

January 2024

Digital Newsletter



This month we begin exploring Artificial Intelligence (AI) in schools. We asked AI to write the introduction to this newsletter. Here is what happened . . .

A Journey into Artificial Intelligence in the Classroom

In recent years, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has emerged as a powerful tool in various fields, and education is no exception. As teachers in religious and independent schools, you may be curious about how AI can be integrated into your classrooms. Let's delve into the pros and cons of using AI and explore some tips for getting started with this exciting technology.

One of the major benefits of incorporating AI into the classroom is its ability to personalize learning. With AI-powered adaptive learning systems, students can receive tailored instruction to meet their individual needs and learning styles. AI can also analyze vast amounts of data to identify patterns and trends, allowing teachers to gain valuable insights into student performance and make data-driven instructional decisions.

Another advantage of AI is its potential to enhance students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Through AI-based platforms and tools, students can engage in interactive and immersive learning experiences, where they are encouraged to explore complex problems and develop innovative solutions. AI can also facilitate collaborative learning, enabling students to work together on projects and exchange ideas in real time.

However, it is important to consider the drawbacks of AI in the classroom. One concern is the potential for overreliance on AI and the diminishing role of teachers. While AI can provide valuable support, it should not replace the human connection and guidance that teachers provide. It is crucial to strike a balance between AI-driven instruction and teacher-led facilitation to ensure a holistic learning experience.

Additionally, there might be ethical considerations when using AI in the classroom. Data privacy and security issues arise when collecting and analyzing students' personal information. It is essential to implement robust privacy policies and protocols to safeguard student data and ensure transparency in AI algorithms used for educational purposes.

By embracing AI in the classroom, you can harness its potential to create personalized and engaging learning experiences for your students. With careful consideration of the pros and cons, along with the implementation of effective strategies, you can integrate AI seamlessly into your teaching practice and empower students to thrive in the digital age.

And here's what we learned:

The response to the left was generated when we asked Magic School AI to create the following:

A college level essay for a newsletter, 2 paragraphs with the most important things to know about using AI in the classroom. Include pros and cons of AI in the classroom, how teachers can get started, and write it for teachers in religious and independent schools in New York State.

On page 2 of this newsletter we unpack what we learned from using AI as a "thinking partner." Check out some of the lessons learned, including the pros and cons from this experience using Artificial Intelligence.

[Visit Our Website Here!](#)



4 LESSONS LEARNED FROM OUR COLLABORATION WITH AI

Here's what we learned and what it could mean for helping your students use AI responsibly:

1. IT'S NOT A 'ONE AND DONE'

While the information is generally helpful, the paragraph doesn't meet our criteria in a few different ways. It's much longer than 2 paragraphs and there is nothing that makes it specific to religious and independent schools or New York State. There are no citations so we can't know how AI determined the 'most important things to know' about AI. For students using AI this is an important lesson:

AI requires fact-checking and editing.

Students using AI need to **be able to critique** AI-generated responses against teacher-generated rubrics and assignment guidelines and their own common sense. **Students need to fact-check:** *How do they know that what AI has told them is true or represents factual or consensus thinking on any particular topic?*

2. IT LACKS PERSONALITY

We appreciate that Magic School made our work much easier – it generated the first column of our newsletter in well under a minute—but we feel that it's a little bit generic and doesn't make a strong or tailored connection to the teachers and leaders with whom we work. This could very well be related to how we input the criteria. **It reminds us that it's important** for students to understand that while generative AI can produce substantial and acceptable content based on their input, the output is based on algorithms that are likely to make it somewhat bland and lacking individuality.

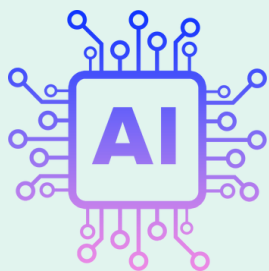
Encourage students to read and revise with attention to their own personality and voice.

3. IT MAY BE BIASED

We asked AI to tell us the pros and cons of AI. It did give us a few cons. They're mostly warnings to the humans using it (*Be sure not to let it replace relationships! Create privacy policies!*). There is emerging research to suggest that "artificial intelligence inherits biases from humans" so anyone using AI needs to be mindful that technology isn't neutral. **Teachers will need to learn how to raise their own awareness of biases in AI generated content and in turn teach their students to do so.**

4. INPUT MATTERS

In our response and our critique above we were looking for things that were really outside of what we asked AI to generate. There were no examples—but we didn't ask for them; there was nothing about how to get started with AI—but we only allowed for 2 paragraphs. Maybe our criteria was unrealistic. Maybe it should have been more specific. Magic School, like most generative AI, allows users to revise their criteria and request 'rewrites.' It's a skill for students to be able to **input relevant criteria or parameters for AI generated content** and to know when to go back and revise it to ensure they get the most accurate product that is aligned with the desired outcome.



