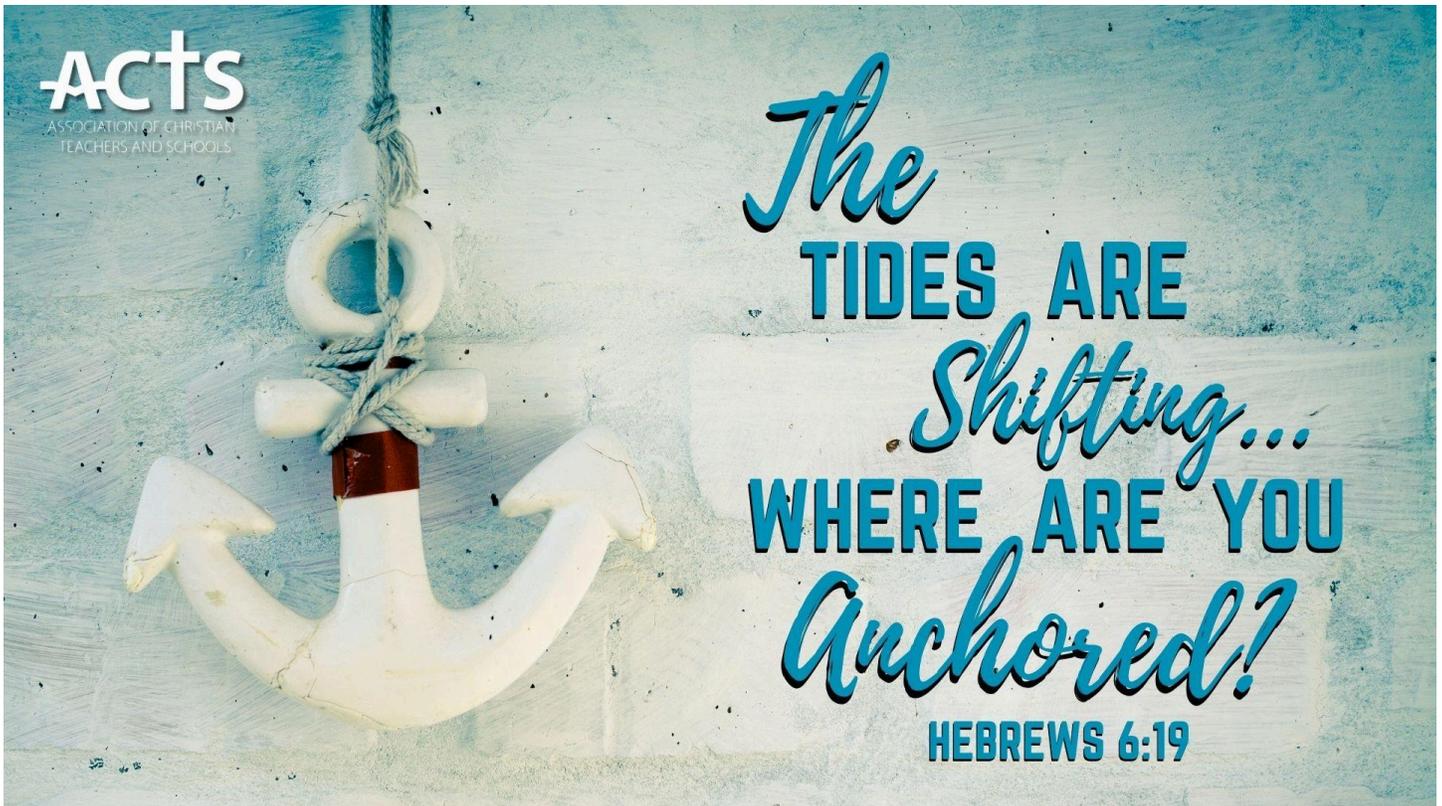




ASSOCIATION OF CHRISTIAN
TEACHERS AND SCHOOLS

Tennessee Christian Educator
Conference
March 30, 2026

First Assembly Christian School
8650 Walnut Grove Rd, Cordova, TN 38018



[Welcome!](#)

We are thrilled to welcome you to the 2026 Tennessee Christian Educator Conference. It is an honor and a privilege to have you join our fellowship today as we gather to sharpen one another for the glory of God. We are excited over the lineup we have in store! The Lord has provided us with truly exceptional speakers for both our keynote sessions and our breakout workshops—men and women of God who are ready to pour into your lives and ministries.

