



# Newsletter

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## Melissa Boley presents: Thinking Maps!

Melissa Boley has spent two years in Southside ISD, in an alternative setting. She is a creator of the Academic Center for Educational Success, or ACES, a dropout prevention program. ACES follows the Boystown model, teaching the basics of social interaction, alongside the traditional core subject areas. Last school year, ten of the twenty-five students in the program earned high school diplomas.



Melissa gave a basic introduction to the Thinking Maps system.

Unlike old-fashioned graphic organizers, Thinking Maps are based on fundamental learning skills. In addition, they are highly versatile, allowing teachers in any subject area to break down learning into highly visual steps, based on one common language.

## "Alternative" from Finding Our Way by Rene Saldana, Jr.

Melissa's presentation showed how the Circle and Flow maps can aid in the instruction of narrative writing.

The Circle Map helps

students define a concept. This aids in the brainstorming phase of writing. The Flow Map helps students break down pieces of literature, allowing them to track subplots as well.

Judging by audience reaction, several more schools will be using Thinking Maps next year!

## *In summary:*

The day began with a Maomi Shihab Nye poem: "The Art of Disappearing".

Great classroom resources: [www.visualthesaurus.com](http://www.visualthesaurus.com), and Inspiration 8.0.

Read: James and My Father.

Remember: Always have pride in your profession. You are necessary, you are loved, and you will be remembered.