

POWER *of* PLACE

LEARNING COMMUNITIES



Dear Colleagues and Friends,

We are less than two weeks from the 2024 Presidential Election, which is the most contentious race I can remember. On the same day, we are hosting the **ECLC Fall Gathering**, aptly entitled *Conversations We Need to Have (but often avoid)*. We will spend the day focused on conflict, an unfortunate but inevitable part of life. As our keynote speaker Amanda Ripley wrote in *High Conflict*, the real work for all of us is to embrace the idea of what she calls "good conflict," where we learn to listen to and see others - no matter who they are or what they stand for - as whole human beings.

Many of us never learned how to manage conflict well, but it's never too late.

Some of my own lessons in recent years have come from an unexpected place: my neighborhood dog park. When we first adopted our dog, I never imagined how much my social circle would grow. We are all dog people at the dog park, but in some cases that's where our similarities end. We have different backgrounds, we speak different languages, and we have had different life experiences. We don't always agree with one another -

especially when it comes to politics - but it doesn't matter. Even when we disagree, it's "good conflict," meaningful conversations made possible by the relational trust we have developed over time.

The dog park, like many other places, is a civic space where everyone belongs. In an excerpt from the forthcoming book ***Belonging Without Othering: How We Save Ourselves and the World***, the authors distinguish between *breaking* and *bridging*. *Breaking* is about turning on each other, and *bridging* is about turning toward each other and building something together. When we are breaking, we tend to retreat into a protective, safe bubble, but we can also lose perspective. When we are bridging, we leave the bubble and open up an expanded space for civic engagement and possibility. When we are bridging, we build "**civic muscle**," the ability to set aside what divides us and understand one another's points of view - so we can accomplish more together.

Public schools are among the most important civic spaces in our society. Schools are the setting for many different kinds of difficult conversations on any given day: between teachers and administrators, educators and families, teachers and students, and people of different social, cultural, and economic backgrounds. These conversations require us to flex and strengthen our civic muscle, to create space to work together to make decisions, solve problems, and co-create a vision for a vibrant community that is more than the sum of its parts.

Let us continue building our collective civic muscle so we can help students learn to build their own. Let us challenge one another to keep building our capacities to engage in "good conflict." The **ECLC Fall Gathering** on November 5 will be a great place to start. We hope to see you there!

In connection,

Jane

FALL 2024

UPCOMING EVENTS

11/5: FALL GATHERING

11/8: EMBRACING THE NEW IEP

11/19: ECLC BOOK CLUB

LEARN MORE BELOW &
CLICK HERE TO SEE OUR FULL
2024-25 LEARNING AGENDA

Two Days Left to Register

**11/5 ECLC Fall Gathering: Conversations We Need
to Have (But Often Avoid)**

Conversations We Need to Have (but often avoid)

Earn
PDPs!

Register by
Friday, 10/25!

See you
there!



Learn more and
register today!



**Essex North Shore
Agricultural Technical School**

565 Maple Street in Danvers, MA

November 5 | 8 am to 4 pm

Coming Up in November at PoP

Looking for your next
great read?

JOIN THE
ECLC BOOK
CLUB!



OUR FIRST BOOK IS...

Normal Sucks
by Jonathan Mooney

Nov. 18 & Dec. 9
3:30-5 pm on Zoom



Register
today!

THE NEW MA IEP

How can we use the state's new IEP to better support student success?



Join **Essex County Learning Community** on November 8 to delve into the Commonwealth's new Individualized Education Program (IEP). Participants will leave with tools and strategies for talking with colleagues, students, parents, and other stakeholders.



Allan Blume, seasoned special educator and IEP guru, will walk participants through the new IEP form and answer questions.



Essential Partners will share strategies and facilitate role-playing related to successfully using the IEP.

Join us on November 8 | 8 am to 4 pm
Wylie Inn & Conference Center
Beverly, MA

Contact info@powerofplacelc.org to register.



