

Kindergarten Explorers  
 Building engaging and robust  
 STEM learning in Minnesota  
 2017 MKA Spring Conference  
 May 5 - 6 at Cragun's Resort



**KINDERGARTEN  
 EXPLORERS**

This year's conference has us scouting out learning through STEM at Cragun's Resort in beautiful Brainerd, Minnesota. Our pilgrimage begins on May 5th with our keynote guide, Katy Smith, a parent educator from Winona, MN and former Minnesota Teacher of the Year. The adventure continues with Doug Paulson, a popular STEM educator from MDE followed by Greg Smedley-Warren who will provide a "smorgasboard" of information as we explore Math Strategies and Technology in the classroom. When the sun sets on the first day of our explorations, you will choose your own path for the break-out sessions, which follow our walk-about dinner. Saturday, May 6<sup>th</sup> finds us waking up to a continental breakfast, our annual MKA board meeting and a day filled with valuable information from Dr. Lori Elliot on Project-Based Learning in K. Along the path there be time to browse through great vendors, enjoy a boxed lunch, visit our all-new "Swap & Share Room", and hear from Minnesota author, Laura Salas. An amazing adventure awaits you at the 2017 MKA Conference! Your MKA Board is looking forward to seeing all of you "Kindergarten Explorers" this spring *IN THE WOODS* at Cragun's Resort!

Respectfully,  
 Chris Messer, MKA President



**Friday Lunch: Italian Pasta Meal**

**Dining Room**

Caesar Salad, Rotini Salad, Pasta, Meat Sauce, Alfredo Sauce, Italian Sausage, Seasonal Vegetables, Bread Sticks, Chef's Choice Dessert

**Friday Dinner: Taco Themed Stations**

**Sports Centre**

- ◆ **Station One:** Tortilla Chips, Fresh Guacamole, Salsa, Acapulco Gold Salad, Romaine Lettuce, Tomato, Avocado, Black Beans, Cheddar Cheese
- ◆ **Station Two:** Tacos, Grilled Steak, Chicken, Beans, Rice, Baby Spinach, Black Beans, Cabbage, Pineapple
- ◆ **Station Three:** Sopapilla, Bananas Foster, Salted Caramel, Beverage

**Saturday Breakfast: Continental**

**Sports Centre**

Assorted Pastries, Fresh Fruit, Yogurt, Juice, Coffee

**Saturday Lunch: Box Lunch**

**Sports Centre**

**Sandwiches, Wraps:**

Roast Beef & Cheddar    Ham & Swiss    Turkey & American  
 Chicken Bacon Ranch Wrap    Chicken Caesar Wrap  
 Vegetarian Wrap with Cheese  
 Chips, Cookies, Fruit, Beverage

**\*\*Gluten free and vegan options available upon request**

## Friday, May 5, 2017

### 9:00-10:15 **Katy Smith**

"Play, Moving from Advocacy to Activism"  
Let's talk about play, out loud, with expertise, and in support of what kindergarteners need. It's time to find our voices and make the case for the essential role that play plays in the development of the whole child. Play does not need to be something we talk about behind closed doors. Play needs to be championed and supported, as a partner to the standards and policies that drive our lesson plans.

10:15 Break

### 10:30-12:00 **Doug Paulson**

"What Do We Know? Illuminate Student Thinking with Play"  
Children are born investigators and need experiences that empower them to explore, think, and reason. Kindergarten provides a great opportunity to tap into the natural curiosity of the world through tinkering and play that are the foundations for learning. We will consider play in new ways and reflect upon conceptual changes to create an environment that is engaging and authentic for students.

12:00 Lunch

### 1:00-2:30 **Greg Smedley-Warren**

"A Smorgasboard of Math Strategies"  
Discover how to build math skills each day using the calendar, math review, mental math, groups, centers and lesson closures. These strategies will help you meet the needs of your students while challenging them to reach for higher-order thinking. Plus, you will find out how to integrate technology and differentiate math instruction.

2:30 Break

### 2:45-4:00 **Greg Smedley-Warren**

"A Smorgasboard of Technology in the Classroom"  
Weave a variety of technology tools into your classroom every day! Learn ways to use an iPad for whole group instruction in handwriting, math and literacy—even if you have only one iPad. Explore how to use QR codes as a math and literacy center. You will also learn how to use technology to manage your classroom and make teaching a little less overwhelming

4:15 Registration and Vendors "Open Camp"

## Friday Evening, May 5, 2017

5:00-6:00 Early Bird Break-Out (*Choose One*)

- **Sarah Edgar** "Making Sight Words Stick"

Current trends are asking kindergartners to learn more and more sight words in order to become readers. Sara will present a wide assortment of ways to teach your students to learn and spell sight words in a developmentally appropriate way. Kindergartners will learn words through movement, fun and novel ways of practicing words at his or her pace.