Interested In Joining A Hands-On Session to Explore AI With Us? February 29, 2024



EXPLORING AI TOOLS TEACHER WORKSHOP

Hosted by the Upstate Professional
Development Resource Center

Thursday, February 29, 2024

4:00 - 5:00pm

Facilitated by Rebecca Shea

Are you curious about AI?

Have you ever wondered how it could enhance your teaching practice and make your job easier? If so, join us for a hands-on workshop to explore AI tools geared for teachers.



In this workshop, we will explore an AI tool that offers exploration for areas such as unpacking standards, leveling text, scaffolding lessons, creating sentence starters or guiding questions, segmenting units, generating accommodations, drafting email language, and much more.

Participants will have the chance to see practical examples of how AI tools can be used and will have dedicated time to explore an AI tool in a collaborative environment. Engage with us as we share insights, critiques, experiences, and best practices to effectively leverage AI in your daily work.

Click [HERE](#) to reserve your spot. Don't miss out on this chance to discover the potential of AI in education for your classroom first-hand!



Click [HERE](#)

or

scan below

to register!



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Join Us in January

Thursday, January 18 | 4pm - 5pm

Strategies to Support Student Learning Gaps Session 1: The Move to Multi-Age: Logistics and More

Tuesday, January 23 | 4pm - 5pm

Integrated Curriculum Session 1: Making Connections: Enhancing Program Function with Integrated Curriculum

Wednesday, January 24 | 4pm - 5pm

Elevating Conversations to Drive Instruction Session 1: Observation & Assessment Data with Danielson

Wednesday, January 31 | 4pm - 5pm

Supporting Struggling Readers Session 2: Creating Engaged Science-Based Reading Lessons (Grades K-2)

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Students Are at the Center of All We Do

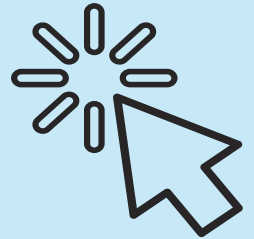


Using Data How can we help?



So you have data, how do you use it easily?

[Click here for a simple 3-question survey](#)
to help us plan PD that
aligned with your needs about using data.



***Did you miss the RISE 2023 Conference?
The keynote speaker spoke about the topic of
AI in Schools! Click below to listen.***



Artificial Intelligence (AI)

**equity, access,
and effectiveness**

Keynote Speaker
Dr. Steven D'Agustino
Director of Online Learning
Office of the Provost
Fordham University

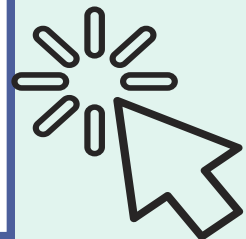


RISE Leadership Conference
Religious & Independent Schools
November 2023
*presented in partnership with
NYSCIRS and NYS PDRCS*

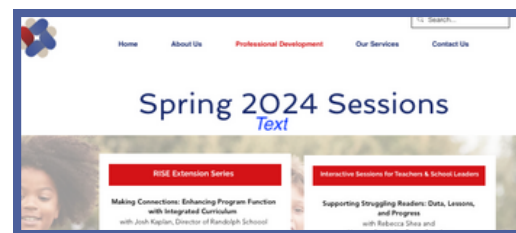








**Check out our Spring
PD webpage!**



Visit Our Website Here!



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CHECK OUT THE RISE EXTENSION SERIES


Beginning January 2024

RISE Extension Series sessions recap and build upon the knowledge shared by our stellar presenters at the RISE conference held in November to help you deepen your understanding and turn ideas into practice.

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Strategies to Support Student Learning Gaps: Multi-Age Classes and Creative Scheduling



With Patti Vitale, Head of School and Nicole Fatato & Sara Knaggs, Multi-age Classroom Teachers from *The Brown School*

Join us!

Growing gaps in student achievement have forced schools to re-evaluate the use of time and staff expertise. Join us for a four-part exploration of how The Brown School redesigned their schedule to bring teachers together in multi-age classrooms to provide increased support for students. Hear from the Head of School about the logistics of reimagining the school schedule and classroom configurations, and learn from the classroom teachers about collaborating to provide targeted instruction, build community, and increase students' progress toward grade-level outcomes.

