

Houston researchED 2026

Speaker Bios, Master Schedule, Breakout Sessions

Real Teaching • Real Evidence • Real Results



Master Schedule

Time	Session
9:00 - 9:30 AM	Registration / Check-In / Coffee
9:30 - 9:45 AM	Freedom in Education: Welcome & Opening Remarks
9:45 - 10:15 AM	Tom Bennett: Setting the Stage: What researchED Is and Why It Matters or
10:15 - 11:00 AM	Keynote: Carl Hendrick- The Why and How of the Science of Learning
11:00 - 11:10 AM	Transition Break
11:10 - 11:55 AM	Breakout Block 1
12:00 - 12:45 PM	Lunch & Networking
12:50 - 1:40 PM	Breakout Block 2
1:40 - 1:50 PM	Transition Break
1:50 - 2:40 PM	Breakout Block 3
2:40 - 3:00 PM	Cookie Break & Networking
3:00 - 3:50 PM	Keynote: Zack Groshell
3:50 - 4:30 PM	Keynote: Sir Nick Gibb and Closing Panel + Live Q&A

Featured Speakers

Tom Bennett

Founder of researchED and internationally recognized author and consultant focused on school culture, classroom management, and evidence-informed teaching.

Carl Hendrick

Carl is a professor and expert in cognitive science and education, and co-author of *How Learning Happens* and *Instructional Illusions*. Carl Hendrick focuses on helping teachers apply research on memory, learning, and instruction in clear and practical ways.

Sir Nick Gibb

Former UK Minister for Schools who led major national reforms focused on a knowledge-rich curriculum and evidence-based teaching.

John Mighton

Award-winning mathematician, bestselling author, and founder of JUMP Math, internationally recognized for his groundbreaking work in math education.

Breakout Sessions

Breakout Block 1

11:10 - 11:55 AM

Sir Nick Gibb - International Lessons in Raising Standards

Nathan Gwinn - Science of Learning 101

Breakout Block 2

12:50 - 1:40 PM

Marcie Samayoa - Rethinking Reading in Secondary Classrooms

Ben Zulauf - Explicit Language Instruction as the Engine of Reading Growth

Breakout Block 3

1:50 - 2:40 PM

John Mighton - Math Fluency and Mastery

Sarah Oberle - Maximizing Opportunities to Learn: Leveraging Executive Function

Speaker Highlights

Tom Bennett

Author, Consultant, and Founder of researchED

Professional Bio

Founder of researchED and author of Running the Room. Internationally recognized for his work on behavior and school culture.

Session Topics

- **Behavior, Research, and Classroom Management**

Sir Nick Gibb

Author, Consultant, and Former UK Minister for Schools

Professional Bio

As former UK Minister for Schools, Sir Nick Gibb led major national education reforms focused on a knowledge-rich curriculum and evidence-based teaching, helping drive significant improvements in student outcomes across England.

Session Topics

- **International Lessons in Raising Standards**

Zack Groshell

Teacher, Instructional Coach, and Education Consultant

Professional Bio

Dr. Zach Groshell is an internationally recognized educator, instructional coach, and consultant who works with schools worldwide to improve teaching through the science of learning and explicit instruction. He is the author of Just Tell Them: The Power of Explanations and Explicit Teaching, host of the Progressively Incorrect podcast, and founder of Education Rickshaw, where he shares practical, evidence-based strategies to improve student achievement.

[Nathan Gwinn](#)

Teacher, Senior Advisor for Curriculum and Instruction at Freedom in Education

Professional Bio

Nathan Gwinn is a teacher and former Principal, and he serves as the Senior Advisor for Curriculum and Instruction at Freedom in Education, where he advises states on evaluating instructional materials and developing robust academic frameworks. His expertise is rooted in extensive experience, having taught 5th through 12th grades in public schools and served as an administrator across all K-12 levels. He leverages this comprehensive, on-the-ground perspective as a lead educator developing comprehensive model standards in mathematics and science. By bridging the gap between high-level educational policy and classroom reality, Nathan equips education systems nationwide with the practical, high-quality tools needed to drive student achievement.

Session Topics

- **The Cognitive Edge: Analog Instruction.** Somewhere between the 1-to-1 device rollout and the app-for-everything era, classroom management became a lost art. This session explores how strong leadership and ironclad procedures reduce cognitive load and create classrooms built on trust, efficiency, and human connection.
- **The Architecture of Authority.** This session examines why reclaiming direct instruction and the human element of teaching strengthens retention, reduces ineffective practices, and improves instructional outcomes.

[Carl Hendrick](#)

Author and Professor

Professional Bio

Carl is a professor and expert in cognitive science and education, and co-author of *How Learning Happens* and *Instructional Illusions*. Carl Hendrick focuses on helping teachers apply research on memory, learning, and instruction in clear and practical ways.

Session Topic

Keynote - The Why and How of Science of Learning

[John Mighton](#)

Award-Winning Mathematician, Author, and Founder of JUMP Math

Professional Bio

Dr. John Mighton is an award-winning mathematician, bestselling author, and founder of JUMP Math, internationally recognized for his groundbreaking work in building children's confidence, skills, and success in math.

Session Topics

- **Math Fluency and Mastery**

[Dr. Sarah Oberle](#)

Educator, Author, and Professional Learning Designer

Professional Bio

Sarah Oberle is an educator, author, speaker, and professional learning designer with 18 years of experience as a primary classroom teacher. Her work centers on helping educators understand how learning happens and how that understanding shapes instructional decisions. She designs and facilitates evidence-informed professional learning for teachers and school leaders across national and international settings.

Session Topics

- **Working Memory 101: An Educator's Toolkit.** Educators will explore the science of working memory, including how it functions, the limits it places on learning, and practical strategies to reduce cognitive overload.
- **Maximizing Opportunities to Learn: Leveraging Executive Function Evidence in the Classroom.** This session examines how knowledge of executive function can support strategic instruction, classroom routines, and equitable learning environments.

[Marcie Samayoa](#)

National Board Certified High School Chemistry Teacher

Professional Bio

Marcie Samayoa is a National Board Certified high school chemistry teacher with over 10 years of classroom experience. Through her Substack, *Scientists in the Making*, she shares evidence-informed teaching strategies that connect cognitive science principles to classroom practice. She has presented at researchED New York and Denver and represented InnerDrive at the Festival of Education in Washington, D.C.

Session Topics

- **Rethinking Reading in Secondary Classrooms.** This session explores how Read Alouds and FASE reading routines can support secondary students in engaging deeply with text through practical strategies and classroom examples.
- **How to Get Student Buy-In for Retrieval Practice.** Participants will learn how to reframe retrieval practice as productive struggle and build classroom cultures that encourage consistent use of retrieval-based learning.

Ben Zulauf, EdD

Director of Teaching and Learning, Cicero School District 99

Professional Bio

Ben Zulauf is the Director of Teaching and Learning in Cicero School District 99, where he leads the district's shift toward evidence-based literacy practices. He has served in multiple instructional leadership roles and has presented at local, state, and international conferences while consulting with school districts across the Midwest.

Session Topics

- **Reading: Explicit Language Instruction as the Engine of Reading Growth.** This session explores how explicit language instruction drives reading growth.

Writing: Consolidating Comprehension Through Writing. Participants will learn practical approaches for helping students express increasingly complex ideas through writing.