



# Social-Emotional Learning

## LESSONS LEARNED & OPPORTUNITIES FOR MASSACHUSETTS

MAY 1, 2019 | DEVENS, MA



# AGENDA

## 8:30 am **BREAKFAST & REGISTRATION**

## 9:00 am **WELCOME**

- Sara Bartolino Krachman, Transforming Education
- Chad d'Entremont, Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy
- Jim Vetter, Social-Emotional Learning Alliance for Massachusetts (SEL4MA)

## 9:20 am **KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

- Stephanie Jones, Aspen Institute/Harvard Graduate School of Education

### **PANEL**

- Sheldon Berman, Andover Public Schools
- Rachele Engler Bennett, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
- Toni Wiley, Sportsmen's Tennis & Enrichment Center

## 10:15 am **BREAK**

## 10:30 am **BREAKOUT SESSIONS: BLOCK A**

### **Choosing & Using Frameworks to Organize Your SEL Efforts**

#### **EXECUTIVE**

In this session, you will explore several social-emotional frameworks used by schools and districts throughout the nation. A high-quality SEL framework helps to organize plans and actions related to SEL by identifying a set of key competencies to prioritize across a school or district. In this session, Massachusetts educators from Lowell Public School and Shawsheen Valley Technical High School will discuss their approach and rationale for choosing a SEL framework and how they are applying that framework.

- Rocio Camargo-Ruiz, Lowell Public Schools
- Greg Harrison, Shawsheen Valley Technical High School
- Josh Takis, Shawsheen Valley Technical High School
- Richard Fournier, Transforming Education

### **Emotional Triggers - What Pushes Your Buttons?**

#### **HILTON**

In this workshop, you will learn about your emotional triggers and how they affect teaching and learning. Through fun, interactive activities, you will identify your emotional triggers, learn how to communicate and respond more effectively in stressful situations and, in turn, improve relationships with students and colleagues.

- Angelina Hudson, FuelEd

## 10:30 am **BREAKOUT SESSIONS: BLOCK A (CONTINUED)**

### **Embedding SEL in Every Elementary Classroom, Every Day**

#### **SOLARIUM**

Come learn key strategies that teachers can use to create the conditions for social-emotional and academic learning to thrive in their elementary school classrooms. You'll learn and reflect on how to create a classroom environment that has a that has a positive community and is effectively managed, academically engaging, and developmentally appropriate.

- Allison Henry, Center for Responsive Schools

### **Student Voice: How Young People Can Shape the Future of Education**

#### **SALON A**

In this session you will hear from a student about the power of youth voice in shaping the future of education and learn about promising programs that are cultivating student voice across the Commonwealth. There will also be a presentation on the Rennie Center's latest research, including recommendations for elevating the voice of students in classrooms, schools, and communities.

- Fallon Manyika, Lowell High School Student
- Arielle Jennings, Generation Citizen
- Sinead Chalmers, Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy

### **Equity & SEL: Elevate, Interrogate, and Activate**

#### **SALON B**

This workshop will help educators at various levels build a better understanding about how their cultural and racial identities play a role in facilitating SEL in the classroom and its impact on equitable (and non-equitable) SEL expectations and practices. Participants will also deepen their understanding about why and how these issues are critical to SEL and equity in the classroom and walk away with tools to continue exploring after the session (and share back with their colleagues at their home districts). This session will encourage self-reflection on racial identity and focus on building meaningful relationships with students as a pathway to equity.

- Kamilah Drummond-Forrester, Wellesley Centers for Women, SEL4MA
- Karen Craddock, Wellesley Centers for Women, SEL4MA
- Akira Gutierrez, Transforming Education

## 11:20 am **BREAK**

# AGENDA

## 11:30 am **BREAKOUT SESSIONS - BLOCK B**

### **Prioritizing Social-Emotional Learning: Developing an Implementation Plan for your District**

#### **EXECUTIVE**

In this session you will hear from four Massachusetts districts working to enhance social-emotional learning in their schools. Through their work with the Excellence through Social Emotional Learning (exSEL) Network, these districts are creating detailed implementation plans. District representatives will share challenges and successes around developing system-wide approaches to embedding SEL practices in schools.

- Tracey Calo, Grafton Public Schools
- Amy Clouter, Shrewsbury Public Schools
- George Farro, Whitman-Hanson Regional School District
- Melissa Maguire, Monomoy Regional School District
- Juanita Zerda, Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy

### **Compassion in the Classroom: A Conversation about Mindfulness as a Way of Supporting Teachers**

#### **SOLARIUM**

This session will focus on building an understanding about how mindfulness practices can support educator well-being and promote an equitable environment of compassion towards self and students in the classroom. Session participants will learn about the intersections of mindfulness, social justice in the classroom, social-emotional learning, and teachers as agents of change. We will discuss lessons learned from an ongoing mindfulness program at a large, diverse school district, and resources to support others in doing this work in their own lives, classrooms, and districts.

- Jersey Cosantino, Lesley University Mindfulness Studies Program
- Akira Gutierrez, Transforming Education
- Julie Morgan, Brockton Alternative High Schools
- Elizabeth Rice, Fitchburg Public Schools

### **Integrating SEL into Everyday Classroom Practices – A Key Approach for Secondary Schools**

#### **HILTON**

Secondary students best learn SEL skills—and teachers best teach them SEL skills—when they are not add-ons. Interpersonal and self-management skills help all of us function effectively all day, every day. When teachers weave SEL into everyday classroom practices, they improve relationships, group discussions, collaborative learning, student voice, academic self-management, and more. This interactive workshop will offer research and samples that work with students and win over faculty—and foster greater academic success.

- Rachel Poliner, Leaders & Learners Consulting

## 11:30 am **BREAKOUT SESSIONS: BLOCK B (CONTINUED)**

### **Supporting New Teachers to Develop Culturally Responsive SEL Skills**

#### **SALON B**

Mentoring pre-service candidates and new in-service teachers in ways that foster their development of SEL and culturally responsive teaching (CRT) skills can help them to maintain health and resilience for long-term success; competently cultivate students' SEL and academic skills; and engage in authentic culturally responsive and equitable teaching practices to reach all students they teach. In this interactive session, practitioners will share perspectives on why and how they explicitly foster SEL and CRT skill development, followed by Q&A and a large group discussion.

- Manuel Fernandez, Cambridge Street Upper School
- Christen Sohn, Cambridge Street Upper School
- Kini Udovicki, Cambridge Street Upper School
- Jane Hardin, Ribas Associates
- Eleonora Villegas-Reimers, MA Consortium on Social-Emotional Learning in Teacher Education

### **All Day, All Year: How Community-Based Organizations Support Seamless SEL Experiences for Students**

#### **SALON A**

This session features a panel focused on the role community-based organizations play in developing children's social-emotional skill growth during out-of-school-time programming. Panelists will focus on the vital role these organizations play in how youth experience and develop SEL skills.

