

POWER *of* PLACE

LEARNING COMMUNITIES



Dear Colleagues and Friends,

Welcome back! I hope you had a summer filled with rest and renewal, and that you are returning refreshed and ready for another year of learning, growth, and making a difference in the lives of your students.

The Essex County Learning Community team has been bustling with activity all summer. Here's a quick recap:

- Our annual Summer Institute brought together educators from 15 of our 20 school districts, where we explored what motivates learning. We are deeply grateful to our valued partners—**Mike Anderson, the WPS Institute, and Greg Coles Dance and Drum**—for leading such inspiring and memorable sessions. **Check out the full photo gallery!** We are grateful to **Tracey Westgate Photography** for capturing the dynamism of the day.
- Our first-ever Principals' Day of Reflection gave school leaders a chance to learn from one another, plan for the upcoming school year, and build lasting relationships to support their work. At the end of the day, participants asked to form an ongoing community, with ECLC facilitation.
- ECLC also welcomed our four newest partner school districts—Georgetown, North Andover, Peabody, and Pentucket—with ice cream socials. A big thank you to **Treadwell's Ice Cream** and owner Tom Gould for their enthusiastic scooping!

Perhaps most importantly, this summer the ECLC team curated the new **2024-25 Learning Agenda**. The Learning Agenda details this year's professional learning experiences, including some exciting new opportunities. Also new this year: all learning experiences are now eligible for Professional Development Points. We urge you to read the Learning Agenda carefully, bookmark the link, and spread the word with your colleagues, peers, and friends.

We like to say that ECLC is a team sport: participants benefit most when they come to learning experiences in teams, to lighten the load of diffusing the learning back home. Every adult who works in a school or district has the capacity to influence children for good, which means every adult deserves a chance to reflect, learn, and grow. We hope you all find something—or many things—that speak to your interests. If there is something else you would like to learn, please let us know! We will continue to build on this agenda throughout the year.

If you are new to our community, welcome! ECLC is the flagship of Power of Place Learning Communities, and is made up of educators from 20 partner school districts in Essex County who come together regularly for deep learning, conversation, reflection, and connection. We do not believe in “one and done” professional development, and instead believe that adult lifelong learning is key to deeper student learning. We also believe that healthy relationships are the foundation for effective learning, beginning with how educators form connections with one another. Fundamentally, we believe that growth is fostered in connection.

This bi-weekly newsletter is intended to keep us all connected, to share reminders and announcements, and to provide you with a curated set of resources. This one is longer than usual, so be sure to read through to the end, and note the Save-the-Date for the Fall Gathering on November 5.

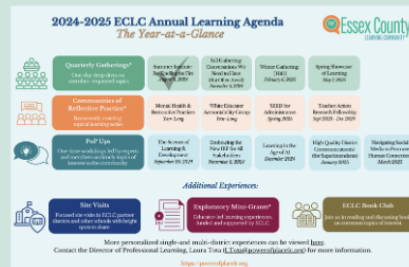
Best wishes for a smooth and joyful start to the year. We can't wait to see you!

With warmth and appreciation,

Jane

2024-2025 ECLC Learning Agenda is Now Live!

CHECK IT OUT →



[Click to view the 2024-2025 ECLC Annual Learning Agenda](#)

Essex County Learning Community offers educators the collaborative time, space, resources, and support they need to grow both relationally and professionally. The annual learning agenda offers in-person, online, and blended learning experiences, including Quarterly Gatherings, multi-part series, role-alike spaces, affinity groups, book studies, and opportunities to engage with expert guest faculty members. **All experiences provide an opportunity for educators to earn Professional Development Points;** some as single learning experiences, and others as bundles of learning experiences. Opportunities in this learning agenda are free and open to all staff members in the 20 ECLC partner districts.

