



VENOLA MASON

Education Thought Leader & Author

WELCOME



Greetings,
I'm a published author and passionate educator who believes in equitable educational opportunities for all students. I support education leaders with making transformational change in their school districts by helping them develop and implement policies and practices that increase student achievement and wellness.

Venola L. Mason

MEET VENOLA



VENOLA MASON

Associate Partner & Author,
International Center For Leadership In Education

Venola Mason is driven by the belief that every student deserves a high-quality education that can afford them many opportunities to lead and contribute to the world as they transition to adulthood. She is passionate about partnering with school districts across the country to create and implement practical solutions to increase student achievement and wellness.

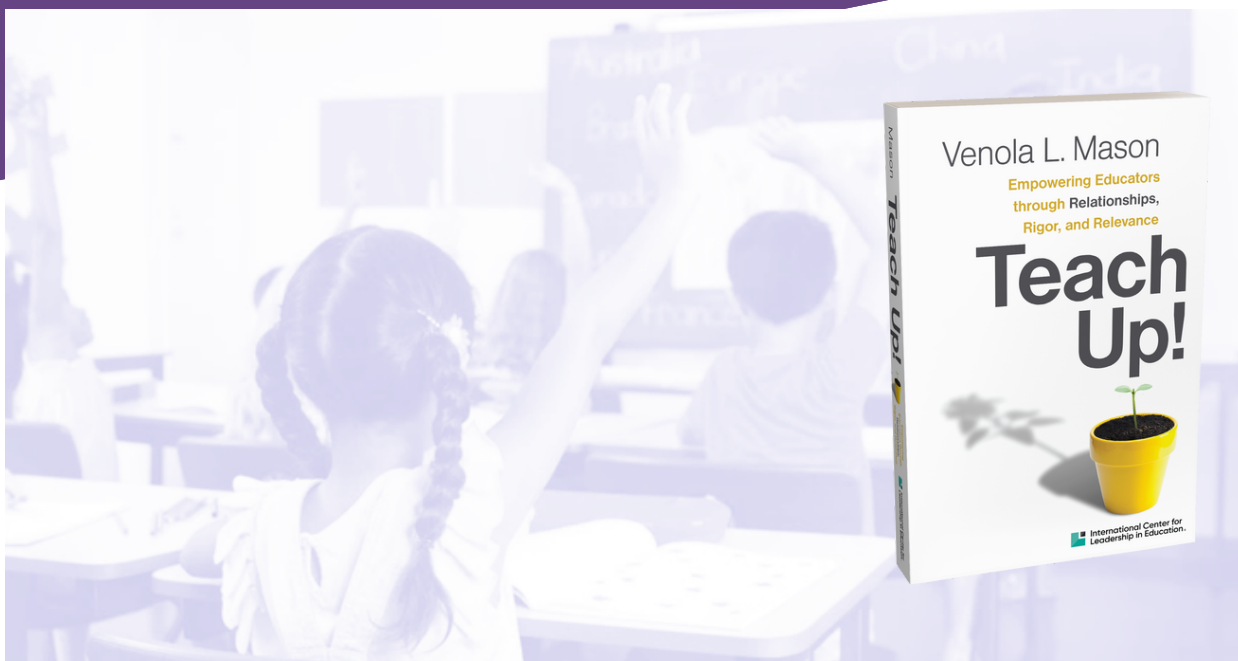
Venola began her career in education as a Teach For America • Metro Atlanta corps member in 2003. She taught for five years in Atlanta Public Schools leading her students to consistently make 1-3 years of academic growth across all content areas closing the achievement gap. She also served as a Site Manager for The New Teacher Project (Tntp) where she managed the Atlanta Content Seminar program, a professional development program for K-12 teachers. During her last year with Tntp, she served as a central Site Manager to support the state approval process and launch of the Georgia Teaching Fellows program, an alternative teacher certification program.

