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## **Rennie Center and Transforming Education Win National ‘How Learning Happens’ Grant**

*Community convening will focus on engaging youth, promoting equity, and inspiring action*

**(BOSTON, MA)** *September 20, 2019* —The [Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy](#) and its partner [Transforming Education](#) today announced they have won a \$30,000 grant from [America’s Promise Alliance](#), a national organization, to support a community convening to advance young people’s social, emotional, and cognitive development.

The Rennie Center and Transforming Education are partnering with the Boston Public Schools to align the district’s social and emotional learning (SEL) work with its Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Practices (CLSP) Framework. They will focus on convening students and families to bring their voices into the conversation and drive these efforts forward.

Goals include ensuring that social and emotional learning is equity-oriented and serves all students, building staff members’ self-awareness about unconscious beliefs that affect attitudes toward students, and developing a plan for school-level coaching to integrate equity-oriented SEL into teachers’ daily practice.

“Bringing together students, families, and community members is critical to Boston Public Schools’ ongoing work to support the needs of every student. We need guidance from the community on how schools can support students’ social, emotional, and cognitive needs in ways that embrace the diverse cultures and experiences of Boston families,” said Chad d’Entremont, the executive director of the Rennie Center. “Amplifying these voices helps bridge the divide between students’ lives at home and in school and highlights how to advance toward a more equitable, effective system.”

“We’re excited to work with Boston Public Schools, the Rennie Center, and the Boston community on this effort to integrate social-emotional learning (SEL) with culturally and linguistically sustaining practices,” said Sara Krachman, the founder and executive director of Transforming Education. “We believe that SEL and educational equity are inextricably linked: To be truly transformational, SEL must be asset-based and culturally sustaining. We look forward to hearing directly from students, teachers, families, and community members about how to realize this vision.”

Based in Washington, America’s Promise Alliance awarded the grants to five organizations as part of its [How Learning Happens](#) work, which builds on multiple national and community-level efforts, including

those of the Aspen Institute National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development. The other winners are in Nashville, Tenn.; Rochester, N.Y.; San Francisco; and Spartanburg, S.C.

“We are proud to lift up the work of these diverse organizations to advance our collective understanding about how learning happens and identify what is needed to help young people thrive in all areas of their lives,” said John Gomperts, president and CEO of America’s Promise Alliance. “The convenings are an intentional step to take these communities’ efforts to the next level and inspire connection among local partners while responding to their distinct equity needs and authentically engaging young people.”

America’s Promise will work closely with the Rennie Center and Transforming Education to provide connections to speakers, research, data, and examples and strategies that reflect a diverse body of knowledge and are matched to local interests and needs. America’s Promise also will prepare an after-action report that summarizes what was learned from the convenings. The Alliance received more than 150 applications for the grants, which will support the planning and execution of convenings through April 2020.

***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. For more information, please visit [www.renniecenter.org](http://www.renniecenter.org).*

***Transforming Education** (TransformEd) 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. TransformEd has partnered with schools and districts serving over one million students in 24 US states to directly support practitioners in their efforts to implement, integrate, and sustain evidence-based and research-informed practices focused on the development of students’ social-emotional competencies and the learning environments that foster them. To learn more, visit [www.transformingeducation.org](http://www.transformingeducation.org).*

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