ECLC takes a constructivist approach to everything that we do. This year's learning agenda is responsive to the expressed needs and desires of ECLC educators and partner districts. That means that this is a living document, which will be updated and added to on a regular basis. **Please bookmark the link and check back often!**

Upcoming Opportunity - Register Now!

RESTORATIVE PRACTICE

Join Beverly educators for a workshop* led by Ron Clark Academy co-founder **Kim Beardon** to learn about the RCA House System and explore ways to engage students, promote academic excellence, build relationships, and create a climate and culture for success.

This workshop will be best for **elementary and **middle school** educators.*



Tuesday, Sept. 3
8 am to 1 pm



Beverly Middle School
502 Cabot St., Beverly

REGISTER NOW



**ECLC Fall Gathering: Conversations We Need to Have
(But Often Avoid)**

Join us for the 2024 Fall Gathering:
**Conversations We Need
to Have (but often avoid)**

Featuring:



[Register Now!](#)



Open to all ECLC educators!

November 5, 8 am to 4 pm
Essex North Shore
Agricultural Technical School
565 Maple Street
Danvers, MA 01937

**Apply Now for a 2024-2025
Exploratory Mini-Grant**

2024-25 ECLC Exploratory Mini-Grant for Educators

Do you have a **great idea** that you want to explore that could inspire your peers and help to build relationships across the ECLC community?

Tell us more.

Apply for a \$2,000 ECLC Exploratory Mini-Grant today!

Learn more!



Apply today!



Application Deadline: Monday, September 30th

Follow Power of Place on Social Media

Power of Place is on LinkedIn and Facebook!

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



Back to School Resources



Back to School with UDL: Checklist and Tips for Teachers

There will never be a “right time.” The truth is that we can't achieve what we don't put out into the universe. We all share a common goal: to be the best educators we can be, reaching and inspiring every student. But what does that specifically look like for you? If one of your aspirations for this new school year is to create an inclusive learning environment, then incorporating Universal Design for Learning (UDL) into your practice is a great place to



Back to School: Building Community for Connection & Learning

The back-to-school activities and ideas in this toolkit will help you create a learning environment where students can thrive. Educators may feel pressured to jump right into instruction at the beginning of the school year. Yet taking the time in the first few weeks of school to nurture community, build relationships, and attend to students' social-emotional needs lays the foundation for students to engage with

start. Katie Novak from Novak Education has been together a checklist for teachers to help them implement UDL into their classrooms from the start of the school year.

Get the checklist [here](#).

the content, take risks, and support one another all year. The resources in this toolkit are modular and flexible and supports Facing History's *US History Curriculum Collection: Democracy & Freedom*.

Access the toolkit [here](#).

MIKE ANDERSON

45 Routines to Teach in the First Weeks of School: A Good Start

There are so many routines to teach early in the school year—it can be a bit overwhelming. Where do you begin? Of course, there is no one right answer—no definitive list. One way to start is to think about ones your students need to successfully navigate the first day. Mike divides the routines into 4 categories: beginning of the day routines, end of the day routines, throughout the day routines, and academic routines. A little time invested in teaching the routines of the room pays huge dividends throughout the year. Students will feel safer, be more independent, and you'll be able to spend more time focused on teaching and learning.

See all of Mike's ideas [here](#).



A Back-to-School Guide for Connecting with Families

Families are all too often under-utilized allies for educators. Proactively building a strong relationship with families in the opening weeks of the school year can pay a host of dividends in supporting a more robust partnership throughout the rest of the year. Parents and caregivers are the experts on their children, and by tapping into their knowledge, we immediately become more effective in serving the needs of our students. As family engagement expert Anne Henderson writes, "If you don't know your students' families, you don't know your students. If you don't know your students, how are you going to reach them, motivate them, and be that important other adult in their life?"

Read the full guide [here](#).

Food for Thought: The Rule of Thirds



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

Power of Place Learning Communities | 2 Burlington Woods Drive Suite 100 | Burlington, MA
01803 US

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