The vision behind this conference is deeply rooted in our shared calling. We are here to provide high-quality, professional development that is both relevant to your classroom and rooted in Biblical excellence. To create a sacred space for networking and fellowship with brothers and sisters who share your precious faith and values. And to fortify our Christian schools through the joyful exchange of wisdom and encouragement among administrators, teachers, and staff.

Our fervent prayer is that this conference serves as a wellspring of refreshment for your soul. May you leave here not only with practical tools for your school but with a renewed spirit, fresh motivation, and a heart on fire for the mission of Christian education.

We are so glad you're here!

[In this program:](#)

[Schedule for the day](#)

[Lunch Options](#)

[Workshop Session Descriptions](#)

[Campus Map](#)

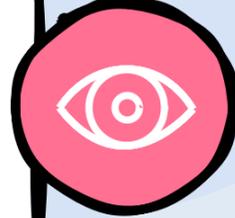
[Receiving your Certification Points:](#)

The collection of Certification Point data occurs electronically. Please visit our conference tables in the sanctuary, scan the QR Code, and it will take you to the Google Form for Certification Points. You will need to fill this form out entirely to receive your Certification Points for the day from your school Administrator. Detailed information about sessions attended by school staff will be emailed to the Administrator after the conclusion of the conference.

Association of Christian Teachers and Schools

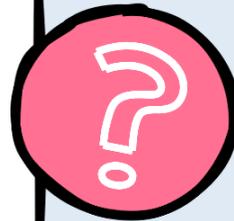
Biblical Worldview

Actions reflect God's Word in education.



Relationship Building

Partnerships to enhance Christian Schools.



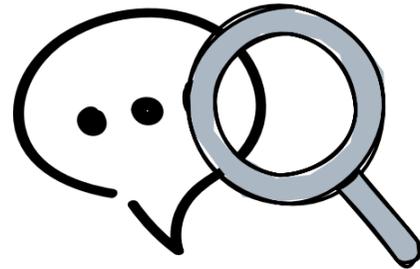
Creativity

Innovative solutions for organizational growth.



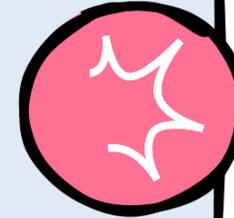
Commitment to Christian Education Excellence

Dedicated to integrity, relationships, and growth in Christian education globally.



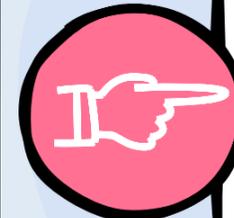
Integrity

Exemplary ethical practice and accountability.



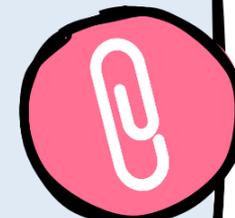
Excellence

Exceptional services for administrators and teachers.



Service

Resources and support for member schools.



Schedule for the Day

7:30am - 8:00am

Registration

8:00am - 8:15am

Announcements/Worship

8:15am - 9:15am

Keynote

9:15am-9:25am

Break

9:25am -10:15am

Workshop 1

10:15am-10:25am

Break

10:25am -11:15am

Workshop 2

11:15am -12:45pm

Lunch (on your own)

12:45pm - 1:35pm

Workshop 3

1:35pm - 1:45pm

Break

1:45pm - 2:35pm

Workshop 4

2:35pm - 2:45pm

Break

2:45pm - 3:45pm

Closing Keynote

Welcome to Memphis!