In 2011, Venola served as the Director of Alternative Certification for Teach for America • Metro Atlanta. In this role, she created the Teacher Leadership Development Program, an alternative certification program for Teach for America corps members, and secured the program's designation as an accredited teacher preparation program through the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. In that same year, she joined the International Center for Leadership in Education (ICLE) as a Consultant and supported school districts across the country in the areas of Instructional Excellence, Blended Learning, and Leadership. Currently, Venola serves as an Associate Partner with ICLE. In this role, she supports school districts in designing strategies to implement practical solutions to increase student achievement and wellness.

Venola has recently published *Teach Up! Empowering Teachers through Relationships, Rigor, and Relevance* and maintains her teacher and administrator credentials in the state of Georgia.

[See shortened bio \(180 words\) here](#)

PUBLICATIONS



"Teach UP! shows the power of positive teacher-student relationships and high academic expectations to help all students reach their full potential"

- Venola L. Mason

Synopsis

"Teaching up" is about adopting a growth-based mindset and iterative practice to cultivate meaningful learning opportunities—the ones that set kids up for success beyond school, as talented and confident human beings. Building on the ICLE Relationships, Rigor, and Relevance model, author Venola L. Mason, an ICLE associate partner, provides educators with strategies proven to help ALL students excel at rigorous tasks while staying engaged in the classroom.

DISTRICT TRANSFORMATION

I work with the International Center for Leadership in Education (ICLE) to help transform education district by district. Our solutions and our approach are what set us apart. We help put your vision, your strategy, policy, and evidence-based practice into action by helping your teams and leaders create sustainable cultures that support rigor, relevance, and relationships. Let's work together to understand your needs for the future. We'll develop a customized plan that integrates your resources and work to put your vision into practice.

Click [**HERE**](#) to read more.

TESTIMONIALS

"Venola Mason has been a tremendous thought partner for the district in our SEL work. Her experience and knowledge have been invaluable as we develop our short, medium, and long-term goals for SEL. Venola is accessible and willing to engage in the details with our leadership team. The district is appreciative of our partnership with ICLE and Venola and we look forward to the impact this partnership will have on the staff and students in JP Schools."



Ajit "AJ" Pethe
Chief of Schools
Jefferson Parish Schools

"I have worked closely with Venola in two different districts (Norwalk and Middletown). Her expertise with unwrapping the Rigor/Relevance Framework with leaders and teachers has led to an acceleration of student achievement in my district. A district's success is contingent upon how the education leader establishes trust with stakeholders. Venola is an expert in fostering relationships and the true definition of an education coach. I have seen many educators grow under her structured guidance and mentoring. She is a special talent in our field."



Dr. Michael Conner
Superintendent
Middletown Public Schools

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

ARTICLES

Venola has written articles/blogs to reach broad audiences that are shared on national platforms.

Click [HERE](#) to read more...

PAST SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Venola shares her knowledge and practical tips throughout the country via the stage, small groups, and webinars.

Click [HERE](#) to view past events...

E-COURSE

Venola has developed a course about developing social & emotional skills using positive relationships.

Click [HERE](#) to view the course...

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Relationships
Social Emotional Learning
Rigor / Relevance
Digital Learning

Equity
Culturally Responsive Teaching
Culturally Responsive Leadership

SPEAKING TOPICS

FEATURED SESSIONS

Tune in and Teach Up!

Great teachers are committed to preparing their kids for success beyond school, but as we know, how they get there is NOT in a straight line. Fortunately, by adopting a Teach Up approach to your instructional practice, you can realize the professional growth and high-level student learning that every teacher aspires to during this winding journey of education. “Teaching Up” is all about continuous improvement: adopting a growth-based mindset and iterative practice to cultivate meaningful learning opportunities. In this lively session, author and ICLE Associate Partner Venola Mason shows us how positive teacher-student relationships and high academic expectations intersect to help students become more socially adept, better able to solve complex problems, and strong and joyful lifelong learners—all crucial components of life success.

[Relationships · Social Emotional Learning · Rigor/Relevance] Audience: All Educators

The Biggest Impact: An Examination of Teacher-Student Relationships

Studies show that teachers have the biggest impact on student achievement. In order for students to successfully navigate a rigorous and relevant curriculum, strong teacher-student relationships need to exist. This session is designed to help teachers understand the critical nature of these relationships and the impact they have on student learning. Participants will leave the session re-energized about relationships and gain some practical tips to establish and maintain these relationships with their students. Join this session to explore how to best #achieveit with Relationships!

