

# POWER *of* PLACE

LEARNING COMMUNITIES



Dear Colleagues and Friends,

On February 27, Governor Maura Healey, Lt. Governor Kim Driscoll, and Attorney General Andrea Joy Campbell issued **joint guidance** reaffirming the state's commitment to support efforts to further equal access and representation in our public schools and institutions of higher education.

“We believe that bringing people of different backgrounds and perspectives to the table...is a strength, especially in education,” said Governor Healey. “We are committed to working closely with our incredible schools, colleges, and universities to support all our students.”

Education Secretary Patrick Tutwiler echoed the sentiment: “This country has long fought for all students to have equal access to a public education. The federal government is attempting to take us back decades, exacerbating real inequities that still exist today. Today's joint guidance reaffirms that Massachusetts will continue to acknowledge and address historical and persistent gaps in student access and achievement, including Black and Brown students, students with disabilities, low-income students, LGBTQ+ students and other marginalized student populations. We remain committed to supporting schools and higher education institutions, within the law, to build more equitable education systems for all students.”

We applaud the Commonwealth's leaders for their clarity in these unsettling times. At Power of Place, we know that students, especially those who face social stigma, learn best when they feel a sense of belonging - when they are fully seen, heard, understood, and appreciated. We also know that for students to thrive, educators must also feel appreciated and have opportunities to continue their own learning. That is what our work is all about.

We know how hard it is to take time out to reflect and engage in deep learning while drinking out of a firehose. Our "third space" is intended as an oasis from the daily frenzy, where educators can gain skills and perspective, connect with colleagues, help each other through challenges, and emerge better teachers, leaders, and learners. Our mission is to help revitalize a profession that is critical to the future of our communities. There is something magical that happens when educators come together within and across districts to celebrate and be celebrated for their dedication to a profession that requires keen intellect, creativity, common sense, and open hearts and minds.

That magic is what prompted us to plan the 2025 Winter Gathering as our first-ever entirely peer-led learning experience. Unfortunately, as many of you know, Mother Nature had other ideas, and we had to postpone - not cancel - our February 7 event. I am happy to share that we have been able to find a new date when all of our presenters can be there. While technically no longer in winter, the **2025 Winter Gathering (Take 2) will be on Monday, April 7 from 8 am to 3 pm at Essex North Shore Agricultural and Technical School (ENSATS)**. A flyer with more details is below - please share it with your colleagues. We hope to see you all there!

We know that it can be hard to leave your buildings for the day, and that it may feel almost decadent to "take the day off" for learning. But making space for your own growth is not a luxury; it's both important and urgent. Those who participate regularly in our learning experiences often leave saying, "I no longer feel alone." They feel a renewed sense of purpose and return to school with greater energy, sense of joy, and hope for the future. And when educators feel that way, the ones who matter most - their students - are bound to benefit.

In connection,

Jane

# Upcoming Events

**MARCH  
10**

**ECLC BOOK CLUB  
ZOOM**

**APRIL  
7**

**ECLC WINTER GATHERING  
ENSATS**

**APRIL  
16**

**POP-UP WITH THE  
CHILDREN'S ROOM  
ZOOM**

*Access the full Learning Agenda here*

*Rescheduled for April 7!*  
**ECLC Winter Gathering**

ECLC 2025 Winter Gathering

# Tapping into the Wisdom Within



**New Date  
and  
Location!**

**April 7, 2025 | 8 am to 3 pm  
Essex North Shore  
Agricultural Technical School**

**Register Today!**

# Starring an All-Star Cast of ECLC Educators



**Gabrielle  
Montevecchi**



**Heather  
Lang**



**Amy  
Mitchell**



**Lindsey  
Polizzotti**



**Kelly  
Feurt**



**Laurie  
Regan**



**Heidi  
Wakeman**



**Amber  
Magin**



**Allison  
Nichols**



**Diana  
Fullerton**

*Save the Date!*  
**Spring Showcase of Learning**



SAVE THE DATE

# Showcase of Learning

A Celebration of Community

MAY 21, 2025 | 4:30-7:30 PM  
PEABODY ESSEX MUSEUM



**Join ECLC and The Children's Room  
for our first "PoP-Up"**

# Building Compassionate School Communities: Creating a Grief-Supportive Culture



One in 13 children experience the death of a parent or sibling by the time they turn 18. Educators can play an important role in helping students through their grief, and classrooms can become a place of compassion, belonging, flexibility, consistency, and normalcy.

*Learn more in a special PoP-Up with*

***The Children's Room***

*April 16, from 4-6 pm on Zoom - Register Here*



***Register Now!***  
**ECLC Book Club: Troublemakers**

**Join the ECLC Book Club**

**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**

**Opportunities from Our Partners**



# NEERO 2025 Annual Conference

Equity, Justice, and Renewal in Education:  
Bridging Gaps through Research and Innovation

March 26 - 28, 2025  
Portsmouth, NH

Join us for innovative  
research, discussions, and  
networking opportunities!



- 45 Research Papers
- 9 Research Posters
- 1 Symposia & 2 Keynotes
- 25 Practitioner Presentations

Register now at:

<https://events.humanitix.com/neero-2025-annual-conference>



For more information:

[www.neero.org](http://www.neero.org)

The NEERO Conference purposefully brings together teachers and other practitioners with education researchers, and we hope members of the ECLC community will consider joining - particularly on Thursday (March 27th) which includes a full day of sessions and a keynote lunch. Limited scholarships are available through MINTS (they will provide a code making your registration free) - [apply here](#) soon to not miss out!