- Brigid Boyd, United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley
- Wil Cardwell, Boston After School & Beyond
- Ashley Harton-Powell, Freedom House
- Ivelisse Mendoza, Boston Scores
- Ivelisse Sanchez, Generation Teach
- Nikki Tabron, Thompson Island Outward Bound Education Center

## 12:30 pm **LUNCH**

## 1:15 pm **ENERGIZER**

- Jonathan Gay, Playworks

# AGENDA

## 1:45 pm **BREAKOUT SESSIONS - BLOCK C**

### **Moving Beyond Measurement: Leveraging What Matters in SEL Data**

#### **SALON A**

Recently the education field has been abuzz with the idea that if we care about SEL we should measure it. However, is simple measurement enough for our young people? The strongest educators collect SEL data, leverage it, and use it to inform their practices. In this session you will explore how to use data at the district and school levels to inform your SEL work, and you'll hear from three Massachusetts leaders and educators about their successes, lessons learned, and critical considerations for next school year.

- John Mills, Marshfield Public Schools
- Nikki Murphy, North Andover Public Schools
- Laura Tilton, Marshfield Public Schools
- DJ Cervantes, Transforming Education

### **Comprehensive School Mental Health Systems**

#### **EXECUTIVE**

In this session, you will gain an understanding of the steps taken to establish a comprehensive school mental health system (CSMHS) in Methuen, MA, that includes two elements: instructional practices and activities designed to foster social emotional learning competence, and therapeutic services and supports. The discussion will include an examination of specific practices designed to support the implementation of this system, such as universal mental health screening, use of psychosocial data, and evidence-based therapeutic practices to support identified students (including group and individual therapy).

- John Crocker, Methuen Public Schools

### **All Learning Is Social and Emotional: A Framework and Strategies for Integrating SEL and Academics**

#### **SOLARIUM**

Integrating academic and social-emotional learning is an imperative for preparing our students for the future. Students must learn to regulate their emotions, employ and communicate critical thinking, and respectfully navigate social interactions in the context of their academic learning. Their ability to do so is what will ultimately determine their potential for success and fulfillment in our complex, competitive, and globally connected world. In this session, you will consider a framework for the integration of academics and SEL, view a lesson that intentionally integrates the two, and reflect on classroom strategies for achieving impactful results.

- Kim Gilbert, Center for the Collaborative Classroom
- Stephanie Hurley, Transforming Education

## 1:45 pm **BREAKOUT SESSIONS - BLOCK C (CONTINUED)**

### **Integrating SEL with Classroom Management and Discipline in Middle and High School Classrooms**

#### **HILTON**

Participants will explore an approach to developing student SEL competencies in the context of classroom management, behavior supports, and discipline in secondary classrooms. The session will introduce a framework and examples of promotion, prevention, and intervention strategies that can be incorporated into daily practice in any subject area.

- Larry Dieringer, Engaging Schools

### **Building Support and Momentum for SEL in Your Community**

#### **SALON B**

In this lively, interactive session, explore key strategies for broadening and deepening support for SEL in your school, district, or broader community. Learn effective approaches to identify key audiences to convince, mobilize stakeholders, educate about the importance of effective SEL, and generate momentum to implement and expand SEL throughout your community. Whether your goal is to influence classroom practice, increase budget allocations, secure time in the professional development calendar, gain agreement to expand SEL beyond the classroom, etc., these strategies can help you to cultivate champions and allies who can help you turn your SEL vision into on-the-ground reality.

- Ellen Gibson, SEL4MA
- Jim Vetter, SEL4MA

## 2:35 pm **BREAK**

## 2:45 pm **WORLD CAFE**

We'll come together at the end of the conference for small group discussions on social-emotional learning and reflect on what you heard throughout the day.

- Jonathan Raymond, JPR Consulting

# BREAKOUT SESSION MAP

**EXECUTIVE  
CLUB  
(UPSTAIRS)**

**HILTON  
(NEXT DOOR)**

**SALON A**

**SALON B**

**SOLARIUM  
(MORNING SESSION LOCATION)**



# SPEAKERS

**SARA BARTOLINO KRACHMAN** brings deep expertise in social-emotional learning, K-12 education, change management, and related fields. She founded and now serves as the Executive Director of Transforming Education (TransformEd), a non-profit that partners with school systems to support educators in fostering the development of the whole child. Sara has authored more than a dozen publications and toolkits that translate findings from neuroscience, psychology, and related disciplines into actionable guidance and strategies for K-12 educators. She has led TransformEd's work to support school systems serving over 1M students across 20+ states, and she serves as a national thought leader on the topic of social-emotional development and positive learning environments. Before founding TransformEd, Sara was a Senior Associate in the Parthenon Group's Education Practice. In that role, she served as a strategic advisor to leading national foundations, large K-12 school districts, and state departments of education on the design and rollout of large-scale education reform efforts.

**DR. SHELDON BERMAN** has served as superintendent of schools for 25 years in Andover, Massachusetts (current position); Eugene, Oregon; Louisville, Kentucky; and Hudson, Massachusetts. He was President of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents and has been a leader in education reform policy, technology integration, social-emotional learning, special education, and education funding. He received the 2003 Massachusetts Superintendent of the Year Award, the 2011 Sanford McDonnell Award for Lifetime Achievement in Character Education, and recognition in 2011 by the American Association of School Administrators as one of ten courageous superintendents. Holding a doctorate in education from Harvard University, he has authored two books—*Children's Social Consciousness and Promising Practices in Teaching Social Responsibility*, as well as numerous articles on social responsibility, social-emotional learning, service learning, universal design for learning, virtual education, education reform, and ethical leadership. One of the founders and President of Educators for Social Responsibility, he chairs the board of the Center for Applied Special Technology and serves on the Harvard Graduate School of Education Making Caring Common Advisory Board.

**BRIGID BOYD** is the Vice President of Communications and Public Affairs for United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley. In this role, she is responsible for media relations, communications, government affairs, and public policy around United Way's work ensuring financial opportunity and educational success for children and families in need throughout eastern Massachusetts. Before joining United Way, Brigid worked as a legislative aide in the Massachusetts Senate and as a town reporter for several weekly and daily community newspapers. In 2017, Brigid was elected to the School Committee for the Town of Marshfield, where she lives with her three children, and serves on the Board of Directors of the Marshfield Education Foundation. She is a native of Phoenix, Arizona and holds a B.A. from College of the Holy Cross.

**TRACEY CALO** is the assistant superintendent of Grafton Public Schools. Previously, she spent her entire professional career at Nashoba Regional High School, where she was an English teacher, an instructional coach, and an assistant principal. Tracey considers herself a teacher, regardless of her role. She designs her professional development workshops with the same vision that guided her instruction: "What I can do with my teacher today, I can do by myself tomorrow." As a result, participants in her workshops not only understand the theory, but more importantly, they can put the theory into immediate practice with realistic and relevant strategies. Tracey has been offering professional development on a host of topics, including brain-based learning, homework design, school culture, and leadership for close to 15 years. She presents for the Massachusetts Secondary Administrators Association as well as school districts across the state and finds great joy in coaching educators.