ICYMI: here's what's been happening at PoP *Annual Learning Agenda*

The Journey to Restorative Practices

On Thursday, October 17th, administrators, adjustment counselors, nurses, psychologists, and health educators from across our partner districts gathered at Wylie for the opening workshop of our Mental Health & Restorative

Practices series, *The Journey to Restorative Practices*. Guided by the captivating facilitation of Edgar de Leon, *Director of Restorative Practices* at Beverly Middle School, participants considered how they themselves had become curious about restorative practices, developed a shared understanding of what restorative practices are and are not, and heard a recounting of the path Beverly Middle School has been on—including wins and challenges—toward embedding restorative practices within their approach to school discipline.



Participants of the session ended the time together analyzing where they feel each of their schools/districts are in the journey toward restorative practices, and what small steps forward they might take when they left the workshop.

Click here to check out the Linktree from the workshop, and stay tuned to learn about the next offering in our Mental Health & Restorative Practices Series.

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.



Resources & Opportunities

**Submit a Proposal to
Present at NEERO!**



The New England Education Research Organization (NEERO) holds a conference each spring (next will be at the end of March 2025 in Portsmouth, NH). In recent years the conference has purposefully expanded to include teachers and other practitioners to share their expertise alongside researchers - last year, several members of the ECLC community attended (and were featured on a panel).

Currently there is an open call (due November 1) for proposals to present at the 2025 conference.

Here's a link to the **NEERO Call for proposals** - while there's lots of information and instructions, the core parts of a proposal can be found on Page 9 - for either Practitioner: Pedagogical Innovation Presentations, or for Practitioner: Problem of Practice Roundtables. If anyone is interested and has more questions - or would like help putting together a proposal - please reach out to ECLC Faculty-in-Residence, Bryan Mascio (bmascio.teacher@gmail.com).

edutopia

Engaging With Families Through Parent-Teacher Conferences

In many of our schools, parent-teacher conferences are a missed opportunity for building stronger relationships, trust, and communication between educators and families. Rarely do teachers make the intentional effort to ask questions and treat families as experts on their children. This serves to perpetuate the dynamic of educator as expert and parent as passive recipient of information and tends to compound the ways that families often don't feel heard. Ari Gerzon-Kessler leads the Family Partnerships department in his school district and talked with families about their conference experiences.

Find out what he learned [here](#).

Transcend

Increasing Student Engagement and Belonging to Reduce Chronic Absenteeism

Two schools in Texas are proving that the key to student success lies in one simple concept: listening to students. Through innovative programs, fostering strong relationships, and addressing the root causes of absence, Dupre and Alderete demonstrate the transformative power of student-centered learning and improve student experiences. Recent data from more than 100,000 students found that students who report positive experiences in school are 25% less likely to be chronically absent than students who dislike their school experiences.

Learn more from the study [here](#).

Greater Good Magazine

SCIENCE-BASED INSIGHTS FOR A MEANINGFUL LIFE

How to Prepare Kids for Misinformation Online

In an era when online misinformation is seemingly everywhere and objective facts are often in dispute, UC Berkeley psychologists in a new study have presented a somewhat paradoxical partial solution: Expose young children to more misinformation online—not less. Doing so in limited circumstances, and with careful oversight and education, can help children gain the tools they'll need to sort fact from fiction online, said Evan Orticio, a Ph.D. student in UC Berkeley's Department of Psychology and lead author of a paper published recently in the journal *Nature Human Behaviour*.

Get the tools from Evan [here](#).

BROOKINGS

What Are We Learning From School Suspension Bans?

Exclusionary school discipline—i.e., suspension and expulsion—remains a controversial practice in U.S. schools. Researchers have documented that students of color and other historically marginalized groups are disproportionately subjected to exclusionary discipline, and these practices are associated with negative impacts such as reduced instructional time, lower achievement, and increased school dropout. However, there's ambiguity about what the best alternative might be, and discipline advocates see more of a role for exclusionary discipline.

Read the full study [here](#).

Food for Thought

Where are you today?

Thanks to Michael McKnight of 4 Directions Seminars for sharing this resource.



Adapted from: Watson, P., Gist, R., Taylor, V. Evlander, E., Leto, F., Martin, R., Vaught, D., Nash, W.P., Westphal, R., & Litz, B. (2013). Stress First Aid for Firefighters and Emergency Services Personnel. National Fallen Firefighters Foundation.

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

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

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!