

POWER *of* PLACE

LEARNING COMMUNITIES



Dear Colleagues and Friends,

I am a lifelong football fan, and like so many of you, have been glued to the TV for the last couple of weeks. But in addition to cheering for the Kansas City Chiefs (because of close cousins who live there, not Taylor Swift), I've been thinking a lot about the importance of team-building.

We are quick to recognize the value of athletes working as a team on the field, and cheer when they make gravity-defying plays that would not be possible without the support of their teammates. We relish demonstrations of excellence that come from the collective effort of athletes working together.

Beyond our intuitive understanding of the importance of teams, there is plenty of evidence across the physical and social sciences pointing to what we gain from working together. In medicine, "team science" is a collaborative effort to address a scientific challenge that leverages the strengths and expertise of professionals, often those trained in different fields. In the corporate world, as Harvard Business Professor Amy Edmondson tells us, "teaming occurs when people apply and combine their expertise to perform complex tasks

or develop solutions to novel problems." She cites four behaviors that drive success: speaking up; collaboration; experimentation; and reflection.

Educators are in the business of navigating complexity and solving problems, but we often have a difficult time leaning into regular collaborative practices in the school environment. Traditional public schooling was designed to be efficient, to sort students into categories that would suit an industrial economy. The old mental model of the lone teacher at the front of the room and students sitting at individual desks exemplifies both teaching and learning as primarily individual achievements. In today's society, that model no longer works.

There are numerous examples both in and beyond Essex County of schools engaged in team efforts, such as educators utilizing expanded common planning time, PLCs, and Critical Friends Groups, or students engaging in jigsaw assignments, pair-sharing, gallery walks, and more. Change is underway.

It can be challenging to find space for teamwork. But the research on teaming, community building, and system redesign reminds us that it takes many minds working together to solve complex problems. The good news is that when we collaborate, we learn from one another. We are energized by the time we spend together; we are motivated to try new things knowing that our colleagues have our back. Getting to know one another is slow and patient work, but ironically, it is the most efficient and effective way to create environments that benefit all learners.

This is what Power of Place is all about, and what we aim to offer through all of our learning experiences. We hope you will invite your colleagues to experience the power of learning-in-community.

With warmth and appreciation,

Jane

Register Now

The Project Habit: Designing for Rigor with Project-Based Learning - February 8

Is student engagement a priority for you? If so, join us on Feb. 8 for a day focused on Project Based Learning strategies with internationally known expert **Michael McDowell**.

We urge districts to bring a team of 5-6 staff members, including special and/or general education teachers, instructional coaches and school and district leaders. Administrators are also invited to join Michael for a special lunch to discuss school-and district-wide strategies around getting started, or diving deeper, with project-based learning at scale.

Learn more and register **here**.



ECLC Winter Gathering

The Project Habit: Designing for Rigor with Project Based Learning

*featuring Michael McDowell,
The Core Collaborative*

Wylie Inn & Conference Center

February 8, 2024
8 am to 3 pm



Seeking Educational Equity & Diversity for Administrators

Join us for an intimate, administrators-only series of conversations about educational equity and diversity, some of the most challenging issues in education today. These three full days of learning experiences are ideal for those who wish to build up their courage, and become more effective leaders in the process.

Only 8 spots remain;
REGISTER soon to claim your seat.

SEED for Administrators



Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity (SEED) is a peer-led model, that has - until now - been unavailable to administrators.

School and district leaders are invited to join us for our new **SEED for Administrators**, and to join their peers in a unique SEED experience.

February 29 | March 13 | March 27
8 am to 3 pm
Wylie Conference Center
Beverly, MA



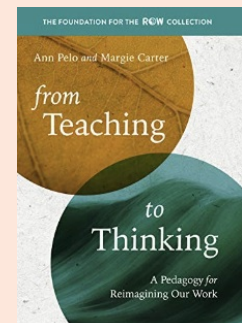
For Early Childhood Educators

From Teaching to Thinking: Rediscovering the joy and wonder of early childhood education.

In *Teaching to Thinking: A Pedagogy for Reimagining Our Work*, authors and early childhood consultants Ann Pelo and Margie Carter present a series of stories and concepts which explore the joy and wonder of teaching and learning in the early years.

