

POWER *of* PLACE

LEARNING COMMUNITIES



Dear Colleagues and Friends,

Like 126 million other people around the world, I camped out in front of the television with my family on Sunday to watch Super Bowl 59. I have always loved football, especially the excitement and can-do spirit that surrounds the Big Game each year (along with the commercials and the halftime show, of course).

This year I was struck by a new theme that began with **Brad Pitt's pre-recorded message prior to the game.** Wandering through a library, Pitt extolled a message that often gets lost in our individualistic culture, but is historically part and parcel of the national DNA: the importance of the true huddle.

"When we are bound by a common goal, we've reached heights, authored achievements, pushed progress. Not alone, but together, in ways that have lifted the world and one another," he said. The football huddle, he noted, "is a metaphor for our history, for the power found in our shared purpose. It's there in our unity that we form hope and find strength."

For me, this message landed as a combined history lesson and call to action at a time of great upheaval in our country and around the world. We are better together, our fates are shared. We are not just achievers on individual paths to success, but also - and perhaps more importantly - barn builders who lend a hand to our neighbors and strive on behalf of the common good.

A similar theme was echoed by the winning team at the end of the game. When a reporter asked Eagles Quarterback Jalen Hurts what it felt like to be a champion, he acknowledged his own personal victory but quickly pivoted: "I couldn't do any of these things without the guys around me." Eagles Head Coach Nick Sirianni expressed a similar sentiment: "You cannot be great without the greatness of others," he said. "This is the ultimate team game." These athletes, representing the epitome of masculine strength, are not afraid to say aloud that the caring connections among them matter the most for their success.

It's not lost on me that "the Huddle" is a circle. Pythagoras said the circle is the most perfect shape; it withholds all and everything emerges out of it. Every point of the circumference is the exact same distance from the center. The circle has no beginning and no end. There is no better side; there is no hierarchy.

We often say that when done well, education is a team sport. We need one another and do our best work when we put our heads together, work in partnership, and collaborate. Power of Place aspires to create a necessary "third space" away from the tumult of daily life in schools that allows educators to support each other as lifelong learners, and grow as professionals. When educators learn deeply, so can students.

When we make a circle, we commit to creating a space together that is richer and deeper than anything we can achieve as solo practitioners. This is our goal every time we bring educators together. Last week we were disappointed to have to postpone our Winter Gathering due to the weather, but we are working to reschedule for sometime early this Spring. Stay tuned - and we hope to see you all in our huddle soon.

In connection,

Jane

Upcoming EVENTS

FEB 26 **SEED for Administrators**
Wylie Inn & Conference Center

MAR 10 **ECLC Book Club**
Zoom

TBD **Winter Gathering, Take 2**
Stay tuned!

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

Register Now!
SEED for Administrators

ELEVATE YOUR LEADERSHIP: **SEED** for Administrators



Join **Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity (SEED)**, a peer-led series for exploration, reflection, connection and deep learning for school and district leaders.

February 26 | March 5 | March 12

Wyllie Inn & Conference Center in Beverly

Register today!