- **Doug Paulson** "How Do We Know? Navigate the Role of Culture in STEM Learning"

Experiences shape the knowledge and skills students build upon in the classroom. Each experience from visiting museums to walking in the woods to listening to elder's stories provide a different way of "knowing." Each are as valid as the others. In the session we will explore different ways culture impacts how we learn and what students may provide as evidence of scientific reasoning.

6:15-7:00 Dinner and Vendors

7:00-8:00 Break-Out Sessions 1

8:00 Break

8:15-9:15 Break-Out Sessions 2

9:45 Vendors Close Camp for the Night

### Friday Special Events, hosted by MKA:

9:45 Campfire by the Lake.....Explorers fill your canteen and meet other Campers poolside at the Cabana.

## Saturday, May 6, 2017

8:00-8:30 Registration/Vendors Open/Continental Breakfast

8:30-8:55 Welcome and MKA Annual Board Meeting

9:00-10:45 **Dr. Lori Elliott** "Project-Based Learning in K"

10:45 Break/Vendors

11:00-12:00 **Laura Salas** "Great Things Come in Small Poems"

12:00 Lunch/Vendors

1:00-2:00 **Dr. Lori Elliott**

2:00 Break/Vendors

2:15-3:15 **Dr. Lori Elliott**

3:15 Vendors (Vendors close camp at 4:00)



DR. LORI ELLIOTT is an energetic and passionate National Board Certified teacher (for over 25 years) and currently a trainer. Lori is popular on the SDE circuit. She has taught students of various grade levels and served as a Literacy Coordinator and Technology Integration Specialist. She is the author of several books: Project Based Learning for Real Kids and Real Teachers, Different Strategies

for Different Learners, Teach Like a Techie, The Accidental Techie to the Rescue, and Teach Like a Techie with Apps. Lori believes building positive relationships with students, parents, and colleagues is the most important thing we can do as educators. Her energy and love for teaching & learning is contagious.

Make learning real and meaningful in your classroom through project-based learning! Join Dr. Lori Elliott to identify the essentials of true project-based learning and to learn how to plan for authentic instruction. She shares some of her favorite project-based units and tips for managing a project-based classroom.



As a 2015 elementary music education retiree, Shana Wagner continues to substitute teach, serve as the MN Orff Chapter president, act as a mentor to a young music teacher through a grounded mentoring program, and presents workshops on the BrainDance for all ages.

Shana was trained in the BrainDance by BrainDance creator, Anne Green Gilbert, in the summers of 2007 and 2008 and in a 1 on 1 update training in the fall of 2015. She used the BrainDance with all of her elementary music students from 2007 until retiring in 2015. She has presented numerous workshops around the state and nationally.



GREG SMEDLEY-WARREN, is well known for his Kindergarten Smorgasboard blog

[www.kindergartensmorgasboard.com](http://www.kindergartensmorgasboard.com)

He has been teaching for 11 years. He spent a year teaching fifth grade, two years in second grade, and is now in his eighth year of kindergarten. He received his bachelor's degree

from Indiana University and his ELL certification from David Lipscomb University. At the beginning of his career, he spent two summers teaching in Ecuador, which only helped to fan the flames of his passion for teaching. In 2015, he was selected a Teacher of the Year by his peers. He has a monthly broadcast on YouTube called Submission for Smorgie LIVE. He enjoys blogging, creating curriculum and resources for his classroom and conducting professional development sessions to help teachers around the world make their classrooms a more fun, effective and interactive place to teach. You won't want to miss where mustaches, glitter and great teaching collide!



Former teacher, Laura Purdie Salas has written more than 125 books for kids, including the CanBe..... Series (Bank Street Best Books, IRA Teachers' Choice) and BookSpeak! (Minnesota Book Award, Notable), plus the forthcoming If You Were the Moon. Laura loves to share

inspiration and practical tips with educators about poetry, nonfiction, and more. Visit Laura at [laurasalas.com](http://laurasalas.com).