January 18, 2024 4-5 pm	March 6, 2024 4-5 pm	March 13, 2024 4-5 pm	March 20, 2024 4-5 pm
 The Move to Multi-age: Logistics and More	Multi-age Classrooms: Why? and the Benefits Behind this Model	Multi-age Classrooms: Preplanning and Taking the First Steps	Multi-age Classrooms: In Practice and Delivery

Questions? Contact Rebecca Shea, Upstate PDRC Director rshea@measinc.com


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Integrated Curriculum: Leverage Teacher Collaboration & Solve Common Challenges




With Mr. Josh Kaplan, Director at the *Randolph School*

Join us!

Learn how an integrated curriculum improves teacher collaboration, efficiency, retention, and instructional quality. This series will help you get started within your school's current context, leveraging the people you already have to establish a workable plan toward a more integrated curriculum. Join us to explore practical implementation tips and ways to assess the impact of these changes.

January 23, 2024 4:00-5:00 pm	February 6, 2024 4:00-5:00pm	February 27, 2024 4:00-5:00 pm
 Making Connections: Enhancing Program Function with Integrated Curriculum	 Practical Implementation at Work: Nuts and Bolts of Moving to an Integrated Curriculum	 Checking In: Assessing What You Tried and Next Steps

Questions? Contact Rebecca Shea, Upstate PDRC Director rshea@measinc.com

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Elevating Conversations to Drive Instruction



With Dr. Noelle Beale, Regional Superintendent, Catholic Schools of Westchester in the Archdiocese of NY

Join us!

One key to improving student learning outcomes is to elevate the conversation between teachers and instructional coaches. This series will help you examine how to use data to focus conversations that help teachers align their practice with their instructional goals. Learn practical strategies from fellow principals and coaches who have implemented this framework.

January 24, 2024 9:30-10:30 am	February 13, 2024 9:30-10:30 am	March 5, 2024 9:30 -10:30 am
 Observation & Assessment Data with Danielson	 Next Steps: Digging into Implementation	 Principal Panel: Success Stories and Overcoming Challenges

Questions? Contact Rebecca Shea, Upstate PDRC Director rshea@measinc.com

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SPRING 2024 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERIES

In addition to the RISE extension series, check out our courses on **Supporting Struggling Readers, Art Education, Coaching, and Assessment in Differentiated Classrooms**




Support for Struggling Readers
Data, Lessons & Progress
With the Upstate PDRC




Join us!

Learn how to plan for successful and engaged reading instruction in your classroom with your current group of students. We will explore the science of reading and how to use certain facets to inform teaching through lesson design and delivery. Discuss and pose questions related to the issues you face in supporting your students who struggle to read. Turn the science of reading into practical instructional strategies to successfully reach all of your students!

January 10, 2024 4:00-5:00 pm	Jan 31 (K-2) Feb 7 (3-6) 4:00-5:00 pm	February 28 4:00-5:00 pm
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 Gathering Baseline Data and What To Do With It	 Creating Engaged Science-Based Reading Lessons	 Monitoring Student Progress in Reading
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Questions? Contact Rebecca Shea, Upstate PDRC Director rshea@mesinc.com

Click or Scan  Register Here!



Art Educator Network



Join us!

The Art Educator Network provides a forum for art professionals in NYS religious and independent schools to connect and collaborate. Each session will focus on a current topic in art education, with time for open-ended discussion and resource sharing.

Whether you are a seasoned art teacher or a new educator just starting out, the Art Educator Network is a valuable resource for advancing your classroom practice. Join us to connect with other art professionals, share ideas and resources, and stay up-to-date on the latest developments in art education.

February 8, 2024 4-5 pm	March 14, 2024 4-5 pm	April 18, 2024 4-5 pm	May 16, 2024 4-5 pm
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Using AI in Art Instruction	Inter-Disciplinary Connections	To be determined with group input	To be determined with group input
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Questions? Contact Rebecca Shea, Upstate PDRC Director rshea@mesinc.com

Click or Scan  Register Here!





Coaching Conversations with Student Work at the Core
With Rebecca Shea




Join us!