Interested? So are we. Please join **Georgetown educator Shannon Tenney**, an ECLC Exploratory Mini-Grant recipient, for a book study that will ignite new ideas and encourage a re-envisioning of our work in early childhood.

Through both independent reading and four collaborative sessions, participants will create a new outlook for their daily work through the exploration of key ideas and theories presented in this book.



To join the book study or for more information, contact Shannon Tenny at tenneys@georgetown.k12.ma.us

An Opportunity from The Teacher Collaborative

CRT Co-Lab: Practicing Culturally Responsive Teaching in Our Classrooms

Join the Teacher Collaborative for **The Practicing Culturally Responsive Teaching in Our Classrooms Co-Lab**, a five-session, bi-weekly professional development learning opportunity designed to support a small group of teachers with the instructional approach and practices of Culturally Responsive Teaching.

At the end of this Co-Lab teachers will gain a fundamental understanding of CRT practices, and strengthen their instructional skills by implementing CRT practices in their own classrooms. Participating teachers will earn a \$200 stipend, 10 PDPs and the opportunity to earn a microcredential in Culturally Responsive Teaching Expertise.

Learn more and register [here](#).



LEARNING CO-LAB **NEW!**

Culturally Responsive Teaching PRACTICES

Unsure of how to use CRT in your classroom? Join an introductory and learning experience with other educators!
Earn \$200 stipend, 10 PDPs and a microcredential badge!

APPLY NOW tinyurl.com/TeacherCoLab

THE teacher collaborative

Save the Dates

Wednesday, May 8 (4:30-7:30pm)
ECLC Spring Gathering: 2023-2024
Showcase of Learning
Peabody Essex Museum | Salem, MA

Thursday, August 8
ECLC Summer Institute
Beverly, MA

Thursday, November 7
ECLC 2024 Fall Gathering
Essex North Shore Agricultural and
Technical School | Hathorne, MA



Access the updated 2023-2024 Learning Agenda here.

Resources from the Field

Striving for Relationship-Centered Schools: Insights from a Community-Based Transformation Campaign

Research shows that youth who have positive connections with adults at their schools demonstrate higher levels of motivation, self-esteem, and prosocial behavior than their peers in less relationship-centered contexts. The Learning Policy Institute explains the Californians for Justice and the Relationship Centered Schools Campaign and shares successes of two school districts that have implemented the campaign. Read more [here](#).

A Surprising Way to Stop Bullying

A “Portrait” framework helps leaders implement a new collective re-design vision. To facilitate and empower leaders in this transformative journey, we start with a comprehensive visioning and strategic process that revolves around five interconnected and dynamic portraits: the Portrait of a Learner, the Portrait of a System, the Portrait of a Leader, the Portrait of an Educator and a Self-Portrait. These interrelated and adaptable elements of the framework have both interconnected and discrete competencies. Access the Portrait Model [here](#).



A Moment in Time is a game designed to support high school students in considering their own emotional landscape, and in particular, how they cope with grief and loss in relationships. Social and emotional learning opportunities are embedded throughout the activities and assignments.

This game-based learning unit uses the interactive story and video game, Florence, as the text. Students will follow the story of Florence Yeoh and Krish Hemrajani as they fall in and back out of love.

See more [here](#).



He Is Me Institute

The Impact of Black Male Teachers: A Conversation with De'Shawn Washington, the 2024 MA Teacher of the Year

In today’s rapidly evolving educational landscape, the role of teachers extends far beyond classroom instruction. It encompasses mentorship, inspiration, and the cultivation of life skills that prepare students and other teachers for success and a balanced life. De'Shawn Washington, 2024 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year and the first Black male educator to receive the award, embodies this multifaceted approach to education.

Listen to the full conversation [here](#).



Equality is everyone getting a pair of shoes.



Diversity is everyone wearing a different type of shoe.



Equity is everyone getting a pair of shoes that fits them.



Accessibility is having shoes, or alternatives that feel comfortable.



Inclusion is feeling respected and valued whether you are wearing shoes or not.



Belonging is showing up with or without shoes and without fear of judgment.

Over the last few years, we have seen various versions of the equality-equity continuum. This graphic, created by Jamie Shields of **Disabled by Society**, captures a more nuanced perspective, based on his lived experience.



*Do you have something to share with your fellow educators?
Send it to us at info@powerofplacelc.org.*

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