**DOUG PAULSON** is the STEM Specialist at the Minnesota Department of Education where he leads STEM initiatives and educational technology. He has experience teaching and as an administrator from kindergarten through 9<sup>th</sup> grade in several districts prior to coming to the department. He provides leadership as a Board Director on several Minnesota organizations as

well as the Council for State Science Supervisors and was appointed to the National Academy of Engineering Committee on Guiding Implementation of K-12 Engineering Education. Doug was named in 2011 as an ASCD Emerging Leader and has presented at National Conferences for ASCD, NSTA, ITEEA, and US DoE. He is currently working on his Ed.D. at Bethel University and is doing research projects on data system indicators, gender equity in STEM, and integration of computer science. Doug is active on social media at @DPaulsonSTEM.



**Dr. Thomas Meagher** holds the position of Lecturer in STEM Education at the University of Minnesota in the College of Education and Human Development. He has presented at state, national, and international conferences in STEM Education. Tom, as well, provides professional development in STEM teaching and learning for multiple

school districts around the state of Minnesota. He holds PhD in Science and Education and has over 20 years of teaching science experience. Currently, he is ISD #761's STEM Coordinator and instructional coach. He created Owatonna's STEM teaching and learning model.



**KATY SMITH** has been engaging communities in conversations for more than 30 years. Katy is an educator, a trainer, and the 2011 Minnesota Teacher of the Year. For over thirty years, she has worked side by side with parents, families, educators, and businesses helping to connect people and build stronger, more vital communities. People inspire her and have driven her educational and career choices. She has a BSW and a Parent Education license from Winona State

University, a master's degree in Education from University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse, and a master's degree in Early Childhood Public Policy and Advocacy from Walden University. Her work takes her to all sorts of places, schools, community groups, churches, churches, businesses, conventions, and conferences. A great day at work includes speaking to small or large groups of people who like to learn and love to laugh. People learn best when they are engaged in a powerful story that challenges their thought process and touches their emotions. No one loves to tell a story more than Katy.



**Sara Edgar** has been a kindergarten teacher in Big Lake School District for 17 years. When she is not teaching kindergarten, she leads classes on a variety of topics for other educators at Resources Training and Solutions in Sartell, MN. She has been honored with several awards including the Leadership in Educational

Excellence Award (LEEA), a TIES Exceptional Teacher Award for her engaging lessons using technology and was a candidate for the MN Teacher of the Year in 2013. Sara loves to create engaging and meaningful materials to meet the needs of her students. She seeks to blend high expectations with fun and developmentally appropriate practices. She is the author of the blog Polka Dot Kinders, where she shares her experiences and ideas with others.

## Friday Night Break-Out Session Topics

### Start the Day Smiling (Sara Edgar)

You have the power to make each day a great day just by starting the day off right. Learn ways to make children feel welcome and excited to learn each morning through simple but effective routines. You will leave with a suitcase of tools that will make you and your students smile each morning including Morning Meeting ideas, Morning Songs and Lucky Duck. (Sessions 1 & 2)

### Make a Difference with the BrainDance! (Shana Wagner)

Learn to use the BrainDance and other age appropriate movement for your students. You will experience and learn several variations of the BrainDance using songs and rhymes. Doing these patterns help students be better prepared for learning, focus, balance, coordination, and moving toward a more integrated body and brain. Be prepared to participate! (Sessions 1 & 2)

### How Do We Know? Navigate the Role of Culture in STEM Learning (Doug Paulson)

Experiences shape the knowledge and skills students build upon in the classroom. Each experience from visiting museums to walking in the woods to listening to elder's stories provide a different way of "knowing." Each are as valid as the others. In the session we will explore different ways culture impacts how we learn and what students may provide as evidence of scientific reasoning. (Session 1 only.)

### STEMify Your Teaching, Using Best Practices of STEM Education in Your Classroom. (Tom Meagher)

In this session, you will learn and practice specific strategies that can move lessons from any content area toward a STEM approach. Bring your creativity and lesson ideas to find out how integrating your curriculum can engage all students in STEM learning. (Sessions 1 & 2)

### Centers Made Simple (Greg Smedley-Warren)

Get familiar with Common Core-Aligned and differentiated math and literacy center ideas and explore ways to effectively manage your math or literacy centers. See how easy it is to integrate technology into your center time. Plus, discover how center wheels and tubs help make managing and rotating centers simple for you and your students. (Session 2 only.)



