

Sunday, March 1, 2026



11:00A - 5:00P | REGISTRATION

1:00P - 2:00P | OPENING GENERAL SESSION | BERGSTROM BALLROOM



• **DR. FREDERICK BUSKEY - THE MOTIVATION EQUATION RESISTANCE**

It is the bane of leadership. Resistance to change, to trying, to coaching, to growth. In this keynote, Dr. Buskey helps leaders understand the truth about resistance – it is simply feedback. It tells us people do not perceive the value of what we are asking them to do as being worth the effort it will take to achieve it. Through captivating stories and simple strategies, this speech will empower teachers and school leaders to meet resistance with curiosity, move from conflict to collaboration, and reconnect with what matters most – people!

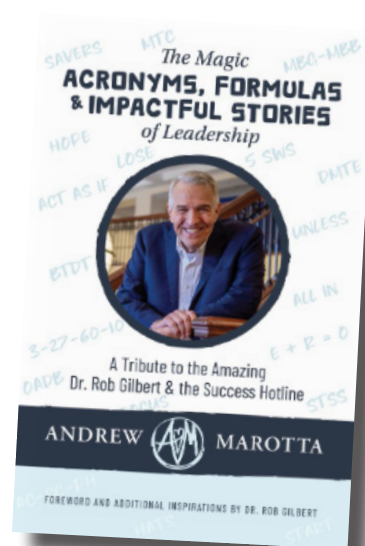
2:15P - 3:15P | FOCUS SESSION: DR. FREDERICK BUSKEY | BERGSTROM BALLROOM

**Rebalancing the Equation** - If motivation equals value divided by effort ( $M=V/E$ ), then how do we increase value and lower effort? How do we know why the equation is imbalanced? In this interactive session, we'll dig more deeply into the motivation equation. Specifically, we'll practice simple techniques for gaining clarity on why people lack motivation or are resistant and look at the most common ways we can increase value and decrease effort. Throughout the session, you will be reflecting and working on your own specific situations. As a result of this session, you will be able to use strategies to identify root issues of motivation and resistance, and identify and apply simple methods for increasing value and decreasing effort.

3:15P - 3:30P | SNACK BREAK

3:30P - 4:30P | FOCUS SESSION: DR. FREDERICK BUSKEY | BERGSTROM BALLROOM

**5-Minute Coaching: Fast Food Practice with Gourmet Results** - We became leaders because we wanted to make a difference in people's lives, but when we spend the majority of our time putting out fires, even productive days can feel purposeless. In this interactive session, we will learn and practice a simple 3-question coaching strategy that will help others grow through reflection and will help you fulfill your leadership purpose. The technique takes less than five minutes, but the impact endures. As a result of this session, you will be able to support teachers and other leaders using a simple reflective process in five minutes or less and will become more aware of the many opportunities you have to use the technique each day.



**Included with Registration: FREE BOOKS from our Keynote Speakers!**

Frederick Buskey: *A School Leader's Guide to Reclaiming Purpose*

Andrew Marotta: *The Magic Acronyms, Formulas, & Impactful Stories of Leadership:*

*A Tribute to the Amazing Dr. Rob Gilbert & the Success Hotline*

Monday, March 2, 2026

7:00A - 4:30P | REGISTRATION AND EXHIBITS OPEN TODAY!

7:15A - 8:00A | COFFEE & TEA

8:00A - 9:00A | MORNING GENERAL SESSION | BERGSTROM BALLROOM



• **CHARLE PECK - THRIVING UNDER PRESSURE: TRANSFORM STRESS INTO STABILITY**

We are under relentless pressure to do more and be more, and we're feeling overloaded. This keynote leaves educators with a powerful message of hope for their future! They will feel energized and confident in their ability to manage their own wellness while effectively responding to student needs. Attendees will have a few practical tools to immediately use that will provide relief to their whole school mental health system upon their return, and because they will learn about the uniquely developing brain and the human stress response system, they'll adjust their lens and adapt their approach to help kids thrive.

9:15A - 10:05A | **BREAKOUT SESSIONS - SET 1 (SET 1 REPEATS UNLESS NOTED BELOW)**

• **Charle Peck: The Language of Behavior: Strategies to Address Common Classroom Challenges ....(Set 1) Bergstrom A**

Students with common mental health issues such as ADHD and anxiety, have difficulty with focus, impulse control, and behavior regulation. These behaviors can cause overwhelm for teachers. This session equips K-12 educators with practical, evidence-based tools to create a calm, inclusive, and engaging learning environment. You'll learn how to confidently prevent and respond to challenging student behavior using clear structure, positive reinforcement, and trauma-informed strategies that work in varied classroom settings.

