2026 NEVADA AFTERSCHOOL SHOWCASE and MCKINNEY-VENTO & FOSTER CARE SUMMIT

Whole Teams, Whole Hearts, Whole Communities: Together We Make the Magic Happen!

THURSDAY, February 26, 2026
9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Tuscany Suites & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada

Time	Content Area	Session Information	Presenters
8:00-9:00 AM	Registration & Breakfast Breakfast will be served in ***Florentine D*** **Pastries, fresh fruit, eggs, coffee, tea, juice, water*		
9:00-9:30 AM	***Florentine D:*** Welcome, Land Recognition, and Native Blessing		
9:30-10:30 AM	**Keynote *(Florentine D)*: Life, Curveballs, & Home Runs** Description: Life throws "curveballs," but resilience is the superpower to hit them out of the park. Dee Hankins shares his journey through foster care, blending personal stories with universal lessons on resiliency, emotional honesty, & self-awareness. His keynote empowers audiences to face life's challenges with strength & hope. Attendees will gain insights into adversity & redefining resilience, perspective to overcome challenges, and the strength found in shared vulnerability.		Dee Hankins *Founder, Dee Hankins, Inc.*
10:30-10:45 AM	**Transition to Breakout Session 1**		
10:45-11:45 AM	Program Management & Professional Development	***Florentine D: From Clock-in to Buy-in: A Look at Part-Time Staff*** What truly motivates part-time afterschool staff to show up, stay engaged, and deliver their best work? This session presents findings from surveys and interviews conducted with team members across Reno's Parks, Recreation & Community Services afterschool programs. Through data-driven analysis and firsthand insights, we'll explore how staff describe their experiences, what they love about their work, what challenges they face, and what helps them feel connected to the program's mission. Attendees will gain a deeper understanding of the factors that can influence morale, retention, and job satisfaction, especially among young and emerging workers in our field. Together, we'll analyze the data from the City of Reno part-time youth staff and begin to discuss practical strategies to strengthen staff buy-in and foster a culture of appreciation.	Jesse Wydrinski *City of Reno - Sierra Kids*
10:45-11:45 AM	Program Structure, Curriculum, & Activities	***Florentine E: Innovative Afterschool Programming Made Easy*** Afterschool care shouldn't just fill time — it should be a launchpad for growth, wellness, and civic awareness. In this session, we will share how our program blends sports, DJ/music, and yoga to engage students across interests, and how we partner with departments across our city or community (e.g., water safety, sustainability) to offer valuable education on water conservation and environmental stewardship. Participants will gain concrete strategies, youth-led project ideas, and evaluation approaches to implement similar holistic and collaborative programming in their own after-school settings.	Megan Burns & Andrea Ramirez *City of Henderson*
10:45-11:45 AM	McKinney-Vento/Foster Care Program Management & Professional Development	***Florentine F: Continuity of Mental Health Care: Across School and Community Systems*** Navigating multiple mental health providers can be challenging in school settings, Monica Romero with the Nevada Department of Education Office for Safe and Respectful Learning Environments, will share best practices and strategies to ensure continuity of mental health services across systems.	Monica Romero *Office for a Safe and Respectful Learning Environment, N.D.E.*

10:45-11:45 AM	Disabilities Program Structure, Curriculum, & Activities	***Florentine G: Unified Activities and Family Engagement*** Learn about Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools, an inclusive approach that brings students of all abilities together through sports, leadership, and inclusive engagements. Discover meaningful ways to involve students and families by fostering connection, encouraging participation and creating welcoming spaces that promote belonging, teamwork and shared experiences that strengthen communities.	Dominique Christion *Special Olympics Nevada*
11:45 AM - 1:15 PM	**Lunch *(will be served as a Mexican buffet)* & Exhibitor Hall in Florentine D** **Transition to Breakout Session 2**		
1:15-2:15 PM	Youth Development & Social Emotional Learning	***Florentine D: Strengthening Resilience Through Purpose and Practice*** Following his keynote address, Dee Hankins will lead an engaging breakout session designed to take a deeper look at the strategies he uses to build a resilient mindset in the face of life's challenges. Through interactive reflection and guided discussion, attendees will explore how purpose, connection, and personal narrative can strengthen resilience for both youth and adults. Participants will leave with practical tools, prompts, and actionable steps to help integrate these resilience-building strategies into their programs, classrooms, and daily interactions with young people.	Dee Hankins *Dee Hankins, Inc.*
1:15-2:15 PM	Program Structure, Curriculum, & Activities	***Florentine E: Arrow Minds - Learn Skills First*** Arrow Minds: Learn Skills First is not your typical sit-and-listen presentation—it's a hands-on, think-fast, move-smart experience! Led by educator and creator Katy Toma, this interactive session takes audiences on a fun journey into the world of learning how to learn. Through playful challenges and brain-boosting activities, participants will discover how focus, memory, attention, and problem-solving can be trained just like muscles. Katy shows why every school and afterschool program should start with learning skills first—because when kids master how to learn, everything else becomes easier (and way more fun!). Teachers, parents, and leaders will leave inspired, laughing, and loaded with simple tools to help kids shine in any subject. Arrow Minds is where fun meets neuroscience and where every learner becomes their own superhero of focus and thinking.	Katy Toma & Stephanie Doroteo *Skills Schools*
1:15-2:15 PM	McKinney-Vento/Foster Care Youth Development & Social Emotional Learning	***Florentine F: Supporting Children Living with Relatives and Family Friends*** When parents can't safely care for their children, relatives and close family friends often step in so kids don't have to live with strangers. This "kinship care" saves the system every day but these families are often invisible in policy, under-resourced in practice, and left to figure things out alone. This session will unpack how children actually enter nonparental care (through child welfare, court, and quiet "off-the-books" arrangements), the gaps in their rights and supports, and what that means for their safety, stability, and long-term well-being. Participants will learn how Foster Kinship's navigator model walks alongside caregivers to build legal, financial, and emotional stability for the whole family. Attendees will leave with concrete language, questions to ask, and practice and policy considerations they can bring back to their own roles to better recognize and support children in kinship care.	Ali Caliendo & Leah Dods *Foster Kinship*
1:15-2:15 PM	Youth Voice Program Structure, Curriculum, & Activities	***Florentine G: Belonging by Design: Youth-Led Pathways to Systemic Change*** Young people are powerful innovators who are uniquely positioned to help redesign the systems they experience every day. When educators intentionally activate student voice through structured after-school leadership opportunities, youth become co-creators of positive change that strengthens school climate, belonging, and community well-being. This session introduces an evidence-based, human-centered approach that leverages the Youth LEADS (Leadership, Education, Agency, Design-Based Learning, Solutions) After School Program — an innovative model that bridges the gap between school and after-school life. By engaging students in data review, collaborative problem-solving, and creative implementation, schools can cultivate student leaders who champion inclusion and elevate the voices of their peers. Attendees will leave with practical strategies for launching a student-led improvement network that produces systematic change by transforming students from participants on a panel into empowered L.o.V.E (Leaders of Valuing Everyone) in both school and after school community spaces.	Laronica Maurer *School Climate Excellence Educational Services & Consulting*