**On an adventure through your classroom,  
You find things that you don't use,  
"I'm not sure why I bought this," you say,  
Things in my way give me the blues!**

**Search your cupboards, your closets,  
All the crannies and nooks,  
Bring gently used things that'll help  
Another's classroom's looks,**

**Don't worry, don't fret,  
Just bring them with you,  
Someone else can use that,  
You'll find something too!**



**To the SHARE & SWAP ROOM it goes,  
And stay there until,  
Another teacher can say,  
That'll give my students a thrill!**



**Bring all your things here,  
And we'll have the pleasure,  
To help another teacher  
Turn your "trash" into their "treasure"!**

**A new addition to our Spring Conference this year is our "Share & Swap Room". This will be tons of fun! Maybe you have things that you are not using in your classroom anymore, but that might be THE very thing that someone else needs, especially a new teacher! Please make sure anything you bring is gently used. You may also bring items that you no longer use, and NOT take anything, that is fine, too. Then, newer teachers will be given more opportunities to "shop"!**

# Accommodations

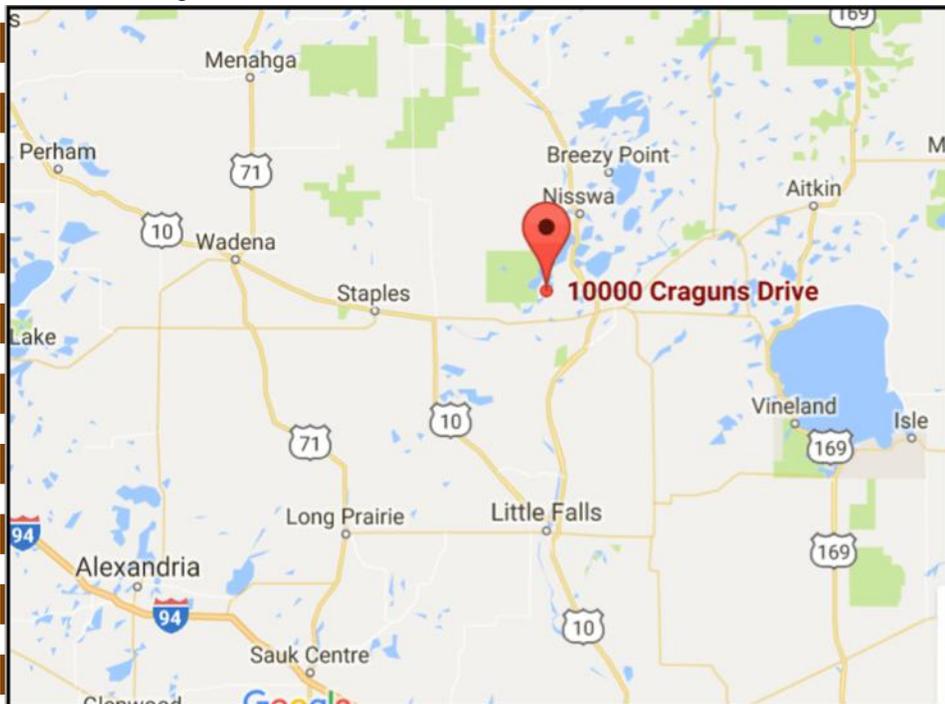
**CRAGUN'S**  
RESORT AND HOTEL ON GULL LAKE

## The One-Night Adult Rate:

- **Lodge rooms:** Single-\$111.30 Double-\$51.15
- **Cabin Pricing (Per bedroom, per night)** Single-\$111.30 Double-\$58.15 All roommates must send forms. All bedrooms in a cabin must be occupied or paid for.

Go to: [www.mymka.org](http://www.mymka.org) to reserve accommodations.

**DAILY CONFERENCE RATE: \$10 per day (includes usage fee and tax) for those not staying at Cragun's but attending the conference.**



**Directions from the North:** On Hwy 371, proceed south past Nisswa approximately 10 miles to the second intersection with County Road 77, turn right, continue 6 miles to Cragun's entrance.

**Directions from the Northeast:** Take Hwy 210 through Brainerd, Minnesota to the intersection of Hwy 371 North. Turn right onto Hwy 371 and proceed north 3 miles to County Road 77 (Pine Beach Road), turn left on CR 77 and continue 6 miles to Cragun's entrance.

