studio 9</b>	<b>PANEL SESSION:</b> Generating Excellence Through Strategic Staffing Kristan Van Hook	<b>PANEL SESSION:</b> Excellence in Action: NIET "Award Winners" Davita Lancelin	
<b>Salon A-C</b>	Fostering Purposeful and Resilient Learners Claire Murray & Robin Variest	Elevating Teacher Agency Through Coaching Conversations April Woolard & Tanjela Sims	Fostering Purposeful and Resilient Learners Claire Murray & Robin Variest
<b>Salon D-E</b>	<b>BUBBLE SESSION:</b> Instructional Leadership Team Ascension Public Schools, LA Theresa Hamilton & Christina Hulin		
<b>Salon F-H</b>	Generating a Culture of Learning Elizabeth Miller & Tasha Dawson	Strategic Communication for Instructional Impact Sarah Jolly-Swift & Dena Rooks	Generating a Culture of Learning Elizabeth Miller & Tasha Dawson

Morning General Session 8:00 - 9:15 AM

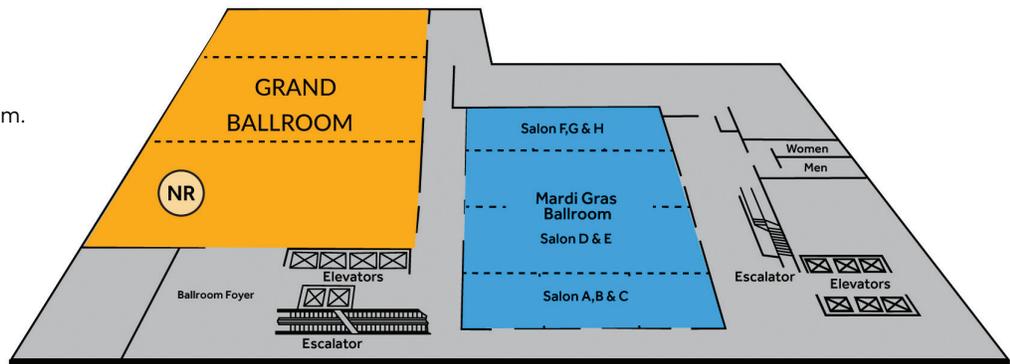
Lunch 12:30 - 1:30 PM

Team Planning 3:15 - 4:15 PM

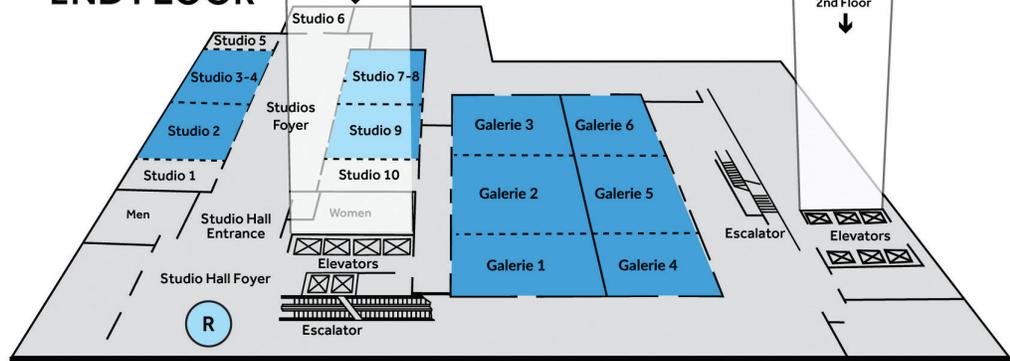
CONFERENCE CONCLUDES

- Breakout Rooms**
- R **Event Registration**  
Tuesday, March 31, 2:00 - 7:00 p.m.  
Wednesday, April 1, 7:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
- General Session**
- NR **Networking Reception**  
Wednesday, April 1, 4:30 - 5:30 p.m.

**3RD FLOOR**



**2ND FLOOR**



**2026 Founder's Award Finalists**

**Horizon Honors Elementary**

Horizon Honors Schools, AZ

**Marthville Elementary & Junior High School**

Natchitoches Parish School Board, LA

**Northview Middle School**

MSD Washington Township, IN

**Riverwalk Academy**

SC Public Charter School District, SC

**Sorrento Primary School**

Ascension Public Schools, LA

**NIET**

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