2:15-2:30 PM	**Transition to Breakout Session 3**		
2:30-3:30 PM	Program Management & Professional Development	***Florentine D: Funding and Sustaining Programs in Challenging Times*** Comprehensive, quality afterschool and summer learning programs need consistent and sustained funding to maximize the impact they have on young people. Learn how to fund and sustain quality out of school time programs through accessing federal, state and local funding sources, and utilize advocacy to forge relationships with a range of community partners and decision makers to ensure funding is available. Group discussion will focus on participants' experiences with different funding streams and the role of advocacy to develop and leverage new funding sources in a climate of fewer resources.	Chris Neitzey *Afterschool Alliance*
2:30-3:30 PM	STEM Program Structure, Curriculum, & Activities	***Florentine E: Launch Their Dreams: Free and Equitable NASA STEM Units for Out-of-School Time*** NASA's PLANETS project spent five years co-creating a free planetary science and engineering curriculum with OST educators for learners in grades 3–8. The curriculum draws on a review of STEM learning research, focus groups with 20 OST practitioners, consultation with advisors experienced in supporting diverse youth, and feedback from working sessions with hundreds of OST educators across the country. Guided by Universal Design for Learning and culturally sustaining pedagogies, the curriculum integrates promising practices in program design, instructional strategies, curriculum materials, and professional learning. In this session, participants will engage in a STEM challenge from one unit and reflect on strategies that foster equity and belonging. Attendees will leave with ready-to-use materials and inspiration to help learners dream big and see themselves as scientists and engineers.	Stephanie Jackson & Lauren Shollenberger *Northern Arizona University Center for STEM Teaching and Learning*
2:30-3:30 PM	McKinney-Vento/Foster Care Program Management & Professional Development	***Florentine F: When Responsibility Is Unclear: Creating a Guide to Confirm Parent Eligibility for McKinney-Vento Services*** Determining McKinney-Vento eligibility can leave school staff in a difficult position when parental accountability is limited or unclear. This session introduces a practical guide developed by Clark County School District's Title I HOPE Program to bring structure, consistency, and fairness to eligibility confirmation. Learn how this process helps staff navigate complex situations, document decisions confidently, and ensure that students continue to receive uninterrupted support.	Kelly-Jo Shebeck *Clark County School District*
2:30-3:30 PM	Native Voice Program Structure, Curriculum, & Activities	***Florentine G: Kinship, Belonging, and Indigenous and Tribal Knowledge for Everyone in OST*** This session will introduce out-of-school time professionals to ways Indigenous and Tribal knowledge and practices can be thoughtfully incorporated into OST programs to support kinship, belonging, and connection for all youth. Participants will explore how these approaches can be applied across a variety of program settings and communities. The session will emphasize inclusive, culturally responsive practices that are accessible and meaningful for youth from diverse backgrounds. Attendees will leave with ideas, tools, and resources they can adapt and build upon within their own programs.	Kadie Zeller & Austin Little *NAN & Fallon Paiute Shoshone Tribe*
3:30-3:45 PM	**Transition to Closing Plenary**		
3:45-4:45 PM	**Closing Plenary *(Florentine D)*: *The Power of Youth Voice*** Emceed by NV Flight Crew alumni Emma L. and Siana, this closing plenary highlights the voices and talents of young people from across Nevada. The session features original spoken word by sisters Nariya and Ss'Vaya, youth advocates and participants in the Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth (NPHY) program. Flight Crew members Emma B. and Maryam will share a brief "Show and Tell" highlighting their leadership growth and projects. Two youth panels featuring Avery, Tiana, Andrei, Cae, Carter, Nayeli, Manuel, and James will follow, sharing perspectives on leadership and the impact of out-of-school time programs. The session will conclude with live music from the Foundation to Assist Young Musicians (FAYM). Centering youth voice strengthens programs, deepens relationships, and ensures that the systems designed to support young people remain responsive and meaningful.		
4:45-5:00 PM	**Networking & Exhibitor Hall**		