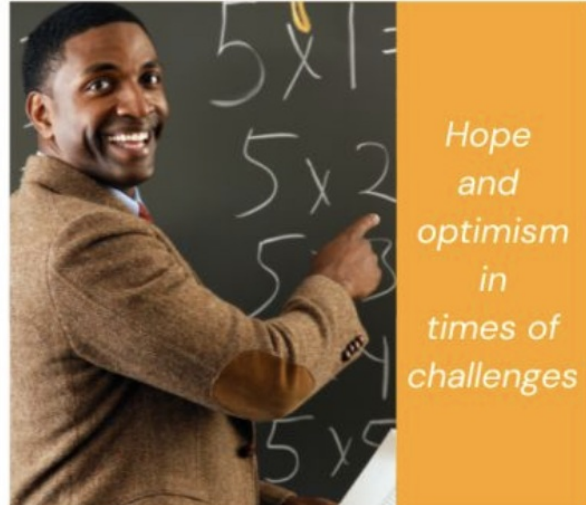
# RESILIENCE ROUNDTABLE

Stress & Resilience: A Dialogue  
About Education During  
Stressful Times

FREE WEBINAR  
March 3, 2025  
3:00-4:00 PM ET



*Defining resilience and  
identifying the strategies to build  
it for yourself and for youth*



*Hope  
and  
optimism  
in  
times of  
challenges*

PEAR will be hosting a free interactive roundtable discussion with Dr. Gil Noam, a leading expert in youth development and mental health, and Jamaal Williams, PEAR's Assistant Director of Training, as we explore:

- What stressors educators and students are facing today
- The role of hope and optimism in addressing these challenges
- How optimism serves as both a driver of resilience and resilience itself
- Defining resilience and strategies to build it—for ourselves and for youth
- Live Q&A—bring your questions, insights, and experiences!

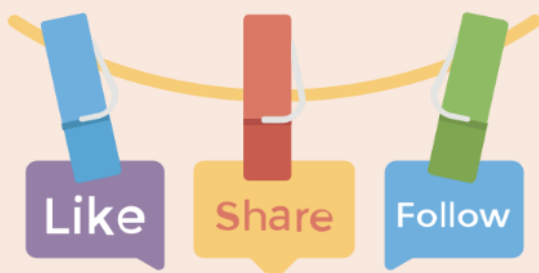
**[REGISTER HERE](#)**

**Mental Health Blog Series with  
Craig Harris: Part 4**

Don't miss this week's blog post by Craig Harris, former Director of Counseling and SEL at the Swampscott Public Schools and long-time head of emotional disability support programs for students. Harris has written a 7-part blog series for Power of Place that delves into his framework for organizing mental health services. Today, we feature Harris' fourth post in the series: "Right Services."



## 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



### **How Educators Are Using Kindness to Transform Schools**

When a few passionate community members approached members of the Bexley City School District in Ohio with the idea of teaching kindness, they weren't sure what form it would take, but they knew it mattered. At the heart of the district's strategic plan are three pillars: learn with curiosity, demonstrate kindness, and embrace equity. While curiosity and equity had clear pathways in education, kindness felt more elusive. That's where Jason Caudill and Laura Moore, two dedicated educators, stepped in and attended the Greater Good Science Center's Summer Institute for Educators—a



### **AI's Potential in Special Education: A Researcher's View**

Matthew Marino, a professor at the University of Central Florida who studies the intersection of technology and special education, is excited about the potential of generative artificial intelligence for teaching and learning. AI is "going to open a whole new front for education," he said. The sentiment is shared by a majority of parents and educators of students with learning disabilities, according to a report from the Special Olympics Global Center for Inclusion in Education. The survey shows that parents and educators believe AI will make learning more accessible, inclusive, and personalized. But they're also concerned about AI's

transformational experience designed to help educators turn research-backed principles of kindness into action.

Read the full article **here**.

potential to decrease human interaction and leave some schools and students behind.

Read the full study **here**.



### **Unleashing Inner Speech: A Metacognitive Approach to Supporting Executive Function in Neurodivergent Learners**

Navigating the complexities of academic tasks often requires a strong command of one's internal language, or "inner speech." This cognitive tool is crucial for comprehending challenging texts, planning, and making decisions, especially during the writing process. However, individuals with executive function (EF) challenges, particularly those who are neurodivergent (diagnosed with a learning disability, ADHD, or autism), can sometimes struggle to effectively utilize inner speech. This limitation can significantly impact their academic performance. This article explores a novel intervention designed to bolster inner speech and, consequently, academic success in this population.

Read the full study **here**.



### **5 Solutions to the Biggest Obstacles in Transforming Public Schools**

Transforming a school district to be future and present ready isn't about raising test scores, it's about rewriting the playbook, from how students engage in the classroom to how custodians and bus drivers see themselves as part of the mission. Bullitt County Public Schools (BCPS) in Kentucky, launched the journey to rethink education eight years ago. For leaders about to get started, or funders and policymakers looking for insight on how to support H3 work, here are five of the biggest obstacles we encountered—and the ways we've tackled them. Their hope is that this can accelerate others' paths toward making education relevant, inclusive, and deeply impactful for students, educators, and the community.

Access their 5 solutions **here**.

## **Just for Fun**

*As Black History month comes to a close, we leave you with a classic song, "Everyday People" by Sly and the Family Stone. It's a song that calls for connecting across our differences. The original song was released in 1968 and was a number one hit on the singles chart in 1969. This version is part of the video series called "**Playing For Change**."*



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

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