

POWER *of* PLACE

LEARNING COMMUNITIES



Dear Colleagues and Friends,

Social connection is good medicine. That was the conclusion of Dr. Vivek Murthy, U.S. Surgeon General, who spoke recently at “Building Connected Communities,” a national conference at Harvard University.

In May, Murthy issued an **advisory** that called the American people’s attention to an urgent public health concern: **An epidemic of loneliness and isolation**. Murthy, in his listening tour across the country, said he heard repeatedly that people felt isolated, even invisible. He also found confirmation of what he was hearing in scientific literature, noting that even pre-pandemic, about one in two adults in America reported experiencing loneliness.

This can have a severe impact on us physically. In fact, Murthy notes that the mortality impact of being socially disconnected is like that caused by smoking up to **15 cigarettes a day**, even greater than that associated with obesity and physical inactivity.

Murthy talked about his own feelings of loneliness as a student many years ago, and the shame that accompanied those feelings. **School plays a critical role in facilitating social connection**, he said, and advised that forming social connections be considered as important as math and English Language Arts. When healthy relationships are prioritized - whether that be teacher to teacher or teacher to student - we are all healthier.

As we continue to emerge from the global pandemic, it seems more important than ever to strengthen our relational muscles. **Power of Place** is, in part, dedicated to building and deepening relationships among educators. **We know that when educators get what they need, students are more likely to get what they need.** We read a lot these days about educator burnout and moral injury. While yoga, meditation, and other therapeutic remedies can be helpful, science tells us **that being in the company of one another is a highly effective antidote to the isolation that so many educators justifiably feel.**

Our team never ceases to be amazed by how much educators enjoy being a room together—for connection, reflection, planning, experimentation, consolation, and celebration. The energy and excitement in the room—whether we have 10 or 100 people—is always palpable and hopeful. In this valuable **“third space”** (not home, not school), we witness the shared vulnerability of learning something new—even if it’s uncomfortable at first—and can see firsthand how relationships flourish in the process.

As psychiatrist Jean Baker Miller said, growth is fostered in connection. As social animals, we are all inherently wired to connect. I am mindful today of how vital social connection will be to those who have lost friends and loved ones in Lewiston, Maine to this most recent act of senseless violence. May we all do our part to enhance close connections in our lives and reach across divides to connect with others whose life experiences differ from our own.

With warmth and appreciation,

Jane


Last Chance to Register for Fall Gathering!

***** LAST WEEK TO REGISTER *****
Sign up now before spots are gone!

ECLC Fall Gathering

Windows & Mirrors:
Teaching, Learning, and Leading
Across Difference


Tuesday, November 7
8am-1pm
Amesbury High School




[Register Here](#)

All staff are welcome, including:
Paraprofessionals, Guidance & Mental Health Counselors,
Specialists, Central Office and Administrative staff


Featuring Workshops by:




Jane Feinberg




Carrie Conaway




Gil Noam



Luis Ortega



Gabrielle Schlichtmann



Edward Walker

Windows and Mirrors: Teaching, Learning and Leading Across Difference: Nov. 7 at Amesbury High

Time is running out to register for this year’s Fall Gathering, which is open to all staff. **Windows & Mirrors: Teaching, Learning, and Leading Across Difference** will focus on UDL, SEL, Anti-Racism, and Equity; our 2023 Teacher Action Research Fellows will also lead a session to discuss the role of the teacher in our changing world. The day will end with role-alike sessions and an opportunity for continued conversation with our experts.

We hope to see you there!

[Register Here](#)

The "How" of Equitable and Inclusive SEL

More Than Your Standard SEL101: Register Now!

The “How” of Equitable and Inclusive SEL is designed for educators ready to move beyond the SEL “checklist” and 15-minute daily SEL block. This experience will instead explore the “how” of SEL: educators will be equipped with the mindsets, pedagogies, and practices to bring SEL to life in every part of the learning environment and experience. Special attention will be paid to how SEL integrates with other practices such as Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy (CSP).

Contact **Laura Tota** for more information about registering.



The “How” of Equitable and Inclusive Social-Emotional Learning

Facilitated by Bryan Mascio

PARTICIPATION

Any staff person from an ECLC member district is eligible to participate.

Participants are asked to commit to completing all sessions, and as part of that commitment especially attending the last session, which will be a share-out to conclude the series. Participants who attend all sessions, PLCs, and the Spring Showcase of Learning will be eligible to receive PDPs.

FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Application Required. 4-6 educators will have the opportunity to serve as teacher fellows for this UDL Series, partnering closely with Gabbie for their own learning and leadership development. Fellows will be expected to support session workshops and facilitate participant PLCs.

ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE

Educators have become very familiar with the “what” of SEL over the past decade or so, but the “how” of SEL—the pedagogies of bringing SEL into the classroom—has remained something of a black box in the field. This series will focus on equipping educators with the mindsets, pedagogies, and practices to bring SEL to life in every part of the learning environment and experience. Special attention will be given to understanding how SEL integrates with other practices such as Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy (CSP).

COHORT SCHEDULE

Thursday, October 26 12:30 - 4:30 PM Wylie Conference Center	Cohort Kick-Off: Five Awareness of Teaching Framework and SEL High-Leverage Classroom Design Elements
November & December TBD ZOOM	Two (2) PLC Session led by Teaching Fellows
Thursday, January 18 12:30 - 4:30 PM Wylie Conference Center	Cohort Session: Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy (CSP) for Equitable SEL
February & March TBD ZOOM	Two (2) PLC Session led by Teaching Fellows
Thursday, April 4 3:30 - 5:30 PM ZOOM	Cohort Wrap-Up: Synthesis of Learning and Preparation for Spring Gathering
May 9, 2024 4:30 - 7:30PM TBD	ECLC Spring Gathering: Showcase of Learning (In-Person)

[*Access the full 2023-2024 Learning Agenda here.*](#)

Spotlight: Storytelling for Change

**Find your voice by telling your story
What’s your story, and how does it define you?**

This was the question Gloucester Spanish teacher Heidi Wakeman posed to her peers at a recent training she led during a professional development day. Working together in small groups, the 80 adults experienced a new approach to exploring, listening to and telling their own stories, and walked away with a new set of skills and a deeper appreciation for one another.

“Everybody has a story,” she said. “So, as a teacher, you can use that to connect to your students - or to each other - through the language of storytelling.”

Read the full blog post by Heidi Guarino [here](#).



Resources from the Field



3 Key Resources to Support Attendance in MTSS

Early Warning Indicators (EWIs) are commonly used within a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) to identify students at risk for drop-out, academic failure, and other negative social-emotional and behavioral outcomes. In this upcoming webinar from **Branching Minds**, presenters LaTisha Cole and Dr. Essie Sutton will highlight the research evidence and best practices recommendations for using EWIs within an MTSS, discuss the benefits of early identification practices and how these indicators can be leveraged, alongside other pieces of student data, to accurately identify students needing support as well as how to build an effective intervention plan. Register for the webinar [here](#).



Transformational Conversations: Moving from Fear to Curiosity

Because dominant white culture encourages us to avoid conflict, many of us raised in it have not fully developed the insight, skill, and emotional stamina necessary to broach and navigate differences of perspective and opinion, especially when harm to a member of a marginalized group is part of the mix. Too often these unskilled conversations are completely avoided or broached only to go from bad to worse, leaving people in divided camps teeming with assumption and anger that further divides us and wreaks havoc on our relationships and communities. This interactive workshop hosted by **Debby Irving** will explore how to embed new, transformational norms into our personal and institutional practices. Register [here](#).

Measuring Teacher Professional Learning: Why It's Hard and What We Can Do About It

Ensuring all children receive an excellent education requires measuring and understanding how teacher professional learning impacts teacher and student experiences and educational outcomes. Despite the importance of measuring teacher PL, professional learning practitioners agree the field lacks the tools needed to effectively evaluate the implementation and outcomes of PL programs. In **RPPL's** Measuring Teacher Professional Learning: Why It's Hard and What We Can Do About It, leaders from 10 PL organizations share insights on the measurement challenges that PL organizations face and where there are opportunities for improvement. Read the paper and case studies [here](#).

Students Know Best When It Comes to Student Engagement in Math

Mathematics education is a hot topic right now. Philanthropies like the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation have made a commitment “to ensure students experience math as relevant, engaging, and rigorous” over the next decade. More locally, Massachusetts has joined the Launch Years Initiative, focused on designing high-quality and equitable mathematics pathways for students. Among the areas of concern is student engagement in mathematics – its current state, likely causes of low levels, and strategies to increase it. How do students view mathematics, and themselves as mathematicians? **Edvestors** took a year long deep dive into advancing mathematics equity in classrooms. Read their findings [here](#).

Just for Fun



*Do you have something “Just for Fun” to share with your fellow educators?
Send them to us at info@powerofplace.org.*

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