

POWER *of* PLACE

LEARNING COMMUNITIES



Dear Colleagues and Friends,

Today I am writing to ask for your help in creating a series of learning experiences to address the youth mental health crisis we are feeling here in Essex County, and around the country. U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy addressed this in [**a 2021 advisory**](#), pointing to alarming data, including that 1 in 3 high school students report persistent feelings of hopelessness. In Massachusetts, kids aged 3 to 17 saw a 50% increase in anxiety and depression diagnoses from 2016 to 2020.

Murthy and others have called for swift and comprehensive action, and here in Essex County, across Massachusetts, and around the country, efforts are underway to provide students with the support they need as quickly as possible. For example:

- In Essex County, the [**Nan Project**](#) recently hosted “Empowering Youth Voices,” a

- summit for teachers and students focused on strategies to better help young people and create a safe environment to talk about mental health in public schools.
- Several school districts in the Commonwealth currently offer students virtual access to mental health assessments, evidence-based therapy and medication evaluation through a partnership with **Cartwheel Care**. Other ECLC school districts have adopted the **City Connects** model of supporting students.
 - The Brookline Center for Community Mental Health has just received \$13 million in state and federal funding to support **bryt program**, which provides students with significant (Tier 3) mental health issues. Among the first to receive bryt funds are Everett High School, Lynn Vocational Technical Institute, and Malden High School.
 - Nationally, 11 states are joining forces to recruit, train, and deploy the nation's first **Youth Mental Health Corps** to help adolescents access mental health resources. The new Youth Mental Health Corps is a public-private collaboration that aspires to address the growing needs of young people while also creating career pathways to address the national shortage of mental-health professionals. Corps members will be trained as navigators serving middle and high school students in schools and in community-based organizations. We hope that Massachusetts will soon be added to this list.

We applaud these and other efforts, and believe that sustaining such good work requires mindset shifts that will take time and ongoing practice. This year, ECLC partnered with **Community Catalyst**, a national organization that advocates for equitable health care systems, to convene youth associated with **Lynn Youth Street Outreach Advocacy (LYSOA)** and student support professionals to discuss strategies to strengthen the Essex County wellness infrastructure.

Working separately, the student support professionals also collaborated on a proposed series of learning experiences for the 2024-2025 school year to boost the capacity of school and district staff across Essex County, and we want to know what you think about them. Please join us for an early dinner on Tuesday, June 18, from 3:30 – 5:30 pm at the Wylie Inn and Conference Center to offer your feedback and contribute your ideas. (Please see the flyer below to register.) This session is ideal for all who focus on student wellness, such as assistant principals, psychologists, school resource officers, school nurses, guidance counselors, social workers, and special educators. We hope you can join us.

In community,
Jane

Registration Now Open for Summer Institute

2024 ECLC
Summer Institute



Rekindling
the fire

*Join us for a day focused on sparking
motivation and driving engagement for
teaching, leading and learning.*



August 8 from 8-3 pm
Wylie Inn & Conference Center
Endicott College
Beverly, MA

REGISTER NOW



Let Your Voice Be Heard - Annual Member Survey

Help Us Shape the 2024-25 Learning Agenda

WHAT

DO YOU

THINK?

Each year we engage with ECLC partner district staff to help shape the ECLC Annual Learning Agenda. Our commitment to you is to provide professional learning experiences that address your most pressing needs and areas of interest. **To do so, we need your feedback!** Please take 5 minutes to complete [this survey](#) to help us refine and finalize the 2024-25 Annual Learning Agenda.

[Complete survey](#)

Upcoming Programs at PoP

 **JOIN US TO FINALIZE A MENTAL HEALTH & RESTORATIVE PRACTICES LEARNING SERIES**


Over the past 12 months, student support professionals have been convening to discuss what is required to create a county-wide wellness infrastructure for youth.

Join your colleagues to:

- ✓ Offer feedback to finalize the desired series of adult learning experiences for SY 24-25;
- ✓ Brainstorm ways to recruit educators from across Essex County to engage in this work; and
- ✓ Discover that you are in good company in advocating for youth wellness! This is for anyone who cares about youth wellness, including:
Assistant Principals Special Educators
School Resource Officers Adjustment Counselors
Guidance Counselors School Counselors
Social Workers Family/Community Liaisons

Tuesday, June 18 | 3:30 to 5:30 pm
Wylie Inn & Conference Center

[Register!](#)

 **PRINCIPALS! JOIN US FOR A DAY OF REFLECTION**


**What worked for you in 2023-24?
What will you do differently in 2024-25?**

Come for conversation, inspiration, motivation, and a walk on the beach

June 26 | 8-2 p.m.