• **SCHOOLS TO WATCH: BERRY MILLER JR. HS .....(Sets 1&2) Bergstrom B**

**What Do You Get When You Cross 1 Lunch with 800 Kids + Clubs & Tutorials? BOBCAT HOUR!** - Welcome to Berry Miller Junior High in Pearland ISD. Bobcat Hour is a special one-hour period during the school day when all 820 students eat lunch together. This time is designed to give students a break from regular classes while offering multiple opportunities for tutorials, HB1416 intervention, 30+ clubs/activities, and positive social interactions. Instead of separate lunch periods, everyone participates in Bobcat Hour at the same time, creating a unified school experience. If you think that this concept is impossible at the middle school level, think again! In this session, Tony Barcelona will show you how to create a blueprint for your very own "Hour," which will give your staff the gift of time and students the opportunity to hone their social skills and increase their academic achievement.

• **SCHOOLS TO WATCH: GRANT MS .....(Sets 1&2) Bergstrom C**

**From Compliance to Collaboration: Transforming PLCs Into Meaningful Learning Spaces** - Many PLCs exist because they are required, not because they are effective. This session will share how our middle school shifted PLCs from task driven meetings to collaborative spaces focused on instruction and student learning. Participants will learn how clear expectations, consistent structures, and shared accountability increased teacher ownership and improved the quality of PLC conversations. Practical examples will be shared that campuses can adapt immediately.

• **SCHOOLS TO WATCH: FOSTER MS.....(Sets 1&2) Bergstrom D**

**The Foster Story: Igniting Excellence Through Culture, Leadership, and Community** - Foster Middle School's Schools to Watch designation reflects a sustained commitment to high expectations, a supportive culture, and intentional systems that promote success for all students. This session highlights how Foster aligns structures, incentives, leadership, and community partnerships to create a cohesive and adaptable middle school model. Participants will explore how strategic student incentives and celebrations reinforce engagement, consistency, and a sense of belonging, while purposeful staff recognition and professional growth systems strengthen instructional practices. The session also examines Foster's distributed leadership model to elevate stakeholders' voices and inform campus improvement. Attendees will gain actionable strategies for leveraging community partnerships to enhance learning, foster student leadership, and promote real-world readiness.

• **SCHOOLS TO WATCH: ATLANTA MS.....(Sets 1&2) Del Valle**

**The Power of 75: From Lunch to Launch at AMS** - What if lunch could do more than feed students? AMS transformed a 75-minute lunch period into a strategic system for movement, intervention, collaboration, and acceleration. Learn how this model flows into WIN time to support academic recovery, enrichment, and teacher PLCs—making every minute of the middle school day matter.

10:15A - 11:05A | **BREAKOUT SESSIONS - SET 2 (SET 1 REPEATS IN SET 2 EXCEPT BELOW)**

• **Charle Peck: Anxiety + Avoidance: From Pressure to Performance .....(Set 2) Bergstrom A**

Why does anxiety seem to be so prevalent these days? What is it, and how does it show up? Avoidance is a typical response (for both staff + students), which becomes unproductive and further overwhelms us. In this session, we will demonstrate the stress process in the brain and body, explain the difference between anxiety and anxiety disorder, and offer practical strategies to mitigate this common issue to benefit staff, students, and caregivers.

11:05A - 12:30P | LUNCH BUFFET PROVIDED / VISIT EXHIBITORS

Monday Continues...

12:30P - 1:20P | **BREAKOUT SESSIONS - SET 3 (SET 3 REPEATS UNLESS NOTED BELOW)**

• **SEAN CAIN: Review Less – Teach More: Or Why We Keep Reviewing Without Improving .....(Set 3) Bergstrom A**

What if content review is not an effective long-term success strategy? It is not. What if content review makes the classroom less effective? It does. What if we are doing content review wrong? We are. Learn why and how an over-reliance on review makes teaching more difficult. Learn the practices and strategies that amplify teacher effectiveness and elevate student understanding and retention, reducing the need for review. Learn how to transition your school and classrooms from backwards practicing to forward learning. Learn how to review less and teach more.

