



Tennessee World Language  
Teaching Association

# **TWLTA East Tennessee Regional Mini-Conference**

Saturday, March 7, 2026  
8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**Oak Ridge High School School**  
**1450 Oak Ridge Turnpike, Oak Ridge, TN 37830**



## **Previous TWLTA East Mini-Conferences**

2015	Webb School of Knoxville
2016	Hardin Valley Academy
2017	Webb School of Knoxville
2018	Oak Ridge High School
2019	Sacred Heart Cathedral
2023	Farragut High School
2024	Walter State Community College, Sevierville
2025	Webb School of Knoxville

## **Special Acknowledgements**

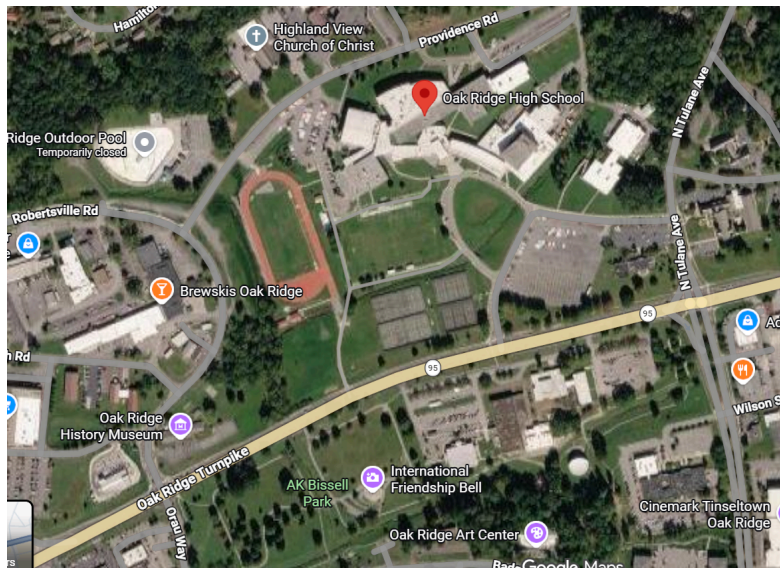
Oak Ridge High School

Sabine Nebenfuehr, Oak Ridge High School World Languages Department

Tennessee World Language Teaching Association

Keynote presenter: Robin Nelson, ELL Experiences

2026 presenters



## Directions

### From Knoxville, TN:

- **Take I-40 West**
- Turn onto Oak Ridge/Pellissippi Parkway – Exit 362-A
- Stay on Pellissippi Parkway approximately 8-10 miles
- As you cross the Solway Bridge, stay in one of the two left lanes, continuing on Hwy #62 toward Oak Ridge. Do **not** take Bethel Valley Road exit.
- As you come into Oak Ridge, continue straight on Illinois Avenue to the 6th traffic light, here turn right onto Orau Way (Dutch Bros. is to the left). Follow this street to the intersection (traffic light) of Orau Way and Oak Ridge Turnpike.
- Cross over the turnpike and continue straight on Robertsville Rd., then turn right onto Providence Road and right onto the Oak Ridge High School Arena parking lot. All spaces (staff and student) are available for parking.
- DO NOT use the ORHS front entrance parking lot (Saturday Flea Market).

### From Chattanooga, Memphis, or Nashville, TN:

- **Take I-40 East**
- Turn onto Oak Ridge/Pellissippi Parkway – Exit 362-A
- Stay on Pellissippi Parkway approximately 8-10 miles
- As you cross the Solway Bridge, stay in one of the two left lanes, continuing on Hwy #62 toward Oak Ridge. Do **not** take Bethel Valley Road exit.
- As you come into Oak Ridge, continue straight on Illinois Avenue to the 6th traffic light, here turn right onto Orau Way (Dutch Bros. is to the left). Follow this street to the intersection (traffic light) of Orau Way and Oak Ridge Turnpike.
- Cross over the turnpike, continue straight on Robertsville Rd. then turn right onto Providence Road and right onto the Oak Ridge High School Arena parking lot. All spaces (staff and student) are available for parking.
- DO NOT use the ORHS front entrance parking lot (Saturday Flea Market).

