

POWER *of* PLACE

LEARNING COMMUNITIES



Dear Colleagues and Friends,

I hope you all found some time to rest, recharge, and catch up on sleep during the April school vacation week. As the temperatures finally tick upward and the buds blossom, I urge you all to take a moment to reflect on your own growth as a professional this past year. What have you learned, and how will that change your practice next year?

At Power of Place we are planning two upcoming opportunities for you to push your growth even further: The May 21 ECLC Showcase of Learning and the two-day August 5-6 Summer Institute.

Our **May 21 Showcase of Learning** will be a celebratory event at Salem's Peabody Essex Museum. Think cocktail party meets science fair: There will be drinks and hors d'oeuvres, Salem's Witch Pitch (Salem High School's a cappella group) will be performing, and educators from across the region will host booths and share stories of the strategies and ideas that have helped them grow over the past year. Come to celebrate and be celebrated!

For the first time, we are hosting the [ECLC Summer Institute](#) in partnership with another organization. Together with **Project Adventure** we will offer two full days of learning at their Moraine Farm location. This beautiful farmland from 1880 will serve as the perfect location for our future-focused theme: “Staying Human in the Age of AI.” We know this is a topic of some interest across our communities, so we are lining up some of the nation’s experts on the integration of artificial intelligence with public education to serve as guest faculty. We encourage districts to send teams of up to 20 people to this year’s Summer Institute.

These upcoming events will be our two biggest of the year. Be sure to register for each one so we can accommodate allergies, accessibility issues, and ensure that we have more than enough food and drink for everyone. (As the PoP team can attest, my recurring nightmare is that there won't be enough food for you to enjoy. So please humor me and register!)

We hope to see you all there!

In connection,

Jane

Upcoming Events

**MAY
5** **ECLC Book Club**
Zoom

**MAY
21** **ECLC Showcase of Learning**
Peabody Essex Museum, Salem

**5/21 Spring Showcase:
Register Now to Present or to Attend**

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO THE

Showcase of Learning

A Celebration of Community

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

Join us to honor and celebrate the educators of Essex County for their commitment to continuous learning and professional growth, and their unwavering dedication to supporting students every day.

Featuring educator presentations, student and adult performances, and remarks from the MA Secretary of Education.



REGISTER
TODAY!

Call for Talent


We're seeking educators to share their talent with us at Spring Showcase on our special side stage "Educator Voices." Published a book? We'd love to have a book reading! Write poetry? We'd love to hear some spoken word. Performers will have the mic for brief sets (~10 min). Let's fill the PEM with your voices!



Sign Up Today!

New Book Club at ECLC **Register Now**

How do you approach concerning student behavior??



Join us to talk through
some collaborative
proactive solutions at the
next ECLC Book Club



May 5, 4-5:30 pm on Zoom

View suggested readings and
register here

Opportunities for the ECLC Community

We Want To Hear From You!

- Have you been experimenting with using AI in your classroom?
- Are you supporting your students to leverage AI?
- Are you part of a district or school effort to identify policies or boundaries around AI use in school?

**Email ltota@powerofplacecl.org
to learn about opportunities to
lead learning at the
2025 ECLC Summer Institute.**

CSDN and ECLC invite you to:

Digital Challenges in Schools *with Dr. Jill Walsh*

Friday, May 9th from 9-10 AM on Zoom
Optional Q&A with Dr. Jill Walsh until 10:30 AM

Join us to learn more about the diverse digital challenges we face in our schools and communities, current research on adolescent internet usage, and strategies to address the mental health issues facing our students through social media today.

Dr. Jill Walsh is a Boston University professor and researcher.

School, district, and district mental health leaders are welcome to attend.

[Register Here](#)





**Learn More and
Apply Here!**

The Educating All Learners Alliance is launching their 2025 New Champions Fund Opportunity. The EALA New Champions Fund is an annual unrestricted competitive sub-grant and year-long mentorship to support leaders of color, or allies of the equity in education movement, who are actively working to support students with disabilities, including students who are marginalized or come from underserved communities and those experiencing poverty.