# SPEAKERS

**ROCIO CAMARGO-RUIZ** is the District Support Specialist for Lowell Public Schools. Her role involves fostering family partnerships with schools by assisting parents and administrators in overcoming communication barriers and promoting effective problem solving. Her role also involves ongoing consultation with schools regarding 504s, bullying prevention, and implementation of district-wide policies, procedures, and initiatives including the District's SEL initiative. She currently oversees a Systems for Student Success SEL grant that is supporting Lowell Public's SEL work with the exSEL Network, which is co-facilitated by Transforming Education and the Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy with the goal of systemically integrating SEL into our classrooms, schools, and learning environments. Prior to this role, Ms. Camargo-Ruiz was a School Social Worker/Adjustment Counselor for 19 years. She holds a MSSW from Columbia University and is a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker.

**WIL CARDWELL** joined Boston After School & Beyond in 2018 as the Director of Summer Learning. In this role, he oversees a citywide effort, in collaboration with Boston Public Schools and local community-based agencies, to leverage summer as a time to close both achievement and opportunity gaps for students. Prior to Boston Beyond, Wil served as an AmeriCorps VISTA and Program Manager with Read to a Child, managing elementary school reading and mentoring programs throughout Greater Boston. He completed a second year of service at Miami University, managing community partnerships and teaching urban education courses. Wil previously worked at Freedom House, a social change organization that utilizes community service, leadership training, social-emotional curriculum, and transitional supports to promote college readiness and persistence amongst Boston youth in high school and college. There he served as the agency's PUSH High School Program Manager, where he built and developed in-school and summer college counseling programs. Wil received a B.A. in Psychology from Miami University, and a Master's degree and Certificate of Advanced Studies in Counseling, Prevention Science and Practice from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. He also holds a Massachusetts license in School Counseling.

**DJ CERVANTES** is Director of Partnerships at Transforming Education and brings extensive experience in K-12 education, adult coaching and facilitation, continuous improvement, and the integration of social-emotional learning with academics. As the Director of Partnerships at Transforming Education, DJ leads the large-scale NewSchools Invent partnership, including providing in-depth consulting and coaching on whole child development and continuous improvement to the leadership teams of over 60 innovative schools nationwide. Prior to joining Transforming Education, as a Leader in Residence, DJ supervised a team of teachers serving overaged and undercredited youth at Phoenix Charter Academy. As a Director of Teacher Leadership Development at Teach For America's Boston, MA and Buffalo, NY regional offices, DJ managed teams of teacher coaches that increased the efficacy and developed pedagogy of teachers new to the field. DJ began his career as high school science teacher in Oakland Unified School District. He regularly draws on this prior experience to inform his approach to coaching school leaders on the integration of social-emotional learning into the day-to-day experiences of teachers and students.

**SINEAD CHALMERS** is a Senior Associate at the Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy. She was born in the Bronx, NY into a working-class family and immigrant community. Throughout her adolescence, Sinead's parents reinforced the importance of education in providing opportunities for socioeconomic mobility, especially in achieving personal security and professional fulfillment. Sinead was the first in her family to earn a postsecondary education, receiving a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology from Stonehill College and then eventually a Master's degree in Sociology with a focus on education policy from Boston College. Her experience navigating higher education as a first-generation American and first-generation college student inspired her to pursue a career evaluating and improving the public education system. In her role at the Rennie Center, Sinead focuses on the inequities in PK - 16 education pipeline and has produced policy reports that critically analyze trends in state-level indicators that measure progress and proficiency. Based on the findings of her research, she provides evidence-based, efficacious local practices with promise for expansion across sites. Focusing on the connection between data, best practice, and policy, Sinead also serves as the lead consultant to intermediary organizations that partner with local

public-school districts to strategically implement strategies that are designed to support the diversity of student populations across the state. Additionally, Ms. Chalmers has worked as an adjunct professor at Stonehill College and Bridgewater State University, teaching courses in the fundamentals of sociological practice and a seminar on social movements.

**AMY CLOUTER** is responsible for leading teaching and learning in Shrewsbury, a dynamic school system in central Massachusetts. She brings 25 years of experience as a teacher, principal, and curriculum designer to the role of Assistant Superintendent, all of them devoted to serving students and educators working in public schools. A graduate of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst and Simmons College, Amy has worked in a several school systems, each with a diverse range of student needs. Although Amy is relatively new to her latest title, a deep commitment to continuous learning and equity has always fueled her work. Amy grew up in Virginia and moved to Newton, Massachusetts at the age of ten. Now with two daughters in college, she has seen firsthand how educational experiences shape our graduates. Her family, her cats, and her love of reading keep her humble, grateful, and grounded.

**JERSEY COSANTINO** is a trans/non-binary educator with over 6 years of teaching experience in middle school, high school, and early childhood classrooms in the states and abroad in both general education and special education settings. They are currently pursuing a Graduate Certificate in Mindfulness Studies from Lesley University, where they received their Master's degree in Education, and are working on developing online resources for individuals with intellectual disabilities alongside members of this community.

**KAREN T. CRADDOCK** is an Applied Psychologist and Trainer-Coach concentrating on the socio-cultural context and relational frameworks that center on issues of equity & wellness, leadership & partnership, and capacity building across sectors. Explorations of psycho-social functioning, culture, and creativity include race/gender intersectionality, models of optimal resistance and resilience, social-emotional learning, emotional intelligence, and the neuroscience of inclusion. She has lectured at Tufts University and Simmons College, and is faculty at the Jean Baker Miller Training Institute/Center for Growth and Connection. Karen has also held senior administrative and research roles with U.S. federally sponsored projects, Education Development Center, Inc, and Harvard University. Dr. Craddock is Director of Strategic Initiatives and Network Engagement for EmbraceRace and is a Visiting Scholar at the Wellesley Centers for Women (Wellesley College) currently collaborating on research and practice projects to advance mental health and wellbeing, especially among people of color in community, professional, and scholarly settings. Alongside her fellow leads and founders of The Wellness Collaborative, she is launching innovative multi-disciplinary initiatives to re-imagine approaches and practices to overall wellness through and practice. In addition, she is co-developing design and curriculum on focused on complimentary, culturally responsive, life-skill learning platforms that engage students, educators, and community members. Her writing and editorial works include *Black Motherhoods: Contours, Contexts and Considerations*, and *Transforming Community: Stories of Connection through the Lens of Relational-Cultural Theory*. Karen is Founder/President of KCollaborative Connections, a relational and asset-based consultation, training, and coaching practice. She is a tribal member and chair of the Wampanoag Women's Center of Aquinnah, steering member and chair of the equity and inclusion committee for the Social-Emotional Learning Alliance for Massachusetts (SEL4MA), as well as advisory committee member for Social-Emotional Learning for the United States (SEL4US). Dr. Craddock earned her Ed.M. in Human Development and Psychology from Harvard University and PhD in Applied Developmental Psychology from Tufts University.

