

CONNECTED

Tuesday, October 13, 2026 | Orlando Regional Realtor Association | 5421 Diplomat Cir, Orlando, FL 32810

Communities That Count: Why Student Math Confidence Is Everyone's Business



PRESENTED BY



8:30 AM

Welcome

Amity Schuyler – President and CEO, Consortium of Florida Education Foundations

Morning Keynote - Imagine What Math Can Make Possible

Dr. Zandra de Araujo – Director of Mathematics, Lastinger Center for Learning, University of Florida

Mathematics is an outlet for human curiosity, creativity, and imagination. Throughout history, mathematical ideas have helped us understand our world and create things once thought impossible, from modern computing to artificial intelligence. This keynote explores how cultivating the wonder and power of mathematics can unlock human potential, expand economic opportunity, and build the creative, adaptable workforce our future demands.

Speed Session: Rethinking the Math Pathway – HB 1279 and Florida's Future

Representative Jennifer Kincart Jonsson

Florida's future workforce will require more students to see mathematics not as a barrier, but as a pathway to opportunity. Representative Jennifer Kincart Jonsson shares the thinking behind HB 1279 and its move toward more relevant, career-connected math pathways for Florida students. This fast-paced conversation explores why connecting math to students' futures matters, and what it could mean for Florida's talent pipeline, communities and economy.

Session 1: The Mathematics of Opportunity – Why Math Confidence Shapes Futures, Communities and Florida's Economy

Math confidence can shape a student's path, influence career opportunities and strengthen Florida's economic future. Explore the research, examine the role of math in tomorrow's workforce and hear from a panel of leaders about how math fuels innovation, mobility and economic development.

Panelists:

- Corrie Melton, *Florida Chamber of Commerce*
- Paul Sohl, *Florida High Tech Corridor*
- Dr. Murthy Ganapathy, *Florida Institute of Technology*
- Nicholas Longo, *Lockheed Martin*
- Patty D'Alessandro, *Duke Energy*

Networking Break sponsored by



Session 2: Who Decides Who's Good at Math – How Beliefs, Placement and Expectations Shape Math Identity

Students' beliefs about their math ability are shaped long before they enter the workforce. A panel of educators and administrators will explore how classroom experiences, course placement and adult expectations influence math identity, along with the policy and practice changes that can help more students see themselves as capable mathematicians.

Panelists:

- Dr. Sarah Trench, *University of South Florida*
- Dr. Sarah Bush, *University of Central Florida*
- Ashley Dietz, *Florida Philanthropic Network*
- Dr. Alice E. Barfield, *Superintendent, Glades County Schools*

11:35 AM

Networking Break & Lunch sponsored by



Pull up a chair and hear it straight from the source. Over lunch, students share what actually builds their math confidence and what quietly chips away at it. No podium, no pressure — just honest conversation with the students at the center of this work.

12:30 PM

Attendance Awareness Contest Winners

September was Attendance Awareness Month. K-12 students from across Florida participated in a Poster and PSA Contest to share, in their own words and creativity, what they love about coming to school and why showing up matters. This contest was a partnership between the Consortium and Leader in Me.



Presenting the winners:

- Amity Schuyler, *President and CEO, Consortium*
- Karle Hunter, M.Ed., *Client Partner, Leader in Me*
- Michelle Work, *Managing Client Partner, Leader in Me*
- Alex Butler, *Client Partner, Leader in Me*

Session 3: Creating Math Confidence — What Math Teachers Want You to Know About the Community's Role

Who better to tell us what builds math confidence than the people in the room where it happens? Hear directly from math teachers about the community's role in developing math-confident students and what it really takes to support and keep great math teachers in the classroom. Bring your questions; this conversation goes both ways.

Panelists:

- Shane Wiggan, *Impact Florida*
- Marlena Sinclair, *Pinellas County Schools*
- Cameron Hance, *Orange County Public Schools*
- Danny Erb, *Flagler Schools*
- Valentin Sotomayor, *Seminole County Public Schools*

Networking Break sponsored by



Afternoon Keynote - Designing a Community that Builds Math Confidence

Dr. Christopher Danielson — Educator, Author, and creator of Math-On-A-Stick

Dr. Christopher Danielson invites audiences to see math differently, not simply as a school subject, but as something to touch, explore, discuss, and experience together. Drawing on his work with students, teachers, parents, caregivers, and children, Danielson will explore how communities can make math visible, social, playful, and inviting. His keynote challenges attendees to consider where math already lives in everyday life and how positive, shared experiences can help more students see themselves as capable math learners.

Session 4: Speed Session - How Does Math Show Up in Our Community

In this speed session, hear from Thom Jones and Jackie Wolfe from the St. Lucie County Education Foundation about the work happening in their community to build math-confident students, and the lessons they've learned along the way.

Session 5: Where Math Lives

Math isn't confined to classrooms — it's at the fair, in the park, around the kitchen table. In this session, explore how to design a community where math shows up everywhere and everyone plays a part in building math-confident students. Featuring Math Happens, and a few surprises from where math truly comes alive.

Panelists:

- Lauren Siegel, *MathHappens Foundation*
- Margarita Azbel, J.D., *Orlando Math Circle*
- Vincent Taylor, *Author and Educator, Cornbread the Math Detective*

4:00 PM

Reflections and Comments

Let's wrap up an incredible day of information and actions for you to take back to your community.