[Relationships · Social Emotional Learning] Audience: All Educators



SPEAKING TOPICS

BREAKOUT / INTERACTIVE SESSIONS

Developing Social and Emotional Skills through Positive Relationships

Research shows that teachers have the biggest impact on student achievement. Relationships are the foundation for the development of the cognitive, social, and emotional skills and competencies that students need to be successful within the classroom and beyond. This webinar is designed to help educators understand the critical nature of these relationships and the impact they have on student learning.

Participants will leave the session with:

- A deeper understanding of the science and practice of social and emotional learning
- Practical tips to establish and maintain relationships with students
- Strategies to cultivate a sense of belonging within your classroom and among students

[Relationships · Social Emotional Learning] Audience: Primarily Teachers; All Educators

Culturally Responsive Teaching: I See You

Building relationships with all students can seem like a daunting task. At any point in your career have you asked yourself, “How will my students know that I see them and care about their success?” Venola will guide a discussion and share three student-centered strategies that align to current environments, emotional states, and allow teachers to create a positive culture for learning that celebrates culture and student assets.

[Equity · Culturally Responsive Teaching · Social Emotional Learning] Audience: Teachers

Leading for Equity Through Positive Relationships

At the risk of sounding like a broken record, the past two years have been tough. There are lots of lingering questions, including: What role do schools play in the lives of children in the “new normal”? In this presentation, Venola will focus on how teachers, school leaders and district leaders can encourage and foster positive relationships amongst teachers, students, and the community by leading through an equity lens. She will also examine the relationship between equity and social and emotional learning. Participants will walk away with concrete strategies to promote equity, build positive relationships, and support teachers and students.

[Equity · Culturally Responsive Leadership · Social Emotional Learning · Relationships] Audience: Leaders

Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships for the 21st Century Learner

Students need a strong academic foundation to successfully complete post-secondary education or to enter the workforce. To that end, we must prepare students to be critical thinkers, solve authentic problems, and to relate effectively with others. During this talk we will explore why it is important for all students to experience rigor, relevance, and relationships and how they impact student learning. In addition, practitioners will leave with concrete strategies that can be implemented immediately. Join this session to understand how to best #achieveit with Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships!

[Relationships · Social Emotional Learning · Rigor/Relevance] Audience: Teachers

SPEAKING TOPICS

BREAKOUT / INTERACTIVE SESSIONS (CONT'D)

Quad D™ Idea Lab: Be Ready for the Unpredictable

The Quad D Idea Lab is an exploratory space for participants to discover learning that aligns with the Rigor/Relevance Framework®. In this session, you will engage in multiple learning experiences that integrate hands-on activities with physical materials, digital tools, and instructional strategies that promote student choice, differentiation, collaboration, and academic discussion. These learning experiences are intended to pique curiosity and spark creativity as you reflect on and plan Quad D learning for your own classroom. Come experience a unique learning environment and be ready to engage in unpredictable situations!

[Digital Learning · Rigor/Relevance] Audience: Teachers

Quad DTM Live!

Quad DTM Live! offers participants the opportunity to discover learning that aligns with the Rigor/Relevance Framework®. In this session, you will engage in a Quad DTM learning experience that integrates hands-on activities with physical materials, digital technologies, and instructional strategies that promote critical thinking, collaboration, choice, and creativity.

[Digital Learning · Rigor/Relevance] Audience: Teachers

Hope In Learning

The central and indispensable ingredient in learning success is hope. The central student question is, “can I do this?” Let’s think together about how to create hope in individuals and classrooms. Let’s learn to become “dispensers” of hope for the sake of our students, their current success in learning, and a better future for all.

[Social Emotional Learning] Audience: Teachers



PROMOTIONAL IMAGES



Click on the images above to download a high-resolution copy.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Venola Mason

phone: 717.475.8231

email: info@venolamason.com

website: venolamason.com



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