**JOHN CROCKER** has worked in public education for a decade, primarily as the administrator for the Methuen Public Schools Guidance Department. He has overseen the planning and implementation of the "Mental Health Initiative," which has focused on the establishment of a comprehensive school mental health system (CSMHS) in partnership with the National Center for School Mental Health (NCSMH). John has worked with the NCSMH as a member of the National School Mental Health Task Force and as the Massachusetts team

# SPEAKERS

leader for the National Coalition for the State Advancement of School Mental Health (NCSA-SMH). He was recently appointed to the role of Director of School Mental Health & Behavioral Services, a position charged with overseeing the district-wide implementation and evaluation of Methuen's comprehensive school mental health system (CSMHS) and positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS). His work has focused on developing a district-wide system of universal mental health screening, advancing the use of psychosocial data to inform school mental health staff's therapeutic practice, and the development and evaluation of the CSMHS in Methuen. He has worked to scale-up evidence-based therapeutic services across Methuen through the provision of district-wide professional development and the design and implementation of group- and individual-therapy programs. Mr. Crocker founded the Massachusetts School Mental Health Consortium (MASMHC), a group of approximately ninety school districts across Massachusetts committed to advocating for and implementing quality and sustainable school mental health services and supports. He received the National Center for School Mental Health's School Mental Health Champion Award and is the 2019 Massachusetts School Counselors Association (MASCA) Administrator of the Year.

**CHAD D'ENTREMONT** is the Executive Director of the Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy. He is responsible for shepherding the organization's mission to improve public education through deep knowledge and evidence of effective policymaking and practice. He has published numerous articles, book chapters, and reports on education improvement strategies ranging from early childhood education to early college designs and launched multiple, community-based initiatives to support the implementation of evidence-based practices. In 2012, Dr. d'Entremont helped found the Massachusetts Education Partnership, a coalition of labor and management leaders committed to sustainable school improvement. Success and lessons learned were captured in his book *Improving Education Together: A Guide to Labor-Management-Community Collaboration*. Dr. d'Entremont has supported over 100 school districts in driving improvements through network-based initiatives, including the Excellence in Social Emotional Learning (exSEL) Network and the Massachusetts Institute for College and Career Readiness. He is the former 8th grade global studies teacher and holds a Ph.D. in Education Policy and Social Analysis from Teachers College, Columbia University.

**LARRY DIERINGER** has been executive director of Engaging Schools for 25 years. He is an experienced school consultant, professional development leader, and university lecturer and has worked nationally with schools on issues including secondary school redesign, systemic reform, schoolwide discipline and student support, social and emotional learning, and advisory development. Larry began his career as a secondary school social studies teacher and youth wilderness program director, and he has an Ed.M. from Harvard University. Engaging Schools partners with approximately 100 middle and high schools each year to build safe and supportive learning environments, and personalized, engaging classrooms that promote healthy social and emotional development and academic success for each and every student. Engaging Schools specializes in providing professional learning and resources with practical strategies that integrate academic, social, and emotional learning and development. Through research-based services, schools strengthen teacher effectiveness; develop a systematic, positive approach to school discipline that is integrated with student support; and create and implement advisory programs.

**KAMILAH DRUMMOND-FORRESTER** became the director of Open Circle in 2017. She initially joined Open Circle in 2013, where she led the organization's teacher development programming for four years, preparing educators to implement and integrate the Open Circle Curriculum in their classrooms. In that role she delivered training and coaching to teachers, administrators, and support staff while upholding the integrity, quality, and fidelity of all elements of Open Circle's programming. Drummond-Forrester is also a facilitator with the National SEED Project, a program of the Wellesley Centers for Women (WCW), and has led WCW community members in discussions around various topics surrounding equity and diversity. Prior to joining Open Circle, Drummond-Forrester was a co-founder and director of wellness at a Boston charter school and director of an award-winning, educationally based reentry program at Suffolk County House of

Correction. Her professional experiences have fueled her passion for social and emotional learning (SEL), equity, and youth development, affording her unique insight into the importance of SEL in the lives of children and the adults who care for them. Drummond-Forrester is attuned to the changing landscape of education and, in her new role with Open Circle, intends to work collaboratively with her colleagues to provide curricula, professional development, and implementation support that keeps the wellbeing of students at the center while meeting the needs of schools and educators.

**RACHELLE ENGLER BENNETT** is an Associate Commissioner of Student and Family Support at the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). At DESE, she works with teams on a number of programs and initiatives designed to support student success, including but not limited to social and emotional learning (SEL), rethinking discipline, additional learning time for students, educational stability, early learning, safe and healthy learning environments, and family engagement. She also serves as Co-Chair of the state's Safe and Supportive Schools Commission, and as a member of several state workgroups. Prior to DESE, she held a number of positions in the fields of education, youth leadership, and community development.

**MANUEL J. FERNANDEZ** is the current and founding Head of School of Cambridge Street Upper School in Cambridge, MA. He is the founder and President of the ManDez Group, which provides professional development on issues related to equity and inclusion in education. He has worked for over thirty years in public education as a counselor, teacher, assistant principal, and high school and middle school principal. He was the Director of the Wayland METCO Program, President of the METCO Directors' Association and founding Executive Director of Empowering Multicultural Initiatives, a professional development collaborative of suburban school districts focused on culturally proficient schools and classrooms. He has served as an adjunct professor at the University of Massachusetts / Dartmouth, Northeastern University, and Wheelock. He has received many awards and recognitions for social justice leadership and advocacy in schools. He is the recent recipient of the 2018 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drum Major for Education Award from the Cambridge NAACP and his social justice work was profiled in Teaching Tolerance magazine and Cambridge Day News.

**GEORGE M. FERRO, JR** is the Assistant Superintendent of the Whitman-Hanson Regional School District. Prior to this, he was the Principal of the Whitman Middle School for 15 years. George began his career as a teacher and coach for the New Bedford Public Schools until he moved into Administration in the role of Assistant Principal for the Westport Community Schools in the 1999 school year. His accolades include being named the MetLife, NASSP MA Middle School Principal of the Year in 2009 and also being the President of the Massachusetts School Administrators Association (MSAA) in 2016-2017.

**RICHARD FOURNIER** is the Managing Director of Partnerships at Transforming Education, where he provides technical assistance to schools, LEAs, and SEAs across the country to support the implementation, integration, and sustainability of evidence-based practices focused on the development of students' social-emotional competencies and the learning environments needed to foster them. Previously, Richard was a Research and Technical Assistance Associate at the Education Development Center, a Project Scholar for the University of Virginia's Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture, a high school history teacher, and is currently an adjunct faculty member at Lasell College. Richard is currently a doctoral candidate at Boston University, working to finish his dissertation on principal leadership, and has co-authored several articles and book chapters on school culture and character education. Richard holds an M.Ed. in Policy and Planning from Boston University and a B.A. in American History from University of Maine, and is a licensed superintendent in Massachusetts.