• **DARLENE HERNANDEZ/ELIZABETH MINTO-BAUER: Introducing the Lever Leader Model:**

**Building Systems to Support Novice Teachers .....(Sets 3&4) Bergstrom B**

This session introduces the Lever Leader model developed at a Texas middle school in the lower Rio Grande Valley to support novice teachers (0–3 years) through targeted instructional coaching and intentional leadership structures. Participants will gain an overview of the purpose, design, and implementation of the model, including how coaching roles were defined, how time was protected for support, and how leadership decisions created sustainable systems. This session establishes a shared understanding of the Lever Leader approach and sets the foundation for the keynote, which will explore the deeper impact of the model on instructional growth, teacher confidence, and retention. Opportunities for Q&A will also be provided.

• **SCHOOLS TO WATCH: HALTOM MS .....(Sets 3&4) Bergstrom C**

**Feedback That Moves the Needle: Leveraging Principal Practices for Instructional Impact** - Effective principal feedback goes beyond observation—it builds clarity, accountability, and growth through practical, intentional systems. This session will explore structured walk-throughs, efficient feedback forms, and timely, actionable feedback that supports instructional improvement. Participants will examine systems for collecting and analyzing campus data, conducting one-on-one data meetings with teachers and students, tracking student progress, and providing consistent administrative feedback. The presentation will also highlight student-centered feedback strategies that strengthen engagement and ownership in the middle school setting.

• **SCHOOLS TO WATCH: CROCKETT MS .....(Sets 3&4) Bergstrom D**

**From Classroom to Collective Impact: Building Teachers as Instructional Leaders** - Strong schools grow when teachers see themselves as leaders of learning. This session focuses on how our Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) builds capacity by developing teachers as instructional leaders through intentional roles such as PLC facilitators, instructional shadows, and shared leadership structures. Participants will reflect on how clarity, collaboration, and distributed leadership strengthen instruction, grow teacher influence, and create collective impact across the campus. When teachers are empowered to lead instruction together, leadership is no longer a position—it becomes a shared practice that drives sustained student learning.

• **THINKCERCA .....(Sets 3&4) Del Valle**

**How Changing the Master Schedule made a positive impact to the Culture, Climate, and Academics** - Jose Lozano, principal of Crosby MS, and Elizabeth Lalor, ThinkCERCA. Crosby Middle School, which is on a 4 day schedule, needed to make some changes to increase academic standards while providing more planning time for teachers. Come learn how this unique schedule has met their needs.

1:30P - 2:20P | **BREAKOUT SESSIONS - SET 4 (SET 3 REPEATS IN SET 4 EXCEPT BELOW)**

• **SEAN CAIN: Quit Managing and Start Leading:**

**The Transformative Power of Formative Classroom Observation .....(Set 4) Bergstrom A**

When implemented correctly high-volume formative classroom observations are the most effective way for instructional leaders to build pedagogical expertise, hone process analysis skills, accelerate pattern recognition, improve decision making, and increase confidence. WHEN IMPLEMENTED CORRECTLY. Join Sean Cain in this exciting session and learn how most classroom observation practices are counter-productive and what to do instead to make you a better leader, your teachers more effective, and your students more successful.

2:45P - 3:15P | **SCHOOLS TO WATCH AWARDS CEREMONY | BERGSTROM BALLROOM**

3:15P - 4:15P | **AFTERNOON GENERAL SESSION | BERGSTROM BALLROOM**



**DARLENE HERNANDEZ/ELIZABETH MINTO-BAUER - SUPPORTING NEW TEACHERS WHERE IT MATTERS MOST: THE LEVER LEADER MODEL**

This session highlights how a Texas middle school in the lower Rio Grande Valley developed and implemented a Lever Leader program designed to support novice teachers (0–3 years of experience) through targeted instructional coaching and intentional leadership structures. Participants will explore how the program accelerates instructional growth, strengthens teacher confidence, and supports long-term retention while positively impacting student achievement. The presentation will unpack the systems that made the work possible, including purposeful scheduling, mindset shifts around coaching and feedback, and the establishment of sustainable coaching practices. Attendees will leave with practical insights into building coherent systems that develop teachers efficiently and create lasting instructional impact.

Tuesday, March 3, 2026

**7:15A - 8:00A | BREAKFAST**

**8:00A - 9:00A | BREAKOUT SESSIONS - SET 5 (SET 5 REPEATS UNLESS NOTED BELOW)**

**• Andrew Marotta: Master Your Mornings..... (Set 5) Bergstrom A**

What are the routines, structures, and habits you can put into place to help you best jumpstart your day? Want to wake up earlier? Want to be more focused in your personal & professional life? Want to get that morning workout in? In this proactive, self-care session, Andrew dives into the following: Mastering the first 60-75 minutes of each day. Making time to do the things you want to do. Build a shut-down evening routine. SAVERS: how to start your day by using SAVERS. Books, distractions, zoning in, and more. It is challenging to lead if you are not filling your cup first. Make the important thing the important thing and get it done daily, and early.

