

POWER *of* PLACE

LEARNING COMMUNITIES



Dear Colleagues and Friends,

Students everywhere are struggling with stress, anxiety, and exhaustion. There is an ongoing national dialogue about the causes behind these challenges - social media, too much screen time, helicopter parenting, peer pressure, etc - but the end result is a significant negative impact on learning. This topic came up recently at an ECLC Advisory Cabinet meeting, was highlighted in a recent *New York Times* story on **absenteeism** nationwide, and is reinforced in ***The Anxious Generation***, a new book I've been reading by psychologist Jonathan Haidt. Research shows that in the early 2000s, rates of depression and anxiety in the United States were stable, but from 2010 to 2019 - pre COVID - they rose by more than 50 percent.

As educators, it is our job to help young people make authentic connections and thrive in a world where they can often feel untethered. You've probably seen Education Secretary

Tutwiler's message on billboards across the state: "School is where kids belong." The message is explicitly targeted to solving the absentee crisis, but the double meaning is clear: When students feel a sense of belonging, they are far more likely to come to school.

School needs to be a welcoming, comfortable, social space, where young people and adults can learn how to be in community and find common ground even amidst their differences. It's where everyone should feel seen, heard, and appreciated so that they can see, hear, and appreciate others. Face-to-face interactions (aka time away from screens) must be a central part of our students' relational repertoire because human beings are social animals; we are wired to connect in real space and in real time.

Creating a place of belonging for students is aligned to one of our primary goals for adult learning. At Power of Place we aim for all of our experiences to offer safe, welcoming, judgment-free opportunities for participants to be vulnerable, learn from one another, and build a vibrant, thriving community.

Sometimes a shared sense of awe is an opportunity for connection. We have just such an opportunity coming our way on Monday, April 8, when **a total solar eclipse** will cross North America. As the moon passes between the sun and Earth, the sky will darken more than 90% as if it were dawn or dusk. Many communities are hosting outdoor "watch" parties - I hope you all have a chance to join one and **safely** enjoy this rare phenomenon with your students, friends, and peers.

In community,
Jane

Be a Part of the Showcase of Learning

You are cordially invited
ESSEX COUNTY LEARNING COMMUNITY'S

2023-24 Spring Showcase of Learning

FEATURING

Essex County Educators

LEARN MORE & REGISTER

PEABODY ESSEX MUSEUM, SALEM, MA

MAY 8, 2024 • 4:30 - 7:30 PM



Upcoming Learning Opportunity



NEERO 2024 Conference:

*Empowering the Pursuit of Educational Justice
by Looking Back and Imagining Forward*

April 24 - 26, 2024

Sheraton Portsmouth Harborside Hotel, Portsmouth, NH

This conference for researchers, practitioners, activists, policy makers, students and teachers explores how educational justice has been successfully pursued, identifies the barriers to this pursuit (past and present), and imagines the future of justice in education.

Merrimack Institute for New Teachers Supports (MINTS) is sponsoring select educators to attend and will waive the \$295 fee. Please contact Bryan Mascio at [**bmascio.teacher@gmail.com**](mailto:bmascio.teacher@gmail.com) if you are interested.

For more information about the conference:
[**https://www.neero.org/conference**](https://www.neero.org/conference)

What's Been Happening at PoP

Universal Design for Learning



Teachers and administrators from Amesbury Public Schools participate in a day-long workshop on Universal Design for Learning, part of a multi-part series led by ECLC guest faculty member Gabbie Schlichtmann.

SEED for Administrators



Administrators from six ECLC school districts spent three days together deeply engaged in conversation and interactive exercises focused on equity, facilitated by our partner, the National SEED Project.

Follow Power of Place on Social Media

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LinkedIn and Facebook!**

Follow us for photos, links to resources, upcoming opportunities, and more.



Save the Date

ECLC Summer Institute
Finding Your Flow
Thursday, August 8
Beverly, MA

ECLC 2024 Fall Gathering
Election Day, Tuesday, November 5
Essex North Shore Agricultural and
Technical School | Hathorne, MA



***Access the updated 2023-2024
Learning Agenda here.***

Resources from the Field



One Reason Your MTSS Might

Those Who Can't Teach Anymore: a Podcast from Charles Fournier

"Those Who Can't Teach Anymore" is an Ambie Nominated, Award-Winning, 7-part podcast series exploring why teachers are leaving education and what can be done to stop the exodus. Charles Fournier teaches high school English in Cheyenne, Wyoming. He is the creator and producer of the podcast Those Who Can't Teach Anymore. When creating a new class project, he fell into freelancing for Wyoming Public Radio. He is the host of The Mountain Time Podcast Hour and a Fund for Teachers Fellow.

Listen to the podcast **here**.

Be Failing, and What To Do About It

The work of MTSS is urgent for students who are struggling, and teachers need collaboration and practical tools to meet those needs. At the same time, it's important to set a sustainable, reasonable pace for training and implementation. In the context of MTSS, which involves layers of academic and behavioral support, this means beginning with the broad, basic elements that will start having an immediate impact, and steadily adding more specialized interventions and supports.

Read the full study **here**.



Learner-Centered in Focus: The Power of a Reimagined Approach to Education

Artificial Intelligence is all the rage, but some school districts are moving in the opposite direction: focused on creating learner-centered, relationship-rich environments. Education Reimagined, a DC-based organization that seeks to catalyze the invention of a new public education system, has created a new short film series about schools that have intentionally gone analog.

Watch the video **here**.



Transformative Research Toolkit

We have seen in transformative research strategies that defeated proposed jail expansions, won millions of dollars for community-prioritized programs, and built new community-led organizations that changed a political landscape, among many other achievements. This transformative research toolkit refers to a wide range of processes where people center their lived experience and visions for social transformation and lead a process that systematically builds on this knowledge through investigation and learning rooted in their own ways of knowing.

Access the toolkit **here**.

Just for Fun

Jack Black asks parents to Turn On The Subtitles to improve child literacy



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

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