# SPEAKERS

**JONATHAN GAY** is the Executive Director of Playworks New England, which is part of a national organization that brings play and youth development programming into schools during recess as a means to improve the health and well-being of children and to enhance learning through the power of play. During his tenure, Gay has coached students on the playground, developed new partnerships, served as development manager, led the organization through a tri-state expansion and name change, and everything in between. He is credited with helping to grow Playworks New England from seven to 250 elementary schools, serving more than 90,000 youth across Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island. Gay's work began with Playworks in 2006 when he was hired as a program coordinator at an elementary school in East Boston. His job was to facilitate physical activity at recess while giving youth the option to participate in various social and emotional learning activities. Within two years, he was promoted to program manager where he oversaw Playworks programming in elementary schools in Dorchester and Roxbury. Within five years, Gay had switched gears to focus on the financials and relationships behind the organization as development manager and then director of partnerships and development. Now, as the Executive Director, the 34-year-old Roslindale resident is leading the recess revolution in New England to make play a valued part of the school day. Gay holds a bachelor of arts in political science and Spanish from Bates College where he played soccer and rugby and was an active service-learning community member for youth organizations, such as the Boy Scouts of America and Best Buddies. He also earned a master of science in sports leadership with a concentration in sports-based youth development from Northeastern University.

**ELLEN P. GIBSON** is Chair of the Policy and Advocacy Committee for the Social and Emotional Alliance for Massachusetts (SEL4MA) and is a member of the SEL4MA Board of Directors. Ellen is a former elementary school Special Education Aide in the Newton Public Schools and former Newton School Committee Member. She graduated from Vassar College with an A.B. in English and received her J.D. degree from Boston University School of Law. She served as an attorney at Taylor, Anderson and Travers in Boston, specializing in family law. Ellen has been an active parent advocate, serving as PTO Co-President in Newton at the elementary and middle school levels, as well as a member of the district's PTO Council. She chaired various local campaigns in Newton including two school committee campaigns and has organized two override campaigns on Newton's north side. She organized Newton's Ward 1 for Deval Patrick's campaign for governor.

**KIM GILBERT** is Manager of Educational Partnerships for Center for the Collaborative Classroom in Western Massachusetts and Connecticut. She has 15 years of teaching, coaching, and speaking experience in the areas of literacy, teaching diverse learners, social-emotional learning, and classroom management. Kim has trained and taught as a Reading Recovery teacher. She has a BA in Child Study from St. Joseph's College and a M.Ed. in Education, specializing in Literacy and Language Learning, from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

**AKIRA GUTIERREZ** is Manager of Research-Practice Integration at Transforming Education and is responsible for bridging research and practice to inform developmentally appropriate and equitable approaches to supporting whole learners in the classroom. She brings extensive developmental psychology, education, training and resource development expertise, informed by her experiences at the intersection of research and practice. Akira has developed a wide range of research-based resources and tools to help guide educators in leveraging their expertise and leadership to support student academic and social-emotional development. She has also collaborated with leading research experts to make emerging research readily accessible to various education stakeholders. Prior to joining TransformEd, Akira worked on a series of research projects at Tufts University, including research design and analyses of multi-site, longitudinal, school-based studies, as well as program development and implementation, in the areas of social, emotional, and character development. She has also conducted mental health, developmental, and school readiness assessments with adolescent mothers and their children. Akira has taught young children in inclusive classrooms and adolescent students and has published several articles and presented at professional conferences about topics related to agency, positive youth development, and teachers as research partners.

**JANE HARDIN** began her career as a public school teacher teaching both general education and special education. For the last 23 years, Jane has been a member of the Simmons College ( now Simmons University) Faculty, supervising and training student teachers and interns who are going into the field of special education, and now serves as a adjunct faculty and part-time supervisor of interns. In addition, she has served as a consultant for a variety of school systems both locally and nationally and was a board member of the Massachusetts Council for Exceptional Children for over 10 years. Jane is also a published author, most recently a co-author of Social Emotional Learning in the Classroom and Social-Emotional Learning in the Home. Jane is also the Vice Chair of the MA Architectural Access Board.

**GREG HARRISON** has been a guidance counselor at Shawsheen Valley Technical High School in Billerica for the past 10 years. He previously was a middle school science teacher as well as a K-8 health and Phys. Ed teacher. He has a M. Ed in Curriculum and Instruction and an M. Ed in School Counseling.

**ASHLEY HARTON-POWELL** was born and raised in Boston, MA and has been exposed to different educational, professional, and social opportunities in her hometown since middle school. Upon graduating high school, Ashley attended the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth. While there she involved herself with a variety of clubs and organizations that fueled her love for serving her community. In 2014 she worked for Citizen Schools at the Dever-McCormack Middle School, and transitioned to serving with the Massachusetts Promise Fellowship – an AmeriCorps organization housed by Northeastern University's Center for Community Service – which brought her to Freedom House in 2015. During her time with Freedom House, Ashley has served as the Freedom House Academy Fellow, and currently works as the PUSH High School Success Coach at the Jeremiah E. Burke High School. In these roles Ashley conducts 1:1 coaching sessions with students, facilitates a variety of workshops along with her colleagues, and connects students to academic, professional, and social opportunities that will help them develop skills to be successful in their post-secondary careers.

**ALLISON HENRY** is Director of Marketing and Client Services for the Center for Responsive Schools. Allison has more than 10 years' experience supporting school and district leaders in planning and sustaining Responsive Classroom as part of their social-emotional efforts. She is passionate about supporting educational communities as a professional and a parent. Prior to joining the staff at Center for Responsive Schools, Allison was an educator, developmental specialist, and counselor.

**ANGELINA HUDSON** brings more than 15 years of professional experience in the field of services to individuals who have a brain disorder or mental illness diagnosis. Her background in this arena includes work as Director of Education with the National Alliance on Mental Illness of Greater Houston and Trainer with the National Council for Behavioral Health and Mental Health America. For the last 7 years, she has worked as a trainer with FuelEd Schools where she helps fuel schools through the power of relationships. Angelina graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from the University of Texas at Austin and holds a Master degree in Public Administration from Texas Southern University. Her work includes advocacy, locally and nationally, where she lobbies to improve policies surrounding special education. Angelina oversees a myriad of psychoeducation programs, support groups, and awareness events year-round and enjoys cooking and travel in her free time.

