



Suzanne M. Swain, EdS, LMSW is a master and specialized middle school educator, licensed social worker, and speaker whose work sits at the intersection of education, emotional learning, and real-world classroom practice.

With more than 20 years of experience as a teacher, administrator, librarian, professor, and school-based therapist, Suzanne brings a rare dual perspective to her work—blending curriculum design with clinical insight. She specializes in emotional critical thinking, a skills-based approach that helps students understand emotions as information, think through reactions, and make more intentional choices in school and in life.

Suzanne has taught middle school writing and science to more than 3,500 Tennessee students and has worked extensively with at-risk students, gifted learners, neurodivergent students, and first-year college populations. Her work is trauma-aware, research-informed.

Known for her calm, humorous, approachable & practical style, Suzanne helps schools and families move beyond compliance-based behavior systems toward clarity, connection, and sustainable emotional skill-building. She co-hosts her podcast with Steve, her emotional-support dog, who helps make complex topics more approachable for kids and serves as a friendly, regulating presence for families.

Areas of Expertise:

- Middle school development
- Emotional learning & emotional critical thinking
- Social-emotional learning (SEL)
- Teacher burnout & emotional labor
- Post-pandemic classrooms & cognitive load
- Trauma-aware and neurodiversity-affirming practices
- Literacy, student engagement, and motivation
- School culture & emotionally intelligent systems

Popular Topics for Interviews & Features

- Why middle school behavior is often misunderstood
- Teaching emotional skills without shame or punishment
- The emotional labor teachers carry—and why it matters
- What kids actually need adults to understand about emotions
- Moving beyond “behavior management” toward emotional thinking
- Supporting neurodivergent students in real classrooms

Suzanne M. Swain, EdS LMSW
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Speaking & Consulting

Suzanne speaks to educators, administrators, counselors, parents, and organizations seeking practical, emotionally intelligent approaches to learning and behavior. Her sessions are grounded, research-informed, and immediately applicable.

Audiences include:

- Elementary, middle, and high school students and families
- Families of neurodivergent children
- School districts and administrators
- Teachers and instructional staff
- School counselors, therapists, and social workers
- Higher education faculty and staff
- Parent organizations and community groups
- Television • Podcast • Radio • In-person

Notable Experience & Credentials (Condensed)

- EdS – Curriculum & Instruction: EdTech TTU
- MA - C&I: Library & Info Science for Schools TTU
- LMSW – Clinical Social Work - UT Knoxville
- 20+ years in K-12 and higher education
- Former middle school teacher, administrator, librarian, professor, and school-based therapist
- Licensed and currently practicing in Tennessee
- National and state-level work in literacy, school safety, and curriculum development
- City & County District Teacher of the Year (first year eligible)
- Specialization in neurodivergent learners, at-risk students, and rural education



Media Assets:

- Professional headshot (high resolution)
- About Page PDF
- Speaker / Consultant PDF
- Website and podcast assets