

# POWER *of* PLACE

LEARNING COMMUNITIES



Dear Colleagues and Friends,

The end of the calendar year is a time for list-making: grocery lists, card and gift lists, party invitation lists, and the seemingly endless list of errands. It can be immensely satisfying to make lists and check things off one by one. Lists are straightforward and concrete; they hold us accountable to ourselves. What we list we can measure.

Lists can also be misleading, and lull us into thinking that we can fully achieve something just by checking off all of the boxes. Lists help us get moving toward something—but are not a substitute for the deeper work that reflects our individual values and intentions. It is easy to believe that checking off the boxes will move the needle for young people, but that is not enough. It's not the boxes we check, but the long-term commitments we make, along with the everyday actions we take, that breed true success.

At Power of Place, we understand that time and finances can make it difficult for districts to invest in the necessary deep and ongoing development opportunities required to truly move the needle for students, and we aspire to help bridge that gap. At PoP, we work in

partnership with districts to move professional learning from a checklist of things to get done toward a long-term commitment to every educator's individual growth.

Essex County Learning Community, our flagship, is our long-term commitment to educators and districts in this region. We know that all educators—from superintendents to principals to teachers to paraprofessionals—need time and space away from school to reflect, connect, plan, and innovate. Our **Annual Learning Agenda** is an ongoing invitation to educators to invest in their growth, alongside peers from neighboring communities. We are always in awe of what you bring and what you can offer one another in these learning spaces. We believe that when educators come together in community they can accomplish so much more than they can do on their own.

We urge you to add finding time for reflection to your end of year to-do list so you can consider this question: *How might I invest in myself as a professional in 2025?* We hope your answer will lead you to one or more ECLC experiences next year, so you can continue to engage with our growing, thriving community of kindred spirits.

Happy holidays to you and yours. We will see you next year!

With warmth and appreciation,

Jane

# ECCLC 2024: A Look Back



**2/8/24:**  
**Winter Gathering**  
*The Project Habit:  
Designing for Rigor  
with Project-Based  
Learning*



**5/8/24: Spring  
Showcase of  
Learning**



**8/8/24:**  
**Summer Institute**  
*Rekindling the Fire*



**11/5/24:**  
**Fall Gathering**  
*Conversations  
we need to have  
(but often avoid)*

*See you  
next  
year!*

*Upcoming*  
**EVENTS**

**2/6/25**

Winter Gathering  
*Wylie Inn and  
Conference Center*

**2/26/25**

SEED for  
Administrators  
*Wylie Inn and  
Conference Center*

VIEW OUR COMPLETE  
2024-25 LEARNING AGENDA [HERE](#)

**Register Now: SEED for Administrators**



# SEED FOR ADMINISTRATORS



**Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity (SEED) is a peer-led model for administrators only. This is a space for exploration, reflection, connection and deep learning for school and district leaders.**

**February 26 | March 5 | March 12 from 8 am to 3 pm**  
Wylie Inn & Conference Center in Beverly

**Register today!**



**Upcoming Opportunities**



PLEASE JOIN THE CURRICULUM AND STAFF  
DEVELOPMENT NETWORK & ECLC FOR

# *The Human Side of Changing Education*

FEATURING RESEARCHER  
JULIE JUNGALALWALA



**FRIDAY, JANUARY 10, 11 AM TO 2 PM**

ESSEX NORTH SHORE AGRICULTURAL AND TECHNICAL SCHOOL  
*A wonderful lunch will be served and books will be provided for all*

**FOR ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENTS, CURRICULUM DIRECTORS AND OTHERS  
LEADING DISTRICT CHANGE. (MAXIMUM THREE PARTICIPANTS PER DISTRICT)**

**REGISTER TODAY!**





# Democracy in Dialogue

An ECLC Exploratory  
Mini-Grant Experience

As the nation nears its 250th anniversary it is vital for young people to break down barriers and build bridges to better understand the people around them. Join us for a new PD series designed to:

- **Empower and prepare educators** to facilitate conversations between students within their classrooms, schools, and communities.
- **Leverage the power of objects and place in learning**, and help educators learn to build partnerships between local community organizations and their classrooms.
- **Partner and utilize resources and materials** from Essex National Heritage and the Smithsonian to provide a dynamic and meaningful professional development with tangible takeaways and resources.
- **Prompt meaningful dialogue** amongst young people across our communities.

*This series will be led by **Brian Sheehy**,  
History Department Coordinator at  
North Andover High School*

**[REGISTER HERE](#)**

## 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



### U.S. Education Department Pings States, Schools to Set Policies on Cellphone Use

The U.S. Education Department called on every state, school and district on Tuesday to adopt policies on cellphone use in schools. The department asks schools to have well-thought-out policies on the matter, but does not dictate exactly what those policies should be. An accompanying resource for schools notes the risk social media can pose to students' mental health. "In this digital age, every elementary, middle, and high school should have a clear, consistent, and research-informed policy to guide the use of phones and personal devices in school," U.S. Education Secretary Miguel Cardona said in a written statement.

Read the full article [here](#).



### How to Apply Practices That Support Positive Youth Development

Decades of research have demonstrated what practitioners often innately know to be true: learning and development are fundamentally shaped by the quality of relationships and experiences in the settings where young people and adults interact. High-quality youth programs focus on the experiences that young people have in these settings. Adults can develop their practice to support learning and development more effectively by understanding the things they can do to create and support these high-quality experiences. The Pyramid of Program Quality is a visual representation of these ideas.

Read the full blog [here](#).



### Nine to Thrive: The Well-Being Podcast

Join Julie Fischer, Positive Psychology Practitioner, Coach and Well-Being Advocate for meaningful and lively conversations with experts, thought leaders, authors, business leaders and more. She dives into the "un-well-being crisis" we are experiencing as a collective, and share tools and strategies that foster increased mental, emotional, physical, spiritual and financial well-being. Ready to connect with a community of people who strive to thrive? Tune in every other week for inspiration, insight and maybe what feels like a nudge from a friend to keep



### Healing the Heart of Democracy: The Courage to Create a Politics Worthy of the Human Spirit

In *Healing the Heart of Democracy*, Parker J. Palmer quickens our instinct to seek the common good and gives us the tools to do it. This timely, courageous and practical work—intensely personal as well as political—is not about them, "those people" in Washington D.C., or in our state capitals, on whom we blame our political problems. It's about us, "We the People," and what we can do in everyday settings like families, neighborhoods, classrooms, congregations and workplaces to resist



moving, keep uncovering and keep transforming yourself, your life and your sense of well-being.

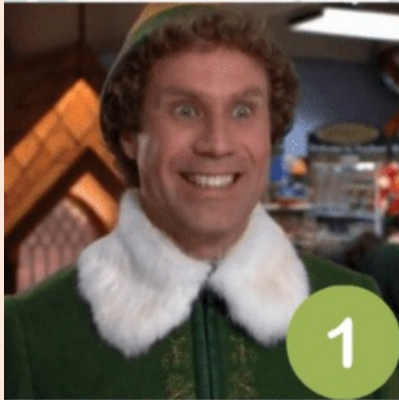
Listen to the podcast [here](#).

divide-and-conquer politics and restore a government “of the people, by the people, for the people.”

Learn more about Palmer's book, discussion guide, and discussion guide videos [here](#).

## Just for Fun

# THE EMOTIONS OF TEACHING THE WEEK BEFORE WINTER BREAK



@weareteachers

*Do you have something to share with your fellow educators?  
Send it to us at [info@powerofplace.org](mailto:info@powerofplace.org).*

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