**STEPHANIE HURLEY** is Director of Partnerships at Transforming Education, where she consults with districts on whole-child development by designing and leading professional learning series, advising educators on how to effectively use data, and working alongside leaders to coach them on the roll-out of SEL strategy, vision, and implementation. Prior to joining Transforming Education, Stephanie consulted with the Boston Schools Fund to assess their approach to supporting grantees and worked as a Content Specialist at Achievement Network to design literacy assessments and coach internal team members on data-driven

# SPEAKERS

instruction and standards-based planning. A former middle school literacy teacher and Humanities Data Leader at the Academy of the Pacific Rim charter public school in Boston, Stephanie regularly draws from her experience in the classroom to inform her day-to-day work.

**ARIELLE JENNINGS** is the Massachusetts Executive Director of Generation Citizen. Arielle developed a love for civic engagement early in life when her high school offered civic action opportunities inside and outside of the school day. She was personally empowered and realized the importance of youth voice but saw that many youth did not have access to these experiences and when they did were often marginalized from having real decision-making power. Arielle believes that our schools have a civic mission to fulfill to teach young people how to be lifelong civic actors. Arielle is particularly excited to be part of Generation Citizen because of its dedication to high-quality programming and its voice in the national movement to see action-based civics in every classroom. Arielle has been working in the nonprofit and civic engagement field for ten years. She earned her master's degree in Education from Harvard Graduate School of Education and her bachelor's degree in psychology from The George Washington University with a minor in human services. Early in Arielle's career, she worked with nonprofits in Boston and Washington, DC addressing issues of food insecurity, homelessness, and ex-offender workforce re-entry. It was there she realized the importance of underrepresented voices taking political action to create long-term change around issues that affect them. She has since worked in K-12 schools and universities promoting youth voice and civic action both domestically and in the U.K.

**STEPHANIE JONES** is the Gerald S. Lesser Professor of Child Development and Education at Harvard's Graduate School of Education. Dr. Jones' research, anchored in prevention science, focuses on the effects of poverty and exposure to violence on children and youth's social, emotional, and behavioral development. Over the last ten years her work has focused on both evaluation research addressing the impact of preschool and elementary focused social-emotional learning interventions on behavioral and academic outcomes and classroom practices; as well as new curriculum development, implementation, and testing. Jones is a recipient of the Grawemeyer Award in Education for her work with Zigler and Walter Gilliam on A Vision for Universal Preschool Education and a recipient of the Joseph E. Zins Early-Career Distinguished Contribution Award for Action Research in Social and Emotional Learning.

**MELISSA MAGUIRE** has been the Director of Student Services for Monomoy Regional School District for the past three years. Prior to this, she served as the Director of Pupil Personnel for Shrewsbury Public Schools for eight years. She currently serves on the Cape and Islands Suicide Prevention Coalition. Melissa attended Worcester State University and earned a Bachelor of Science in psychology and a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling at Assumption College. She has consulted to public schools and served as adjunct faculty at Fitchburg State University and Lesley University in the special education and counseling departments. Melissa has presented at numerous state-wide conferences on Social Emotional Learning, Applied Behavior Analysis, and Inclusive Practices in public schools.

**IVELISSE MENDOZA** started at Boston Scores in 2013 after several years of teaching 8th grade Social Studies. As the Academic Program Manager, and then the Director of Education, she was responsible for overseeing and approving Scores academic curricula at each age level (K2-12) as well as managing 24 elementary and middle school sites. Now the Program Director, Ivelisse oversees all year-round Boston-based programming including 140 coaches serving 1,700 Boston Public School students. She is also the point person for Boston Scores' Boston Public Schools, Boston After School & Beyond, and Partnership for Social and Emotional Learning Initiative (PSELI) partnerships. Ivelisse holds a Bachelor's degree in History and a Certificate in Nonprofit Management & Leadership from Boston University as well as a MA licensure in History grades 5-12.



**JOHN MILLS** is the Assistant Principal of Furnace Brook Middle School in Marshfield. He taught high and middle school social studies and served as a building level administrator at the secondary level. He is the co-facilitator of the district-wide SEL Steering Committee in Marshfield, which coordinates SEL visioning and integration with each of the seven building-based SEL committees, and he serves on the MPSD SEL Data Cohort, which works in collaboration with the exSEL Network and Transforming Education for the 2018-2019 school year.

**NIKKI MURPHY** is the Director of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) for the North Andover public schools. In this role, Nikki effectively communicates a consistent vision of SEL as a pivotal aspect of student educational success using proactive and responsive models, including Multi-Tiered System of Supports. She works collaboratively with district staff to create social emotional learning systems, structures, policies, programs, and curriculums to ensure student success. Nikki provides leadership in the strategic planning and implementation of SEL in North Andover with a particular focus on the development of tier three social emotional programs, tier two student assistance teams, and the tier one instruction of SEL core competencies and skills, including social awareness, self-management, self-efficacy, and growth mindset. Nikki also provides consultation to school districts and professional development seminars for educators on multiple topics including social emotional learning, strategies for helping anxious students, creating trauma-sensitive schools, and the impact of mental health disorders on learning and behavior. Nikki has served on multiple education committees and boards. Prior to becoming a Director of SEL, Nikki was a practicing psychotherapist and clinical supervisor for almost twenty years working predominantly in private practice treating children, adolescents and adults. Her clinical specialties include mood disorders, anxiety disorders, and trauma. Nikki holds Master's Degrees in Clinical Social Work and Educational Leadership and Administration and a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology with a minor in Sociology.

**JULIEANDRA MORGAN** is in her 23rd year as a School Psychologist for Brockton Public Schools, and she is currently enrolled in the Lesley University Educational Leadership PhD program. Her dissertation focuses on the social-emotional learning effects of direct-teaching a structured mindfulness curriculum in 35 Kindergarten through grade five classrooms. She has presented her research data at the National Association of School Psychologists 2017 National Conference in San Antonio, Texas and has presented about social-emotional learning and mindfulness to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Massachusetts Superintendent and School Committee Regional Conference, and many local and regional educator and parent groups. She began a mindfulness program in the Brockton Public Schools which is currently running in many Kindergarten through grade eight classrooms. She is currently working with the Deputy Superintendent on an alternative to suspension program for middle and high school students that will incorporate SEL instruction and mindfulness work. Julie has been a follower of eastern philosophy for decades, and learned mindfulness through independent study and by taking courses and workshops with Joseph Goldstein, Judson Brewer, and others at the Center for Mindfulness in Shrewsbury, MA. She worked closely with a Sri Lankan Buddhist monk to write and edit articles published on his website while he worked in Nepal following the 2015 earthquakes.

**RACHEL POLINER** consults widely on whole student approaches and constructive school communities for young people and adults. Her work focuses on school climate, instructional, structural, and policy reforms: K-12 social and emotional learning, middle and high school advisory programs, improving faculty teams and climate, and coaching leaders. She co-authored *Teaching the Whole Teen: Everyday Practices that Promote Success and Resilience in School and Life*, *The Advisory Guide*, and curricula, chapters, and articles on SEL, resiliency, dialogue, and conflict resolution. Poliner has consulted with public and independent schools across the U.S.; she has also been a teacher, an educational organization director, a faculty member for master's degree candidates in conflict resolution education and peaceable schools, and a founding Board member of the SEL Alliance for Massachusetts.