ACTS Conference

March 30, 2026

Lodging Recommendations:

Courtyard Memphis Germantown

7750 Wolf River Blvd., Germantown, TN 38138

(901) 751-0230 marriott.com

Hampton Inn & Suites Memphis Germantown

1680 S. Germantown Rd., Germantown, TN 38138

(901) 309-0555 hilton.com

Dining Options:

Nearby Dining Options

Friday Tuna Japanese/Sushi

750 N. Germantown Pkwy.

Cheesecake Boss Pizza/Subs/Italian

465 N. Germantown Pkwy.

Hummus Republic Mediterranean Bowls, Wraps, and Pitas

750 N. Germantown Pkwy.

One & Only BBQ Memphis-Style BBQ

153 Timber Creek Drive

Panera

714 N. Germantown Pkwy.

Chipotle

695 N. Germantown Pkwy.

McAlister's

7990 Trinity Rd.

Lenny's

465 N. Germantown Pkwy.

Wayback Burgers

465 N. Germantown Pkwy.

Memphis Favorites

Germantown Commissary Memphis-Style BBQ

2290 S. Germantown Rd., Germantown, TN

Local Lime Tacos

7605 W. Farmington Blvd., Germantown, TN

Huey's Germantown Burgers and American Fare

7677 Farmington Blvd., Germantown, TN

Memphis Pizza Cafe Germantown Pizza

7604 W. Farmington Blvd., Germantown, TN

Soul Fish Southern Comfort Food

3160 Village Shops Dr., Germantown, TN

Gus's World Famous Fried Chicken Germantown

3100 Forest Hill Irene Rd., Germantown, TN

Jerry's Sno Cones Shaved Ice and Diner Style Food

1601 Bonnie Ln., Cordova, TN

Additional Information:

Conference Venue:

First Assembly Christian School | 8650 Walnut Grove Rd. Cordova, TN 38018

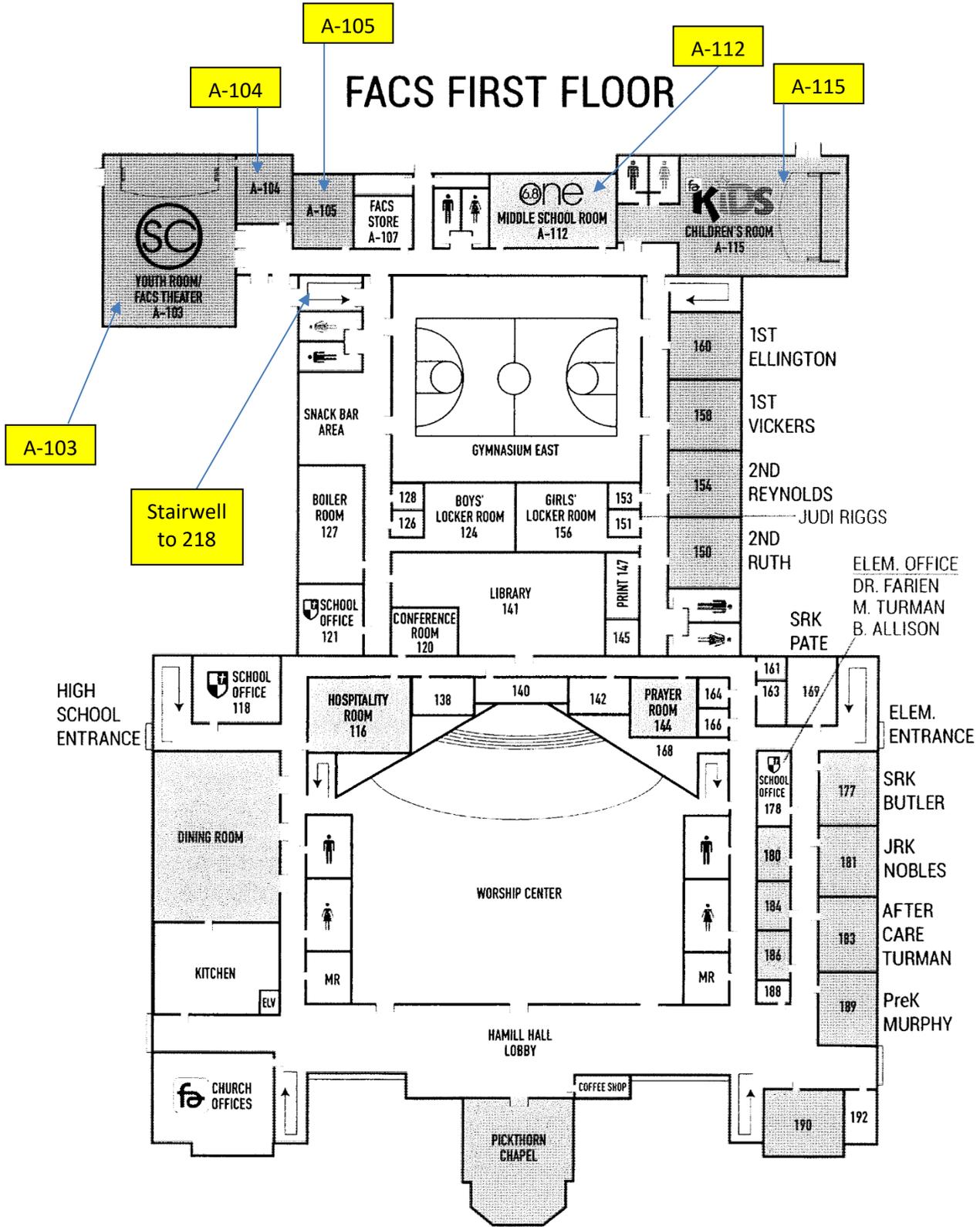
Enter on the West Side at the Dorothy Grove Youth Center