Are you a coach or mentor for other teachers but need help facilitating meaningful discussions to support student learning through instructional practice? Come join us for a plan-do-study-act series where participants will learn a protocol for examining student work (plan), implement it with one teacher (do), and come back to share what they learned about supporting teachers and ultimately student work (study & act). No experience with coaching teachers is required but participants will need to be able to work with one teacher for this PDSA cycle. This could be any colleague who is willing to partner with you to learn more about how to support both student learning and teacher practice.

March 12, 2024 4:00-5:00 pm	March 27, 2024 4:00-5:00 pm
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 Plan & Do: Learn & Use Student Work Protocol	 Study & Act: Share Your Learning
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Questions? Contact Rebecca Shea, Upstate PDRC Director rshea@mesinc.com

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Assessment and Grading in Differentiated Classrooms
Text-based Discussions with Diana Straut




Join us!

Are you moving to a more differentiated classroom and wondering how that might impact your grading practices? Join us to explore how to align assessment and grading in differentiated classrooms. Participants will read brief essays (5-10 pages) by various practitioners in the field, then come together to reflect on how to connect the ideas to their own classroom practice. This series is designed for teachers or leaders who are interested in rethinking their grading systems to make them more equitable and beneficial for teachers, students, and their families.

March 26, 2024 4:00-5:00 pm	April 16, 2024 4:00-5:00 pm	May 1, 2024 4:00-5:00 pm
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Selected Reading: A Call to Action for Equitable Grading by Joe Feldman	Selected Reading: Grading and Differentiation: Paradox or Good Practice? by Carol Ann Tomlinson	Selected Reading: The Right Way to do Re-Dos by Rick Wormeli
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Click on each flyer to learn more and register!

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Standards-Based Learning 3-Part Series: Now On-Demand!

Standards-Based Learning provides transparency to your students, their families, and your administration in order to communicate clearly what students have learned and need to practice. In this series, participants will consider how to implement standards-based learning through the lens of a secondary math-content teacher; however, the concept of leveled learning is applicable to teachers in all content areas and grades.

Course 1 **Unpacking Standards into Learning Levels**

**Identifying Levels to Differentiate for
Deeper Learning**

Course 2

Course 3 **Assessments for Leveled Learning**

Click the course titles to learn more!



Book Study Now On-Demand
*Standards-Based Learning in Action:
Moving from Theory to Practice*
By Tom Schimmer, Garnet Hillman,
& Mandy Stalets

Thinking about exploring the concepts of standards-based (or standards-referenced) learning and assessment? Well, look no further! We can help guide you in your search to refine your current strategies in standards-based learning or help you explore your first steps in the journey. This book offers a comprehensive look at what standards-based learning looks like in action, from creating formative assessments, to using data to inform instruction, and transitioning to standards-based grading systems. Read and join the discussion!

Here's what participants who read the book said they'd take into their classroom practice right away . . .

"Having students help unpack the learning standards into levels."
"Doing more peer and self-assessments."
"Providing levels for summative assessments."
"Checklists for teachers will be helpful."
"Formative assessments, unpacking standards, and creating proficiency scales."

Participants in this course will learn:

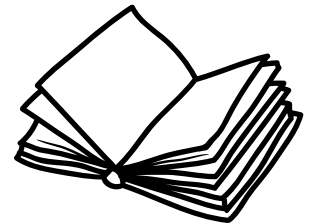
- Step-by-step guidance, and an exploration into the culture of standards-based education.
- Research-based strategies and resources you can implement right away.
- Strategies to support the communication of these practices for your entire educational community (including parents and students).

Read the book with a colleague!

[Learn More Here](#)

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NOW
On-Demand
Standards-Based
Learning
Book Study



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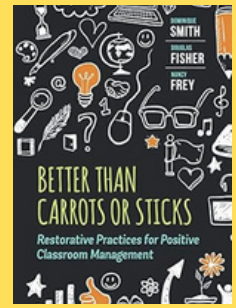
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Book Study On-Demand

Better Than Carrots or Sticks

By Smith, Fisher, and Frey



Log in to learn ways to **proactively manage misbehavior** and establish a classroom climate focused on **collective respect** and **student achievement!**



Here's what participants are saying...

"This is one of the most comprehensive intros to Restorative Justice/Restorative Practices for classroom teachers I have seen so far."

"This book study helped me better understand how to create a positive environment for my kids."

"My students will greatly benefit from learning, understanding, and utilizing topics that have been covered in this book study. Covid has greatly affected how they communicate, listen, treat others, etc. For many of my current students these are skills that haven't been fully developed in the school setting."

This groundbreaking book by Smith, Fisher, and Frey provides practical strategies for:

- Building relationships with students,
- Implementing restorative practices, and
- Creating healthy classroom environments that improve learning outcomes.