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## Registration and Networking Breakfast

8:00-8:30 am

Upper level Cafeteria

Pick up your conference materials and register in the Lobby. Greet and join colleagues for coffee and bagels in the Lobby and Cafeteria as you make connections!

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## Plenary Session & Keynote

8:30 – 9:30 A.M.

Amphitheater

### ***Where Travel Meets Transformation: What Building ELL Experiences Taught Me About Language, Culture and the True Meaning of Fluency***

**Robin Nelson**

ELL Experiences

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Robin Nelson, a former ELL teacher at Central High School in the Knox County school district, who was dedicated to immigrant students learning English, transitioned her passion for education and cultural understanding into a mission to foster empathy through travel experiences. With a background in teaching and a deep-rooted belief in the power of cross-cultural connections, Robin founded a travel agency called ELL Experiences. Specializing in teacher empathy trips to Guatemalan schools, Robin provides professional development that converts feelings and experiences from the trip into changes in practice. She also provides business travel and family vacation services. Through her unique journey from teaching immigrant students to becoming a travel agent focused on empathy-building, Robin has found a way to combine her love for education, cultural exchange, and meaningful travel into a purpose-driven career that makes a positive impact on both travelers and the destinations they visit. In addition to the work done with her travel agency, Robin leads professional development for districts with SLIFE (Students with Limited or Interrupted Education).

*Room: CS 304*

*Language/Focus: All Languages*

*Language of Presentation: English*

*Presenter: Rebecca Whitehead, Oak Ridge High School*

### **Scaffolding Writing in the Target Language**

How can we improve our students' writing stamina and help them reach their higher proficiency goals? Learn some basic tips and tricks to help build our students' writing skills! This presentation emphasizes collaboration and guidance around proficiency levels to help our students expand their writing from simple phrases to organized paragraphs.

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*Room: CS 303*

*Language/Focus: All Languages*

*Language of Presentation: English*

*Presenter: Jana Engle, Dobyys Bennett High School*

### **Time for Madness! Motivating students with music brackets**

German, French and Spanish all now have national music brackets in the month of March. Meet with other teachers to talk about how we're using these music contests to increase enthusiasm in the long month of March!

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*Room: CS 301*

*Language/Focus: All Languages*

*Language of Presentation: English*

*Presenter: Erika Stevens, Walter State Community College*

### **World Language and Generative AI: Bridging the Gap Between K-12 and Higher Ed**

AI can be incorporated into World Language curricula in ways that develop critical AI literacy in students that they need when entering the workforce. This presentation will focus on the importance of transparency and ethics in AI use, communication of AI policy between K12 and higher education, curricular innovations, tech skills, and advocacy for continued WL instruction in the shadow of AI interpreters.

*Room: CS 303*

*Language/Focus: All Languages*

*Language of Presentation: English*

*Presenter: Sara Gilliland, Oak Ridge High School*

### **Más Ritmo, Menos Caos: Using ClassroomScreen to Structure the Language Classroom**

This session will introduce educators to practical ways to use ClassroomScreen.com to improve organization and student engagement in the language classroom. Participants will explore the ClassroomScreen tools to learn ways to streamline daily routines and maximize instructional time. The purpose of this session is to help teachers create a more efficient and interactive learning environment using a single, versatile digital platform that will also allow them to easily stay in the target language on and off screen. Attendees will leave with access to already created screens they can immediately implement in their own classrooms.

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*Room: CS 307*

*Language/Focus: All Languages*

*Language of Presentation: English*

*Presenter: Elise Caron, University of Tennessee, Knoxville*

### **Exploring Cities and Languages: Interactive Learning with Google Maps and Google Earth**

For this session, we will discuss how to use Google Maps and Google Earth to have students navigate a city using the target language. Guided by a list of places and specific questions, students work in groups to "walk" around a city and find answers. This activity is adaptable for all proficiency levels, depending on the tasks assigned to the students.

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*Room: CS 301*

*Language/Focus: All Languages*

*Language of Presentation: English*

*Presenter: Phillip Easterly, Jefferson County High School*

### **Crash! Boom! Bang!**

Is the Internet down? Tired of routine computer activities? Join me in using various activities that foster speaking and total physical response. Teachers will be engaged in several activities with examples provided in German and French; however, they can be modified for all languages..... FYI: Bruises are optional but you won't get wet!