TENNESSEE CONFERENCE KEYNOTE SPEAKER BIO

FRANK CANTADORE

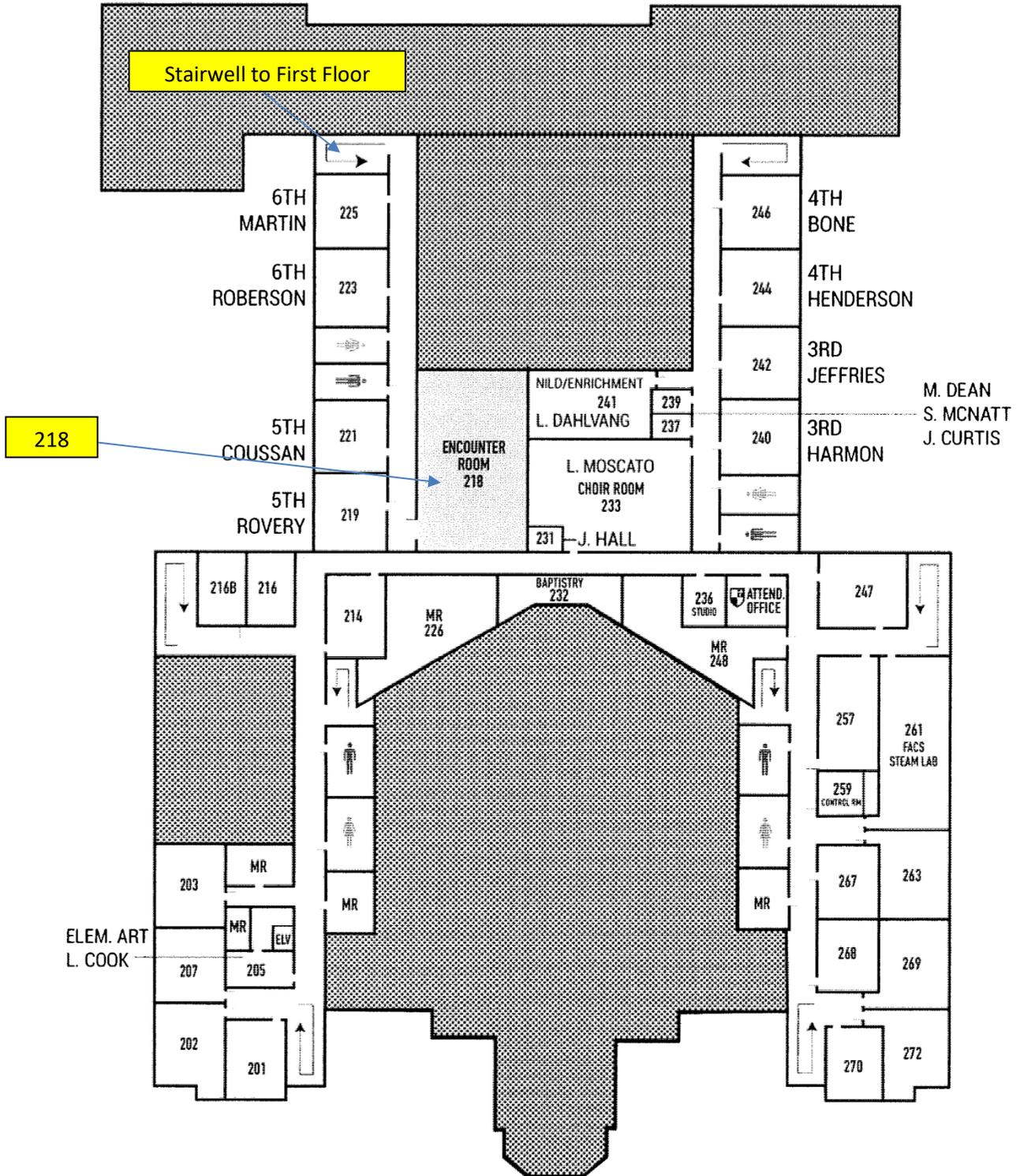
Frank Cantadore is the Head of School at Concord Academy in Concord, North Carolina. He also serves as the Board President of ACTS and is a regular speaker at conferences and conventions. Frank and his wife Kristen have been married for 45 years. They have four adult children and nine grandchildren, all residing in Concord, North Carolina. He is an ordained minister, with a MA in Missional Leadership, who has served in Christian school ministry for over 40 years, 20 years in Connecticut and 23 in North Carolina. With a background in baseball, Frank also has served as a College and Minor League Baseball Chaplain for over 25 years. His heart has always been to motivate and inspire believers to make a difference to their generation and pass that baton to future generations. His life verse is from Jesus' words to his disciples in Matthew 10:40, *"Anyone who receives you receives Me, and anyone who receives Me receives the Father who sent Me."*