**Directions from the West:** On Hwy 210, go 5 ½ miles east of Pillager, turn left on County Road 18. Go 3 ½ miles to County Road 77, turn left and go about a mile to Cragun's entrance.

**Directions from the Metro Area and points South:** Take Hwy 94 west to the Clearwater exit, then turn right (north) at exit and follow to Hwy 10 west to Little Falls, then continue north on Hwy 371 towards Brainerd, MN. Then take the new Hwy 371 Brainerd bypass (C. Elmer Anderson Memorial Hwy). At the junction of Hwy 371 & 210 continue north on 371 for 3 miles to County Road 77 (Pine Beach Road). Turn left on CR 77, continue 6 miles to Cragun's entrance.

# MKA Board

Chris Messer  
**President**

Joyce Kiehn  
**Secretary**

Becky Magnuson  
**Web Site**

Lisa Schoneman  
**Communications**

Katie Zuehlke  
**Scholarship  
and Grants**

Joan Boyenga  
**Newsletter Editor**

Debbykay Peterson  
**State Dept. Liaison**

Penny Warner  
**MNAECTE  
Rep./NKA**

Jeanette Sleeper  
**Public Relations**

Janine Ahrens  
**Spring  
Conference  
Liaison**

Vice President  
**Position Open**

Donell Berube  
**Treasurer**

Su Botner  
**Legislative Liaison**

Lisa Monson  
**Membership**

Kristen Hayes  
**Region 1**

Kari Knutson  
**Region 2**

Dawn Kuechle  
**Region 3**

Tammy Erickson  
**Region 4**

Megan Berwyn  
**Region 5**

Erin Roeske  
**Region 6**

Lori Thompson  
**Region 7**

# MKA REGIONS

## REGION 1 REGION 3 REGION 4 REGION 6

Becker  
Beltrami  
Cass  
Clay  
Clearwater  
Hubbard  
Kittson  
Koochiching  
Lake of the  
Woods  
Mahnomen  
Marshall  
Norman  
Pennington  
Polk  
Red Lake  
Roseau  
Wadena

## REGION 2

Aitkin  
Carlton  
Cook  
Crow Wing  
Itasca  
Lake  
Pine  
St. Louis

Benton  
Big Stone  
Chippewa  
Douglas  
Grant  
Isanti  
Kanabec  
Kandiyohi  
Lac Qui Parle  
Meeker  
Mille Lacs  
Morrison  
Ottertail  
Pope  
Sherburne  
Stearns  
Stevens  
Swift  
Todd  
Traverse  
Wilkins

Blue Earth  
Brown  
Cottonwood  
Jackson  
Lincoln  
Lyon  
Martin  
McLeod  
Murray  
Nicollet  
Nobles  
Pipestone  
Redwood  
Renville  
Rock  
Sibley  
Yellow  
Medicine  
Watonwan

## REGION 5

Anoka  
Carver  
Hennepin  
Wright

Chisago  
Dakota  
Ramsey  
Washington

## REGION 7

Dodge  
Faribault  
Fillmore  
Freeborn  
Goodhue  
Houston  
LeSueur  
Mower  
Olmsted  
Rice  
Scott  
Steele  
Wabasha  
Waseca  
Winona



# Event Registration

2017 MKA Spring Conference  
May 5-6, 2017

Cragun's Resort on Gull Lake  
11000 Cragun's Drive  
Brainerd, MN 56401

Register at [www.mymka.org](http://www.mymka.org)

Pay through PayPal!

Please have available:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred E-mail Address  
\_\_\_\_\_

Special diet needed?

Gluten Free \_\_\_\_\_ Vegan \_\_\_\_\_

School Name \_\_\_\_\_

School Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

School Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

MKA Region \_\_\_\_\_

(refer to MKA regions map)

# Conference Fees

## Explorer-\$225

All day Friday and Saturday  
(includes complimentary MKA  
membership)

## Voyager-\$150

Friday Evening and Saturday  
(includes complimentary MKA  
membership)

## Happy Camper- \$25

(Membership Only)

PO's not Accepted

No refunds will be given

if paying by for conference or  
shirt by check, make  
payable to:

2017 MKA Spring Conference

And mail to:

Donell Berube, MKA Treasurer  
700 6th Ave. SW  
Pine City, MN 55063

Registration deadline: April 15, 2017

## Order your Shirt online, too!

\$12 each

Sizes: Adult S, M, L, XL, 2X  
Green or Blue

Orders due by April 15, 2017