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*Room: CS 304*

*Language/Focus: All Languages*

*Language of Presentation: English*

*Presenter: Paula Kerr, Lauren Mayes, and Kelly Sample, Jefferson Middle School*

### **Playful Proficiency: Games that Grow Language Skills**

Game-based strategies to boost fluency, confidence, and engagement in the language classroom.

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LANGUAGE CONNECTIONS & LUNCH  
12:00 – 1:00 P.M.  
Upper level Cafeteria

*Participants are encouraged to use this time to engage with others in authentic language conversations and make connections for future collaborations.*

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CONCURRENT SESSIONS III

1:10 – 2:10 P.M.

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*Room: CS 301  
Language/Focus: All Languages  
Language of Presentation: English  
Presenter: Ryan Linger, Farragut High School*

**Eurovision 2026 + Eurovision 'Behind the Scenes' PART 1**

Herr Linger is preparing another interactive edition of the Eurovision Song Contest, and this year, ALL OF TENNESSEE is invited! This year's edition will be more elaborate, more exciting, and more enthralling than ever! And despite all of this, it's going to be EVEN EASIER for teachers to run!

Join us for both a sneak peak at this year's festival AND some behind the scenes tutorials on how to use common software platforms to create your own videos and scenes. Please bring your own device if you would like to make your own test video!

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*Room: CS 303  
Language/Focus: All Languages  
Language of Presentation: English  
Presenter: Kaitlyn Gaskins, Hardin Valley Academy*

**Let's Discuss the New AP Exam!**

What have you heard? What do you know? Let's work together to share ideas for how to best prepare our students for years to come!

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*Room: CS 304  
Language/Focus: All Languages  
Language of Presentation: English  
Presenter: Brandon Baily*

**Reading for content and communication**

Texts for vocabulary and grammar that can be used for interpersonal communication.

*Room: CS 301*

*Language/Focus: All Languages*

*Language of Presentation: English*

*Presenter: Ryan Linger, Farragut High School*

### **Eurovision 2026 + Eurovision 'Behind the Scenes' PART 2**

Herr Linger is preparing another interactive edition of the Eurovision Song Contest, and this year, ALL OF TENNESSEE is invited! This year's edition will be more elaborate, more exciting, and more enthralling than ever! And despite all of this, it's going to be EVEN EASIER for teachers to run!

Join us for both a sneak peak at this year's festival AND some behind the scenes tutorials on how to use common software platforms to create your own videos and scenes. Please bring your own device if you would like to make your own test video!

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*Room: CS 303*

*Language/Focus: All Languages*

*Language of Presentation: English*

*Presenter: Missy Newman, Knox Virtual School*

### **Building Reading Proficiency through Readers**

This session explores how the purposeful use of leveled readers builds proficiency in the world language classroom by supporting comprehension, vocabulary growth, and student confidence. We will explore activities and assessments that can be used to increase not only reading proficiency, but proficiency in all modes of communication.

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*Room: CS 304*

*Language/Focus: Spanish*

*Language of Presentation: English*

*Presenter: Evan Heatherly, Fulton High School*

### **¿Un poco loco? Save Your Sanity With Canvas!**

Learn about how to leverage Canvas tools to create low-prep communicative activities that get your students immersed in Spanish from día uno!

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CLOSING  
Amphitheater  
3:30 – 4:00 P.M.

Participation certificates are available at the registration table.

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Tennessee World Language  
Teaching Association

## Save the Date for our TWLTA Annual Conference!

### Conference Theme

**Multilingualism in the 21st Century:  
Reinforcing the Importance of  
Languages in the Workforce**

**Friday, November 6, 2026**

Pre-conference Activities at Conference Hotel Hilton Garden Inn  
Nashville West End

**Saturday, November 7, 2026**

**Conference Hosted at Montgomery Bell Academy  
4001 Harding Pike, Nashville, TN**

Workshop and Session Proposals are Due May 1  
Submit Proposals at [www.twlta.org](http://www.twlta.org)



**Award Nominations**



**Board Nominations**

East Mini Conference Feedback: <https://forms.gle/P7XBRizD611SwtzWA>