Map of FACS – First Floor



Map of FACS – Second Floor

FACS SECOND FLOOR



Workshop 1: 9:25 to 10:15 am

Pulling the Levers: Who Moves the Needle in Education?

Room: A103

Presenter: Steve Lindquist, Executive Director, ACTS, Brandon FL

Audience: General - Admin, Elementary, Secondary, Specials

Pre-planning is often a whirlwind of brainstorming and endless variables. This session cuts through the clutter. Instead of juggling dozens of ideas, we focus on the three pillars that actually move the needle: Expectations, Strategy, and Perspective. Come prepared to answer the tough questions that lead to better outcomes.

Christian Athletics in the Sports World Today

Room: A104

Presenter: David Stephenson, Director of Development, United States Christian Athletic Association

Audience: General, Administration, Athletics, Support Staff

Why coaches are quitting the profession at such a rapid rate

Using TerraNova Data to Anchor your Instruction

Room: A105

Presenter: Christine Kirk, DRC-TerraNova, Maple Grove MN

Audience: General

TerraNova Next provides actionable insights that help us understand student learning and guide instruction. This session will introduce best practices for interpreting test scores, identifying trends, and supporting teachers in using data effectively. Attendees will learn how to view data, analyze growth, support differentiated instruction, and communicate results clearly to parents and staff. We will reflect on how data, when rightly applied, strengthens our mission, anchors our work, and celebrates student progress.

Multiplying Schools

Room: A112

Presenter: Michelle Davis, CEO, Christian Covenant Academy, Weimar, TX

Audience: Administration, Lead Teachers

Join this session to discuss the growth mindset around multiplying school locations to further the mission and kingdom work aligned to the values of your school system. Walk through the systematic methodology to seed partner locations.

Getting Back to the Basics

Room: A115

Presenter: Ike Stokes, Director of Special Projects/Accreditation Commission Chair, ACTS, Nixa MO

Audience: General

John Milton Gregory said, "...true teaching is not that which gives knowledge, but that which stimulates pupils to gain it. One might say that he (she) teaches best and who teaches least." Together, in this seminar, let us understand three basic goals of teaching: Teach students to think; Teach students how to learn; and Teach students how to work. Also, we will review four basic skills to teach: Reading; Writing; Listening; and Speaking.

Integrating Biblical Worldview in my classroom....How, When, Where, Why?

Room: 218

Presenter: Jonathan Aultman, Director of Accreditation & International Programs, ACTS, Bryant AL

Audience: General

Five frameworks that can be used in the classroom for Biblical Integration. Examples include the Harder subjects like Math, Art, and Literature.