Opportunity from an ECLC Exploratory Mini-Grant Recipient

Lindsey Polizzotti is a recipient of a 2024-2025 ECLC Exploratory Mini-Grant for her project "Creating Conversations: Educators' Book Club on Race, Belonging, and Family Engagement through 'Don't Ask Me Where I'm From'" which is culminating in this incredible event Lindsey is opening up to all of Essex County Learning Community. Congrats, Lindsey!

DIVERSITY- EQUITY - INCLUSION

THE POWER OF STORYTELLING

JENNIFER DE LEON



**Speaker, Author, and
Educator, Jennifer De Leon
will be giving a dynamic
presentation on
Tuesday May 27th 6:30pm
at Swampscott Elementary
School.**

**“By sharing stories with
one another, we break
down walls, challenge
biases and preconceived
notions, and make new
connections based on our
shared humanity. Our di
ferences are valuable, only
if they are shared.”**

Funded by ECLC and METCO Grants

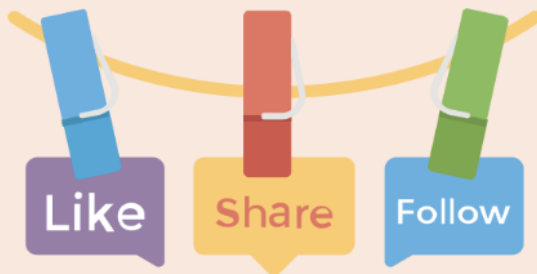


**Mental Health Blog Series
with Craig Harris: Part 7**



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' final post in the series: "[Right Time 2](#)"

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Resources



Arab American Authors: Seven Recommended YA Titles

Heritage months provide opportunities for all of us to recognize the diverse cultures and contributions that shape our communities and American society. April is Arab American Heritage Month, and this year Facing History staff have gathered fiction, non-fiction, graphic novel, and poetry books written for the Young Adult (YA) audience, all by acclaimed Arab American authors. Share the options in this listicle with your middle and high school students for their free reading time, or choose one to discuss within your structured



Disruptive Behavior: Why It's Often Misdiagnosed

Many people assume that kids who act out or throw tantrums are angry or defiant. Sometimes they are diagnosed with oppositional defiant disorder (ODD) as a result. But that diagnosis might be wrong. Instead, kids' disruptive behavior might be caused by a different disorder that's easier to miss. One possibility is that your child could have an anxiety disorder, which makes it hard for them to handle stressful situations. For example, they might refuse to do what you ask or try to run away because they're scared. Or, if they

class time. With a mixture of serious, funny, and whimsical prose and poetry to choose from, this list offers a variety of styles that will speak to many different YA readers.

Get the full reading list **here**.

have social anxiety, they might scream at another child if socializing gets too stressful.

Read the full study **here**.

THE HECHINGER REPORT

Opinion: Stop labeling kids and start revealing their strengths

“Disengaged,” “unmotivated,” “fragile,” “behind.” These are just a few of the negative labels applied to young people today. We read stories about how they’re suffering from pandemic learning loss and an adolescent mental health crisis. “Kids are addicted to their phones” is a common complaint. It all adds up to an even less helpful label: “the anxious generation.”

Some advocates argue that these labels help doctors to diagnose problems and provide appropriate care. But what most people do with labels is criticize, not diagnose for the purpose of knowing or solving anything. It’s time to change the narrative and look instead for kids’ strengths.

Read the full opinion **here**.



Reducing Absenteeism Through Real-World Learning

Chronic absenteeism is one of the most stubborn problems plaguing U.S. schools today. For too many students, school has become something to endure rather than an experience they look forward to. It’s not just a post-pandemic issue of skipped classes and missed school days. Today’s persistent high absenteeism is a symptom of a deeper disengagement that has been brewing for years. As much as educators and families have tried to address this challenge with incentives or punitive measures, there’s a growing consensus that the key to reducing absenteeism lies in giving students something much more powerful: a sense of ownership over their education.

Read the full study **here**.

Just for Fun

Teacher earns 'school dad' label from his female students, shares funny realities of dad-duty



Teachers wear many hats besides 'educator.' For high school teacher Berhanu Dallas at Forest Park High School in Clayton County, Georgia, stepping up and into the role of "school dad" for many of his female students has been his most interesting hat so far.

Read the story **here**.

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

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