



## Call for Proposals: “Engaging Students NOW”

**MREA 2018 Annual Conference**

**Nov. 11-13, 2018 | Brainerd, MN**

**Submission for 2018 is now open. The submission deadline is 5 pm Friday, May 18, 2018.**

Keeping students captivated, ready to learn, and wanting to learn is no easy task.

Student engagement in learning is traditionally represented by good behavior, positive feelings and actions, and student thinking. However, students can be behaviorally and/or emotionally invested in classroom learning without applying any academic effort to personally learning and understanding the subject material.

Research has demonstrated that engaging students in the learning process increases their attention and focus, motivates them to practice higher-level critical thinking skills and promotes meaningful learning experiences. As competition for student engagement has changed over the years, however, the biggest hurdle for any school or teacher is finding ways to make learning relevant, authentic, and valuable in students' lives.

In the end, student engagement is not about quick fixes, but about instrumental changes in our teaching philosophy. How do we reevaluate whether what we are doing in our classrooms is truly worth being engaged in?

### **Share Best Practices, Solutions, Research**

Minnesota Rural Education Association (MREA) welcomes “Engaging Students NOW” breakout session proposals that share best practices, solutions, and research on engaging students in the learning process and challenging them to own their learning. We encourage submissions in all context areas of student engagement.

Session proposals should help educators frame success in terms of learning rather than performing. By helping school teachers and leaders bridge the gap between what they know about good instruction and what they do in the classroom, presenters can help 400 rural education leaders across our state implement best practices to meaningfully guide the performance of a school or a student.

### **Breakout Session Focus Areas:**

- Curricular design that engages and builds understanding
  - Helping students foster a sense of competence
  - Empowering students to seek knowledge from many sources
  - Thematic approaches to reading and math with other subjects like arts, humanities, PE
- Instructional practices that engage and empower students
  - Strategies to improve learning through neuroscience, motivational research, and innovative technology
  - Helping students embrace the lessons of failure
  - Addressing the changing demographics and characteristics of current learners
- Classroom management strategies/programs
  - Providing students a sense of control over their behaviors and goals
  - Helping students work effectively with others
  - Creating safe spaces for learning
  - Ways to increase attendance and engaged learning time
- Personalizing learning
  - Identifying and using students' interests and fascinations
  - Enabling student choice and voice
  - Making personalization manageable for teachers—moving beyond buzz words
- Taking learning beyond the classroom

- Helping students perceive learning and learning activities as meaningful
- Helping students experience connection to others
- Creating memorable learning through student action
- Sharpening the saw: strategies for educator continuous improvement
  - Linking rural education research to changes in policy and practice
  - Successful PLC strategies in rural schools
  - Implementing Teacher Development and Evaluation in ways that grow teachers' competencies
- Additional valuable breakouts:
  - Successful turnaround strategies to improve reading and math achievement
  - Student and school safety
  - Innovation and entrepreneurship
  - Topics that address mandatory requirements for MN teacher license renewal (may be in topics above)

### Proposal Development

As you craft your proposal, note that all proposals must provide a brief description of the presentation and its relevance to Engaging Students NOW, leadership, learning, practices or policy in rural schools. Proposals must provide this information:

- Compelling title as you would like it to appear in the event program (5-7 words or less). Avoid abbreviations and acronyms.
- Session description clearly identifying what attendees can expect:
  - Topic/s in rural education will your session address
  - Target audience among school administrators, teachers and school board members
  - Two outcomes attendees will learn from your session
  - How you will engage participants during your session
  - Resources (if applicable) that participants will receive as part of your session
- Information for primary contact and co-presenters. Names and organizations must appear as you would like them included in event promotions.
- The most recent groups to whom and when this presentation was given

NOTE: MREA members like to hear how fellow members are solving educational problems and addressing the focus of the conference. Consultants or employees of for-profit companies are encouraged to include 1 or more rural school representatives as a co-presenter. Sessions may be accepted on the condition that a rural school representative will be co-presenter.

### Breakout Session Guidelines

Sessions will generally host from 25 to 70 participants each, depending on the room size. Presenters will provide their own presentation devices, audio speakers and handouts.

Presenters will rank preferences for session length and day/time:

- **90-minute Early Bird Workshops** These Sunday evening workshops should deliver content that dives deep into the topic and prompts participant dialogue and interaction.
- **50-minute Breakout Sessions** These Monday morning sessions are intended to provide an overview into a specific innovative or promising practice.
- **75-minute Breakout Sessions** These Monday afternoon sessions are intended to go into more depth around innovative or promising practices.

### Proposal Submission & Selection

**Complete proposals must be submitted online by 5 pm Friday, May 18, 2018.**

Proposals will be reviewed and selected by the Conference Committee. The primary contact will receive an e-mail notification regarding acceptance status by June 15, 2018, along with information on next steps if applicable.



## Conference Information

Here's what else you need to know about this premiere Greater Minnesota conference.

### Dates: Sunday-Tuesday, November 11-13

- Sunday: Early bird workshops and networking
- Monday: Opening keynote speaker, breakout sessions, networking, legislative update and awards banquet
- Tuesday: Closing speaker, Gallery Walk vendor fair, annual membership meeting

### Audience: 400+ Education Practitioners & Influencers

- School board members, K-12 teachers, and administrators
- Representing every corner of Minnesota
- Attendance has grown over 50% last three years

### Venue: Cragun's Resort

- In the heart of Brainerd Lakes Area
- Comfortable spaces and updated technology
- Updated accommodations

### Registration & Expenses

- If accepted, up to two presenters per presentation will receive free and/or a \$100 discounted registration fee per person.
- Registration is required for acceptance.
- Presenters attending only Monday receive free registration and breakfast or lunch.
- Travel and lodging coordination and expenses are not provided.

## Questions?

Contact Diane Vosen, Administrative Coordinator at 320.762.6574 or [diane@mreavoice.org](mailto:diane@mreavoice.org).

Complete your proposal [online here](#).