# SPEAKERS

**JONATHAN P. RAYMOND** is an author, storyteller, and education practice and policy advisor. Former president of the Stuart Foundation, he brings insights from many years of experience in education, first as the Chief Accountability Officer of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School system in North Carolina, and then as Superintendent of the Sacramento City Unified School District. In 2009, on one his first days on the job, Raymond recalls a parent imploring him to “please take risks for kids.” During his 4.5-year tenure, those were words he vowed to live by. An outsider to education by trade (formerly a labor law attorney and non-profit leader) but a passionate advocate for equity and system-wide change, Raymond implemented bold initiatives to transform the school district around a vision that focused on supporting the whole child. Highlights included transforming some of the district’s poorest performing schools in the neediest neighborhoods to some of the highest performing; raising graduation rates; expanding early education, summer learning programs, dual-language programs, and college and career pathways; and introducing salad bars and healthier meals to schools, and social and emotional learning to the curriculum. Jonathan was a Fellow at the Broad Superintendents Academy and he completed the Executive Management Program at Harvard Business School. He holds a JD from the George Mason Law School in Arlington, VA and holds an MA from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, where he also earned his BA.

**ELIZABETH RICE** is an Adjustment Counselor at Fitchburg Public Schools. She has been at the district for 26 years. Prior to that, she worked as a counselor in an Independent Living Program, getting young adults ready to exit out of Foster Care, and she managed a Young Parents Program, assisting youth in getting their GED as well as learning parenting and living skills. In 2013, Elizabeth took a year-long certification program with Antioch University and the Center for Mindful Studies in Mindfulness for Educators. It was one of the most extraordinary years of her life. Since that time, she has been trying to bring mindfulness practices into her middle school for both staff and students and continues with an active meditation and mindfulness practice.

**IVELISSE SANCHEZ** is a Boston native and has worked in K-12 public education for almost a decade. She was a middle-school English as a Second Language teacher in Boston Public Schools before transitioning into talent and recruitment. She has founded and led several diversity initiatives, including managing a diversity and inclusion task force and overseeing the implementation of a mentoring program for employees of color. She is committed to developing and evolving inclusive talent practices in education, including attracting, recruiting, hiring, and retaining talented and diverse teachers and leaders. She earned her B.A. in Journalism from Northeastern University and her Master of Education in Curriculum and Teaching from Boston University. This is her fourth summer leading programs with Generation Teach.

**NIKKI TABRON** serves as the Vice President of Education for the Thompson Island Outward Bound Education Center. She oversees all education programming, with a focus on increasing the number of public schools that partner with the Island for multi-year sequence STEM and Social Emotional Development programming. Dedicated to public service, Ms. Tabron has over 20 years of experience working with and meeting the needs of a diverse range of young people and educators. Prior to joining Thompson Island, Nikki served as the Senior Impact Director for City Year Boston. During her tenure at City Year, Nikki cultivated school, community, and corporate partnerships in many capacities including once being an AmeriCorps member herself. Ms. Tabron received her graduate degree at the McCormack School of Policy and Global Studies at UMass Boston. She is on the boards of Strong Women Strong Girls, Orchard Gardens K-8 School, and Boston Green Academy.

**CHRISTEN SOHN** is in her 7th year as Assistant Principal at the Cambridge Street Upper School, a public middle school serving grades 6-8 in Cambridge, MA. She graduated from Boston College and received her Masters Degree in School Leadership from Harvard University. Christen is committed to understanding and supporting middle school students’ socio-emotional learning and development, and she is trained in

Restorative Conference facilitation as well as the Developmental Designs teaching and learning framework. Cambridge Street Upper School is at the forefront of conversations about diversity, equity, and race in teaching and learning, and Christen is deeply immersed in the work of promoting culturally proficient instruction and supporting equity in education. In addition to her administrative role Christen serves as a Cultural Proficiency facilitator. Prior to her work at CSUS, Christen taught 7th and 8th grade Language Arts and Social Studies in Cambridge. She recently moved to Newton, MA where she lives with her husband and two young sons.

**JOSH TAKIS** has been a special education teacher at Shawsheen Valley Technical High School in Billerica the past 7 years. He previously was a middle school special education teacher in a social-emotional self-contained classroom. He has a M. Ed in Special Education and a CAGS in school administration.

**LAURA TILTON** has worked for 20+ years supporting school districts as they use technology and data to improve teaching and learning. She developed her core expertise helping districts use and understand MCAS and accountability data while serving as the regional Data Specialist for the District and School Assistance Center (DSAC) under the direction of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Laura has also worked as Associate Director at FreshPond Education (now part of Tripod Education) and Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Technology for the Carver Public Schools, and she is currently the Director of District Data and Accountability for the Marshfield Public Schools.

**KINI UDOVICKI** was born and raised in Cambridge, MA. She is a graduate of Clark University, where she received a B.A in Sociology and Race and Ethnic Relations, in 2001. She continued her education at Suffolk University, where she graduated with a MEd in Guidance Counseling, in 2004. In 2010, she completed her License in Mental Health Counseling. She worked as a Guidance Counselor in Arlington from 2004-2012. In 2012, Ms. Udovicki returned to Cambridge to work as a School Adjustment counselor at the Cambridge Street Upper School (CSUS). Ms. Udovicki has a passion for social justice. At CSUS, in addition to her counseling role she has functioned as a Cultural Proficiency facilitator. She is a trained Restorative Justice facilitator, which she uses frequently at CSUS. She currently lives in Cambridge with her 10-year-old daughter and 14-year-old niece.

**JIM VETTER** has over 25 years of experience supporting diverse communities domestically and globally in promoting social and emotional health and well being. Vetter serves as Executive Director of the Social-Emotional Learning Alliance for Massachusetts (SEL4MA), a grassroots organization founded in 2012 that helps young people throughout the Commonwealth succeed socially, emotionally, and academically by empowering local organizers to influence their communities to advance and support effective social and emotional learning policies, practices, and programs. Jim also serves as Associate Director of Health and Technology at Education Development Center, where he leads design and implementation of a range of interactive online and in-person training and coaching programs across the United States and around the world on topics related to social and emotional health and well being. Vetter also serves on the Massachusetts Community Behavioral Health Promotion and Prevention Commission. Vetter previously worked as Director of Programs and Services at Open Circle, a nationally recognized elementary school social and emotional learning program; consulted on the Second Step social and emotional learning program for preschool through middle school; directed suicide and youth violence prevention programs at the Virginia Department of Health; and consulted with numerous schools and districts on effective implementation of social and emotional learning. He received a B.A. from Yale University and an M.Ed. from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