Read with a colleague or a small group of teachers!

[Click HERE to Access This NEW Book Study Course!](#)



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COMING

SOON

PD Series On-Demand

Small Group Instruction Series

When implemented well, small group instruction enhances individual development, equity in instruction, academic and social-emotional growth, while increasing retention and building community.

This series helps teachers learn strategies for making small group instruction an integral and efficient part of their instructional practice.



Here's what participants are saying...

"This course gave me new ideas on how to engage my students."

"I'll be able to do more with them (my students) now that I can put them in groups with intention."

"[These strategies] empower kids to take ownership over their learning, collaborate with each other, and they will get better and more specific feedback from me."

This series includes the following courses:

- ***Flexible Grouping Strategies***
- ***Peer-to-Peer Collaborative Learning***
- ***Station Teaching and Learning Centers***

**Although the content of each course is connected, each session can be taken separately. Take one, two, or all three--on your time, on your terms!*

[Learn More About Our On-Demand Courses Here](#)



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Supporting Struggling Readers: Data, Lessons, and Progress

Wednesday, January 10 | 4pm - 5pm

Gathering Baseline Data and What To Do With It

Wednesday, January 31 | 4pm - 5pm

Creating Engaged Science-Based Reading Lessons (Grades K-2)

Wednesday, February 7 | 4pm - 5pm

Creating Engaged Science-Based Reading Lessons (Grades 3-6)

Wednesday, February 28 | 4pm - 5pm

Monitoring Student Progress in Reading

Strategies to Support Student Learning Gaps: Multi-Age Classes and Creative Scheduling

Thursday, January 18 | 4pm - 5pm

The Move to Multi-Age: Logistics and More

Wednesday, March 6 | 4pm - 5pm

Multi-Age Classrooms: Why? and Benefits and Challenges Behind this Model

Tuesday, March 13 | 4pm - 5pm

Multi-Age Classrooms: Preplanning and Taking the First Steps

Tuesday, March 20 | 4pm - 5pm

Multi-Age Classrooms: In Practice and Delivery

Integrated Curriculum: Leverage Teacher Collaboration & Solve Common Challenges

Tuesday, January 23 | 4pm - 5pm

Making Connections: Enhancing Program Function with Integrated Curriculum

Tuesday, February 6 | 4pm - 5pm

Practical Implementation at Work: Nuts and Bolts of Moving to an Integrated Curriculum

Tuesday, February 27 | 4pm - 5pm

Checking In: Assessing What You Tried and Next Steps

Assessment and Grading in Differentiated Classrooms: Text-Based Discussions

Tuesday, March 26 | 4pm - 5pm

A Call to Action for Equitable Grading by Joe Feldman

Tuesday, April 16 | 4pm - 5pm

Grading and Differentiation: Paradox or Good Practice? by Carol Ann Tomlinson

Wednesday, May 1 | 4pm - 5pm

The Right Way to do Re-Dos by Rick Wormeli

Elevating Conversations to Drive Instruction

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Principal Panel: Success Stories and Overcoming Challenges

Coaching Conversations with Student Work at the Core

Monday, March 12 | 4pm - 5pm

Plan & Do: Learn & Use Student Work Protocol

Wednesday, March 27 | 4pm - 5pm

Study & Act: Share Your Learning

Exploring AI Tools Teacher Workshop

Thursday, February 29 | 4pm - 5pm

Click [HERE](#) or scan to learn more and register!





We look forward to learning alongside you in the new year. Let us know how we can support your work.

Happy New Year!

Rebecca, Diana, Dawn,

and the Upstate PDRC team

I hope THAT IN THE
year TO COME, YOU
MAKE mistakes

BECAUSE IF YOU ARE MAKING
MISTAKES, THEN YOU ARE
MAKING NEW THINGS, TRYING
NEW THINGS, LEARNING, LIVING,
PUSHING YOURSELF, CHANGING
YOURSELF, CHANGING YOUR
WORLD. YOU'RE DOING THINGS
YOU'VE NEVER DONE BEFORE,
AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY,
YOU'RE DOING SOMETHING.

NEIL GIMMAN
@NEILGIMMAN

Our goal is to provide valuable and accessible learning opportunities for teachers and leaders in NYS religious and independent schools, at all stages of their careers.

Reach out to Rebecca Shea at rshea@measinc.com to let us know how we can support your professional needs.

Visit Our Website Here!



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