



## Main Street Academix Student Leadership Summit January 2009 Descriptions of Breakout Sessions

### **Engaged Learning: Science of the Mind**

Presented by Amir Flesher and Max Schadt of Compass School

How can we make learning in schools more real, more relevant, and more hands-on? Participants will learn about an exciting interdisciplinary course that took students to the Harvard Brain Center, allowed them to participate in real brain research, and enabled them to learn about, hold, and dissect a variety of healthy and unhealthy brains. YIKES! The course taught them to meditate, do yoga and even allowed them to write and publish what they learned in a professional journal that is currently being used as a text-book in a college Educational Psychology course. We hope that participants will share what they learn with their teachers and show them how their schools can do more projects like this to get more students excited about learning.

**Student Empowerment and School Democracy: Student Council and Judiciary Systems** Presented by Hannah Venman-Clay, Anne Lise Kloster, Harrison Chase, and Manya Gordon of Compass School

Is there room for “democracy” in our schools? This session will show you how the Compass School handles student discipline in a very different way than most schools. Come learn how students and adults, with proper training in Restorative Justice, can work together as partners to make a school’s discipline system more democratic, more fair, and more effective.

### **Ideas Anyone Can Use to Build a More Respectful School**

Presented by Rick Gordon of Compass School

What are the WORST FIVE DAYS of the school year when nothing positive happens? What else could we do on those days to make school a very different experience for students and teachers? This is one way to start thinking about doing things a bit differently in a school. Participants in this session will learn about several simple, yet powerful, ideas that your school could use to build stronger connections between students and teachers and to make learning much more engaging, fun and meaningful for students. We hope that some teams might propose some of these ideas to their teachers and school leaders.

**Making Assessment Meaningful: Portfolios, Presentations of Learning and Report Cards** Presented by Louise Van Order, Kailey Rinder and Sophie Taylor Havens of Compass School

Everyone seems to hate tests, but what are the alternatives? Being “given a grade” by the teacher is very different than having to “show evidence” that proves what you have learned. How would you prove to your teacher, your parents, or to experts in the community that you have actually learned? In this session, we will show you how grading, passing a course, or graduating from school altogether could happen in a very different way. Learn how students at the Compass School have to “make their own case” to show that they have really learned.

### **Increase the Peace: Let’s Stop Bullying in Schools**

Presented by Bryan Partridge of New England College

Who are the bullies in your school? Have you ever experienced or observed bullying in school? What should you do? What shouldn’t you do? How can you make it stop or at least make it stop hurting? We will explore these questions as well as the effects of bullying on victims, on learning and on schools in order to show why we need to do a better job stopping bullying. Learn how students in your school can take steps to deal with this important issue more effectively.

## Using Poetry and the Arts to Raise Students' Voices

Presented by LeDerick Horne

*How can you use the arts and music more effectively to raise awareness and interest in your leadership team and its goals? How can your team tap into the sometimes hidden potential inside all types of students to build a more powerful and effective leadership team? In this session, LeDerick will build on the topics he discussed in his Keynote Address. He will also help student leaders and adult mentors think more carefully about who they invite to join their leadership teams. Are there students, much like LeDerick in his younger days, who might have hidden talents or unlimited potential, that adults and peers too often overlook? Why not seek out these "unlikely leaders" and invite them to join, diversify, and strengthen your team?*

## Student Leadership: A guide to the first two years

Presented by Bill Preble, with students from Raymond High School, and a report from Woodsville High School.

*How long will it take before we feel like we are making a difference? How does a group of students even begin to change a school? What are the first ten steps an effective student leadership team should follow? We will ask students from Raymond High School to share the action steps they have taken in their first full first year as a team and to show how a student team can get off to a flying start. We will then look ahead and explore the steps they might take in their second year and refer to work being done in Year II at Woodsville HS. This session will help you get a "leadership roadmap" in your head so you can see what is coming down the road.*

## Conquering Girl to Girl Harassment in Your School

Presented by Rachael Frost of Main Street Academix and Courtney Breslin of New England College

*Why are girls so mean to each other sometimes and is there anything we can do to get them to stop? In this session participants will discuss how girls treat each other in schools and what if anything is being done about it. What are the best ways to confront girl-to-girl harassment and what can older girls and women who have been through this do to prevent this from happening to others?*

## When Social Networks Turn on You: Combating Harassment in Cyberspace

Presented by Chris Overtree of University of Massachusetts, Amherst

*Have you ever seen someone's reputation destroyed by an e-mail or text message? Have you ever used social networks or technology as a weapon? Participants in this session will begin to discuss the complex issue of cyber-bullying and explore solutions for addressing this rapidly growing problem. This is really one session where YOU, the students, may truly be the experts!*

## BIG Ideas for Taking Effective Action That Every Leader Should Understand

Presented by Larry Taylor of New England College

*Adult leaders will want to attend this session, along with students who like to think big. What are 3 or 4 BIG ideas or theories that have been proven to be effective in bringing together people with differences or those who are in conflict? What do we know about the power of our "beliefs" to affect our own success or failure as leaders, learners, or just as people, or to affect the success or failure of others? What are a few simple strategies that student leaders or their adult mentors can use to greatly increase their chances for success as they work to bring people together and change their schools?*