Three case studies illustrate executive function’s role in students’ challenges with becoming skilled learners. Executive functioning “allows us to organize behavior over time and override immediate demands in pursuit of longer-term goals” (Guare and Dawson, 2010). The presenter describes the skills comprising executive functioning such as planning, sustaining attention and goal directed persistence (Guare and Dawson, 2010; Barkley 2010). The audience and presenter identify executive function challenges specific to a middle school student’s paragraph writing; a high-school student’s performance with assignment completion; and a medical student’s test preparation. Participants consider possible interventions followed by discussion of evidence-based interventions actually used. Rationales for interventions and student outcomes are discussed. Goal achievement, engagement with content, and emotional satisfaction while learning are considered.

Participants will come away with:
1. Understanding executive functioning skills and their role in mastering three academic skills.
2. Evidenced-based approaches to learning and teaching across grade levels.

Presenter: Richard Goldhammer