Workshop 2: 10:25 to 11:15 am

Christian School Legal Advice, Updates, and Q&A

Room: A103

Presenter: Frank Cantadore, Concord Academy, Concord NC & Jonathan Bailie, NCLL, Clearwater FL

Audience: Administrators, Governance

Christian School Legal Advice, Updates, and Q&A with Frank Cantadore and Jonathan Bailie COO & CFO/Attorney at Law with the National Center for Life and Liberty.

Professionalism in athletic coaching and administration

Room: A104

Presenter: David Stephenson, Director of Development, United States Christian Athletic Association

Audience: General, Administration, Athletics, Support Staff

Creating and maintaining professionalism in the athletic department

Innovative Ideas to Augment Learning Opportunities and Develop Curious Learners

Room: A105

Presenter: Dr. Nancie Nesbitt, Administrator, Chilton Christian Academy, Jemison, AL

Audience: General

Christian schools face many of the same problems: how to encourage and augment learning under tight budgets, how to develop differentiated learning opportunities, how to develop continued and curious learners - all under the umbrella of a Christian World View. Although there may be a few who are considered experts in all things education, we all have things and ideas that have worked in our classrooms and schools to enhance learning and help develop those curious learners for the future. This workshop gives some practical and, hopefully, innovative ways to share in this amazing opportunity of teaching a generation about Christ while thinking with no box. Bring your own innovative ideas to share in this very practical breakout session.

Mission Aligned System Evaluation Tools and Metrics

Room: A112

Presenter: Michelle Davis, CEO, Christian Covenant Academy, Weimar, TX

Audience: Administration, Lead Teachers

Take a deep dive into evaluating your school system through the lens of system mission, vision, and core values. What are your metrics, and how are you capturing the data measures of your success or target areas for growth? Gain tools for immediate adjustment and use.

The Israel Course

Room: A115

Presenter: Abel Taye, Curriculum Director, CUFI High School, Christians United For Israel

Audience: Administration, Secondary, Electives

The Israel Course session presents a comprehensive introduction to the very incremental 20-lesson curriculum and instructor's guide designed for private Christian schools, home school associations, and Christian high schoolers across the nation. This course session gives an overview of the curriculum lessons that will cover subject matter from the biblical reasons to support Israel as a Christian, to the history of Israel and the Jewish people, the modern state, what to expect on a college campus, and more!

Fear in the Classroom: Equipping Educators for a Fear-Free Classroom

Room: 218

Presenter: Jonathan Aultman, Director of Accreditation and International Programs, ACTS

Audience: General

Recognizing, preventing, and dealing with self-harm among students and staff.

Visit our Vendors during the Event...



Workshop 3: 12:45 to 1:35 pm

Overcoming Barriers: A Biblical Framework for Student Success

Room: A103

Presenter: Steve Lindquist, Executive Director, ACTS

Audience: General

In an era where students are navigating unprecedented personal, social, and emotional barriers stemming from issues like trauma, poverty, and economic hardship, Christian educators face unique challenges. This session, grounded in the understanding that Christ-centered educators are uniquely positioned to address these burdens with both professional excellence and biblical wisdom, presents ten research-based, Scripture-grounded strategies. These interconnected practices work together to create dynamic learning environments where all students can academically, emotionally, and spiritually thrive, reflecting the hope found in Jeremiah 29:11.

Improving Student Outcomes

Room: A104

Presenter: Dr. Wendy Oliver, Head of School, Virtstone Preparatory Academy, Hixson, TN

Audience: General

Using data and assessments to help improve student progress and success

Let's get organized!

Room: A105

Presenter: Melissa Norwood, Secondary Science Teacher, First Assembly Christian School, Cordova, TN

Audience: Elementary, Secondary, General, Administration

From nearly 30 years of teaching middle and high school students, organization has been my most helpful learned ability. You can learn it, too! I will share with you tips and tricks I've learned from fellow teachers, the 40 hour Teacher Workweek Program, professional groups, and other professional development events. My organizational system can help you make the most of every minute of instructional time. You'll learn about the daily agenda I use in class every day, the seating chart/roster/grade recording clip board, activity bins, and more! Appropriate for middle and secondary teachers, any subject.