**• Caroline Williams: Beyond the Checkout: Dynamic Library Integration ..... (Sets 5&6) Bergstrom B**

This professional development session aims to equip school leaders with strategies to effectively integrate library resources into various content areas, demonstrating how libraries serve as extensions of the classroom. The session will include hands-on activities and role-playing to facilitate engagement and practical application.

**• Dr. Shaunte Morris: Leading Through Change Without Losing Your Team..... (Sets 5&6) Bergstrom C**

Assistant principals are often the bridge between leadership decisions and staff implementation - especially during times of change. This session equips APs with practical tools to navigate transitions, manage resistance, and build a change-ready culture without burning out their teams. Participants will engage in real-world scenarios, reflective activities, and walk away with ready-to-use leadership strategies.

**• Kathleen Eckert: Do Your Teachers Feel Appreciated? ..... (Set 5) Bergstrom D**

Add up IEPs, 504s, state assessments, department meetings, staff development trainings, parent emails and conferences, and grading guidelines, and the sum total is that teachers are constantly being pulled in 20 different directions. On top of that, as much as administrators want to show appreciation to teachers, our hands are tied by financial guidelines and budgets. See how I make my teachers feel valued and appreciated through a variety of strategies that let my teachers know they are the best! Participants will leave with ideas to quickly and easily implement for little or no cost.

**• SCHOOLS TO WATCH: WoodCreek Jr. High School ..... (Set 5) Del Valle**

**The Power of We** - Schools are at their best when collaboration is intentional and culture is strong. In this session, a junior high leadership team shares how they built collaborative team structures that support both large teams and small departments while creating meaningful connections across the campus. Participants will also explore culture driven practices that ensure students and staff feel known, valued, and supported. Grounded in real campus experiences, this session provides practical, ready to use strategies leaders can take back and implement immediately to strengthen collaboration, elevate culture, and truly make middle school matter.

**9:15A - 10:15A | BREAKOUT SESSIONS - SET 6 (SET 5 REPEATS IN SET 6 EXCEPT BELOW)**

**• Andrew Marotta: People, Performance, & Pressure: Tales from the Hardwood..... (Set 6) Bergstrom A**

Andrew dives deep into powerful stories and experiences from his time as a Division One men's college basketball official. He will take you through the ups and downs, successes and failures, and the journey of trying to be the best you can be under the spotlight and intense scrutiny. Takeaways: How to be your best when it matters most; Empower: Be the mentor you wanted to have when you started; How to "make the right call" in the toughest situations and come out thriving; Our true job description: absorb chaos, create calm, and provide hope.

**• Kathleen Eckert: School Administrators as Instructional Leaders..... (Set 6) Bergstrom D**

What does it mean to be an Instructional Leader? Does a school administrator need to know the state standards for all contents taught on their campus? The answer is no! So, how do you become an impactful Instructional Leader? In this session I will share easy and effective strategies and ideas designed to catapult school leaders into a successful Instructional Leaders on their campuses.

**• Horace Mann: Financial Wellness for a Healthy 2026 ..... (Set 6) Del Valle**

Discussion of services and programs Horace Mann offers that are free to educators, as well as benefits associated with products and the effect of inflation on home and auto premiums.

**10:30A - 11:30A | CLOSING GENERAL SESSION | BERGSTROM BALLROOM**



**• Keynote: Andrew Marotta - Be the ONE: Surviving & Thriving**

Why do some people just stand out? Oh, they're just born with that magnetic personality or that special talent. They're so lucky they can just \_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank). NO — they work at it! They practice their skills. They learn from others. They work at bringing value and positive impact to others. Join Andrew on this fun journey of exploring, dissecting, and diving deep into the strategies and intentional actions of being THAT one that people want to work with & be around. Takeaways: Connecting through stories; Bring positive energy to the workplace; Capitalizing on simple moments that can become important breakthroughs; Listening and being present for others.

**11:45A - 1:30P | SCHOOLS TO WATCH TRAINING/LUNCH - DEL VALLE (For Newly Designated Campus Staff Only)**