# SPEAKERS

**ELEONORA VILLEGAS-REIMERS** is a faculty member at the Boston University Wheelock College of Education and Human Development. She has served as the Dean of the School of Education and Child Life, Acting Dean of the Child and Family Studies Division, and Chair of the Department of Elementary and Special Education. Her prior work includes experience as a high-school teacher, an assistant principal, and as acting director of the Office of International Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Since joining Wheelock College, Dr. Villegas-Reimers has served as consultant to a number of international organizations such as UNESCO, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Board on International Comparative Studies of the National Research Council, and the Academy for Educational Development on matters related to education, teacher preparation and development, education for democracy, values education, and multiculturalism. Dr. Villegas-Reimers is a member of the Design Team of the Massachusetts Consortium for Socio-Emotional Learning in Teacher Education (SEL-Ted). She is also a member of the Massachusetts State Department of Early Education and Care (DEEC) Board, and in that role served in the Inter-departmental Education Committee in Massachusetts, and the DEEC Advisory Board. She has also been a consultant to WGBH, a public television station in Boston on matters related to developing professional development materials for early childhood educators interested in teaching STEM and early literacy. Dr. Villegas-Reimers holds a Master of Education and Doctor of Education degree from Harvard University Graduate School of Education.

**TONI WILEY** has served as Executive Director of Sportsmen's Tennis & Enrichment Center since 2008. Her previous experience includes over two decades of corporate and non-profit leadership experience. Ms. Wiley currently serves on a national United State Tennis Association (USTA) committee working to build the capacity of inner city tennis and education organizations like Sportsmen's, on the USTA New England Board of Directors, as president of the New England Tennis Association, and as a board member of the American Tennis Association. She grew up in Dorchester, just minutes from Sportsmen's, and continues to reside in the area. Sportsmen's Tennis & Enrichment Center builds leaders on the court, in the classroom, and in the greater community by providing academic, wellness, and social development programs alongside recreational and competitive tennis instruction for youth and adults. Sportsmen's is committed to improving life opportunities for youth in Boston's Blue Hill Corridor while welcoming a diverse community from the Greater Boston area.

**JUANITA ZERDA** is Chief Program Officer for the Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy. She leads the planning and development of programs at the Rennie Center, focusing on outcomes management and embedding continuous improvement practices into all implementation efforts. Her multidisciplinary experience includes working in housing and community development, health and human services, and workforce training and education fields. Her expertise is data-informed decision-making and translating policy into practice to help organizations increase their impact on communities, individuals, and families. Juanita's consulting portfolio includes working with funders and providers from public agencies such as Massachusetts' Executive Office of Health and Human Services and Rhode Island's Department of Adult Education; and private organizations such as the United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley and Jobs for the Future. Prior to becoming a consultant, Juanita held management positions at the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development and Commonwealth Corporation. She holds a J.D. from Los Andes University in Bogotá, Colombia and an M.A. in Philosophy from Boston College.

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# JOIN THE EXSEL NETWORK!



**Is your district ready to make social-emotional learning a critical part of every school day? Join the Excellence through Social Emotional Learning (exSEL) Network for the 2019-2020 school year!**

The exSEL Network—and its partners the Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy and Transforming Education—work with district teams to build knowledge and understanding of how the effective implementation of SEL can positively impact students' learning and behavioral outcomes. Participants gain critical insight on how best to support the development of specific social-emotional skills and mindsets through changes in policies and practice at the district, school, and classroom levels. We anticipate that districts working with the exSEL Network will serve as a model for other districts and the state of Massachusetts on supporting whole-child and SEL development in future years.

The exSEL Network launched in 2017 with nine school districts and grew to 19 in 2018. Next year we will host multiple cohorts, including a learning group for districts new to the exSEL Network and a launching group for returning teams.

## **LEARN MORE:**

[www.renniecenter.org/exSELnet](http://www.renniecenter.org/exSELnet) or

[www.transformingeducation.org/our-work/with-schools-and-systems/the-exsel-network/](http://www.transformingeducation.org/our-work/with-schools-and-systems/the-exsel-network/)



# SEL4MA EVENTS



## Spring 2019 Regional Events

### ***Promoting Effective SEL in Your Community***

Join social-emotional learning proponents from across your region and discover approaches for developing an effective SEL plan for your school, district, or community. Whether your community has been implementing SEL for some time or is just getting started, there are concrete steps that you can take to improve your effectiveness and results.

Come join other Massachusetts SEL advocates for a stimulating day of professional learning and personal renewal.

**Tuesday, May 28, 2019**

**Bridgewater State University  
Bridgewater, MA**

Hosted by the  
Center for Pre K-12 Education Outreach

**Thursday, May 30, 2019**

**North High School  
Worcester, MA**

Hosted by the  
Worcester Public Schools

**Register now at [www.sel4ma.org/regional](http://www.sel4ma.org/regional)**

At a SEL4MA regional event, you will:

- Learn best practices and practical solutions for developing a comprehensive SEL plan;
- Assess the current state of SEL in your community;
- Connect with others in your region and share lessons learned;
- Discover strategies for successfully advocating for SEL in your school, district or community;
- Create an action plan outlining practical next steps to take back to your community;
- Leave feeling informed, inspired and renewed.

**Register now and spread the word to colleagues and community members.**



### **exSEL Coalition**

A statewide coalition of educators dedicated to expanding social-emotional learning whose members include the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents, Massachusetts Organization of Educational Collaboratives, and Massachusetts School Administrators Association.



### **The Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy**

The Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy's mission is to improve public education through well-informed decision-making based on deep knowledge and evidence of effective policymaking and practice. As Massachusetts' preeminent voice in public education reform, we create open spaces for educators and policymakers to consider evidence, discuss cutting-edge issues, and develop new approaches to advance student learning and achievement. Through our staunch commitment to independent, non-partisan research and constructive conversations, we work to promote an education system that provides every child with the opportunity to be successful in school and in life.



### **Social-Emotional Learning Alliance for Massachusetts**

The Social-Emotional Learning Alliance for Massachusetts (SEL4MA) is a grassroots organization founded in 2012 that empowers local organizers to influence their communities to implement high quality social and emotional learning (SEL). SEL4MA works to maximize the impact of our members to raise public awareness of the benefits of SEL, promote effective SEL implementation, and advance policies and funding to sustain and spread the use of high-quality SEL. To be part of SEL4MA, join our over 2,000 members from across the Commonwealth by signing up at no charge at [www.sel4ma.org](http://www.sel4ma.org).



### **Transforming Education**

Transforming Education, a Boston-based nonprofit organization, partners with school systems to support educators in fostering the development of the whole child so that all students, particularly those from underserved populations, can thrive. At Transforming Education, we envision a future in which all students become thriving adults, able and empowered to lead personally meaningful lives and to contribute to their communities. As we work, we draw from research, best practice, and the input of diverse stakeholders, applying and sharing what we're learning to identify the practices, systems, structures, and environments that most effectively foster students' social-emotional development and associated outcomes, including academic success.