Conflict Management

Room: A112

Presenter: Frank Cantadore, Head of School, Concord Academy, Concord

NC

Audience: General

Conflicts, friction, disagreements, and “bumps in the road” are opportunities for growth—moments that call us to lead with wisdom and discernment. Let’s take time to examine together how we can navigate these inevitable challenges with grace and purpose as we continue our shared kingdom work.

Current Trends in Education

Room: A115

Presenter: Ike Stokes, Director of Special Projects/Accreditation Commission Chair, ACTS, Nixa MO

Audience: General

Which education trends are capturing the collective imagination this year? Spoiler alert: It's not just technology changing the classroom environment. Here are seven trends you're likely to see more of in the year ahead.

Administrators Roundtable

Room: 218

Presenter: Jonathan Aultman, Director of Accreditation and International Programs, ACTS

Audience: Administration

Discussion on relevant topics, thoughts, and conversations...along with a great place to network!

Workshop 4: 1:45 to 2:35 pm

AI and the Christian School: Truth, Transformation & Tools...

Understanding and Using Technology to Enhance the Christian Classroom

Room: A103

Presenter: Steve Lindquist, Executive Director & Sarah Lindquist, Social Media Director, ACTS

Audience: General

The world of Artificial Intelligence has made its way into every sphere of everyday life...what does it look like in the classroom? Can it be used effectively? Is it a pathway to the destruction of the teacher-led lesson? Should we embrace it or run from it screaming? During this session, we will talk through a variety of topics - ethics, practices, questions, platforms, etc.

Why Coaches leave the Profession

Room: A104

Presenter: David Stephenson, Director of Development, United States Christian Athletic Association

Audience: General, Administration, Athletics, Support Staff

Covering the most common reasons coaches leave the profession

Lockdown: Active Shooter Information Presentation, What a Teacher Needs to Know

Room: A105

Presenter: Ralph Norwood, Teacher / Member of Security Team, First Assembly Christian School, Cordova, TN

Audience: Administration

This presentation is very important for teachers to be a part of not, only will it make aware to teachers what they need to know that they may not be aware of, but it will help to increase safety and health of students and other individuals involved in an active shooter situation and also aid in preventing teachers and others being held liable for something they weren't aware of. More and more now even after a lockdown situation teachers are seen as liable and if they have violated any policies or ignored safety protocols in place at school then they open themselves up to negligence lawsuits and civil suits.

Special Education and Intervention Services Implementation

Room: A112

Presenter: Michelle Davis, CEO, Christian Covenant Academy, Weimar, TX

Audience: Administration, Lead Teachers

From ground up construction to shoring up practices, this session illuminates key components for success for the Multi-tiered Systems of Support and Special Education Services in the private school system. Leave this session with tools for implementation from behavior referrals to accommodation plans to staff training.

The Israel Course

Room: A115

Presenter: Abel Taye, Curriculum Director, CUFI High School, Christians United For Israel

Audience: Administration, Secondary, Electives

The Israel Course session presents a comprehensive introduction to the very incremental 20-lesson curriculum and instructor's guide designed for private Christian schools, home school associations, and Christian high schoolers across the nation. This course session gives an overview of the curriculum lessons that will cover subject matter from the biblical reasons to support Israel as a Christian, to the history of Israel and the Jewish people, the modern state, what to expect on a college campus, and more!

Accreditation Team Training

Room: 218

Presenter: Jonathan Aultman, Director of Accreditation and International Programs,

ACTS/Ike Stokes, Director of Special Projects & Accreditation Commission Chair, ACTS

Audience: General

ACTS continually needs educators willing to serve as accreditation team members. This workshop presents the required training necessary to become a team member.



Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another." — Proverbs 27:17 ✂

Calling all educators! You've spent years honing your craft. Now, it's time to pay it forward. We're looking for presenters to lead breakout sessions at next year's Conference!

Think your idea is "too small"? Think again! Sometimes the simplest practical tip is exactly what a fellow teacher is praying for.

✦ Share your wisdom ✦ Inspire your peers

#ChristianEducation #TeachersLeadingTeachers
#KingdomClassroom