**Wiley Inn & Conference Center
Endicott College, Beverly**

[Learn more & register today!](#)



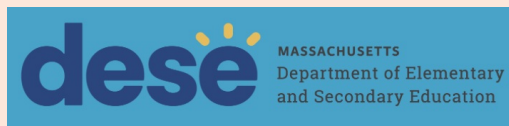
Upcoming Opportunities for Educators



Massachusetts Education Policy Fellowship

The Massachusetts Education Policy Fellowship (MEPF) is a professional development program for established and emerging education leaders designed to strengthen their knowledge and understanding of public policy making. The fellowship offers a unique opportunity for individuals interested in education to engage in discussions and activities focused on important national and state policy issues.

Learn more and apply **here**.



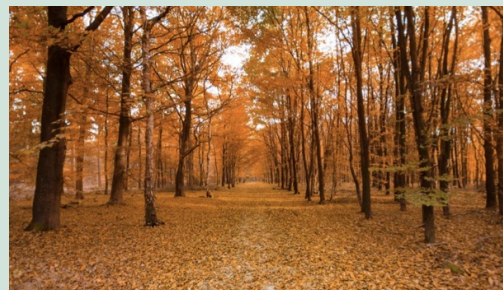
Social, Emotional, Behavioral Academy for New Schools/Districts

EDC is partnering with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the May Institute to offer the Social, Emotional, and Behavior (SEB) Academy. The academy offers trainings, customized technical assistance (TA), and tools and resources focused on SEL and mental health, as well as positive behavior interventions and support (PBIS).

Learn more and apply **here**.

Save the Date for Fall Gathering!

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



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Overcoming Polarization: The Importance of Civil Discourse in a Divided World

Healthy dialogue is characterized by open, respectful exchanges where diverse viewpoints are encouraged and valued. This type of dialogue promotes critical thinking, empathy, and understanding. It allows us all to explore different perspectives and develop the skills necessary to engage in constructive conversations about complex issues. Critical thinking in particular is vital for recognizing and addressing misinformation and counteracting extremist narratives with analysis of facts. Facing History offers tools that can help navigate conversations on polarizing topics with empathy, self-awareness, and critical thinking.

Read the full study [here](#).



Voices from the Classroom 2024: A Survey of America's Educators

As the public education sector grapples with a post-pandemic society and a “return to normal,” the question must be asked: Will our education system evolve along with the rest of the world, or maintain an unequal and inequitable status quo? What will teaching and learning look like in the next year – or in five – and how different will students’ experiences be from today? Voices from the Classroom 2024 explores whether teachers see promise on the horizon, or see us missing a moment worth capitalizing on. It asks how schools can keep pace with a rapidly changing world, rather than preparing students for a quickly dissipating past.

Find out what the teachers said [here](#).



Nurturing Mistake Tolerance in the Classroom

Our students do not like making mistakes in front of their peers. As a matter of fact, I can say the same for many adults. This dislike leads to an avoidance of failure in the hopes of preserving notions of identity and self-efficacy. What I define as “fear branding” is the perception, often implicit in nature, of being outed as incompetent by one’s community. This fear can lead students down trauma spirals of internalized inadequacies, classroom disruptions, and other barriers undermining their confidence as learners. These effects may be more pronounced among students who already face disadvantages in the classroom, including stereotypes about their educational capacity.

Read the full article [here](#).



Building Belonging: Harnessing the Power of Education in a Time of Demographic Change

At a time of profound demographic shifts and ever-increasing diversity in classrooms, our education systems find themselves at a critical juncture. The Ecosystems for the Future of Learning report envisioned a transformative approach to education that breaks down the barriers between schools and communities; this report extends that vision by focusing on the imperative of fostering belonging within these educational ecosystems. At a time when societal divisions appear more pronounced than ever, the role of schools as community hubs where students from all backgrounds can feel secure, accepted, and valued has never been more crucial.

Read the full study [here](#).

Just for Fun



"Blink and You'll Miss It": Louisville, OH Graduation Video Goes Viral

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

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