**ECLC Winter Gathering:
*New Date Coming Soon***

**Postponed due to
weather. Stay tuned
for the new date!**

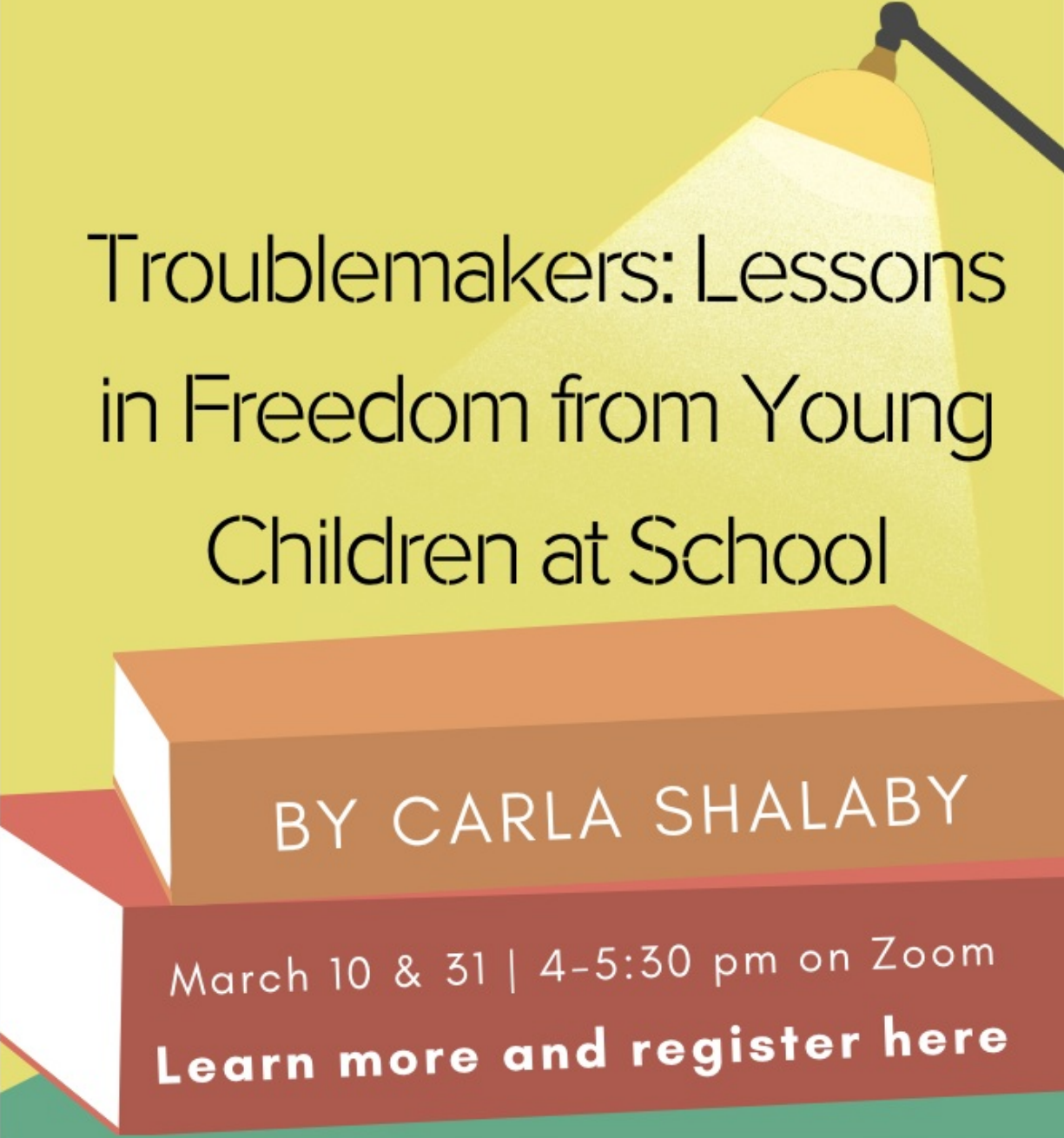
ECLC 2025 Winter Gathering

Tapping into the Wisdom Within



New ECLC Book Club!

Announcing the next ECLC Book Club read:



Troublemakers: Lessons in Freedom from Young Children at School

BY CARLA SHALABY

March 10 & 31 | 4-5:30 pm on Zoom

Learn more and register here

"Riveting, luminous, and terrifying, this little book gives us the tools, the vision, and the confidence to free our children to change the world."

Opportunities from Our Partners

TRANSFORMATIONAL CONVERSATIONS

Moving from blame and disconnection to understanding and connection.

Wednesday, March 5
9 - 11AM PT | 12 - 2 PM ET
\$50



LIVE VIRTUAL LEARNING
AND PRACTICE WORKSHOP

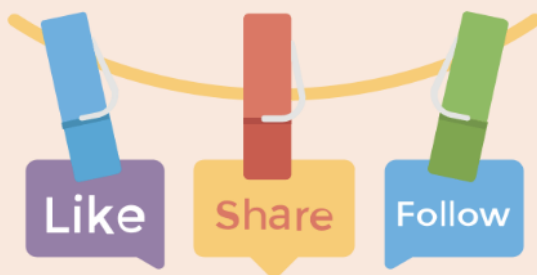


Mental Health Blog Series with Craig Harris: Part 3



Read part 3 of the blog series by Craig Harris, former Director of Counseling and SEL at the Swampscott Public Schools. This series details his framework for organizing mental health services for students.

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Power of Place is on LinkedIn and Facebook!

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

Resources

Psychology Today

Reawakening Childlike Curiosity and the Joy of Wonder

Young children naturally bombard their parents with questions. One study found that the average four-year-old asks an average of 390 questions a day. Many of these questions aren't just

edutopia

Building Connections with Students as a Middle School Principal

Lunch is often seen as a time for students to relax and refuel, but one principal sees it as an invaluable opportunity to connect with her

about facts—they seek explanations, revealing a deep desire to understand the world. Yet by the time they reach school, the number of questions they ask drops dramatically. The same kids who ask dozens of questions an hour at home ask only about two per hour in school. And by adulthood? Most of us rarely ask at all. Why do we lose our curiosity? And more importantly—how do we get it back?

Read the full study [here](#).

youngest students—those in grade five. Starting middle school is a significant transition for any child, and it's especially so for grade five students, who are even younger than most middle school students. Due to space constraints at the elementary school, grade five was moved to the middle school building several years ago. To help them feel more welcome, Cristiana Jurgensen began “Lunch With the Principal.”

Read her story [here](#).



Engaging Minds, Changing Futures: A Deep Dive Into Student Engagement and Learning

Explore this insightful Q&A with award-winning journalist Jenny Anderson and global education expert Rebecca Winthrop as they discuss the evolution of education reporting, the transformative power of family-school engagement, and what parents can do to ensure their children thrive. Together, they share perspectives on the current opportunities for educational transformation, highlighting the critical role of media, parents, and policymakers in shaping a more engaging and effective education system.

Read the full interview [here](#).



Tools: Empathy Interviews

As we face the formidable task of teaching and caring for students and their families during the dual pandemics of COVID-19 and systemic racism, there has never been a more important time to practice empathy. Empathy means trying to understand deeply the experiences and feelings of other people. It is both a mindset to embrace and a skill to practice. While we can never fully understand the experiences of another person, we can listen deeply to their stories and perspectives to uncover unacknowledged needs. As we listen, we must simultaneously examine how our own identities, biases, values, and experiences influence how we make meaning of what others share with us.

Access the full toolkit [here](#).

Just for Fun



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

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