

Supporting Our Students Through COVID-19 & Beyond

Friday, March 19, 2021 | Virtual Event

AGENDA

WELCOME

Senator Karen E. Spilka | Senate President, Massachusetts General Court

PRESENTATION: SUPPORTING STUDENTS THROUGH SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Sophie Zamarripa | Associate, Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy

PANEL DISCUSSION

Moderated by:

Annelise Eaton | Research Director, Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy

Featured Panelists:

Katie Brown | Transition Coordinator at the Office of Student Services, Natick High School

John Crocker | Director of School Mental Health & Behavioral Services, Methuen Public Schools

Tiffany Lillie | Director of Community Resource Development, Framingham Public Schools

AUDIENCE Q&A

CLOSING REMARKS

Senator Karen E. Spilka | Senate President, Massachusetts General Court

SPEAKER BIOS

KATIE BROWN | Transition Coordinator at the Office of Student Services, Natick High School

Katie Brown knew from her childhood she wanted to be a teacher. As a student at the University of Notre Dame she was focused on becoming a college government or philosophy professor. This was until she tutored 2 young boys with autism while spending a semester in London, and she knew that she had to become a special educator. With her new goal, and after receiving her Masters from Montclair State University, Katie spent her first few years teaching students with significant disabilities in New Jersey. Subsequently, Katie taught students with moderate to severe disabilities at the Gifford School and Medway High School. In 2014, she found her niche at Natick High School as the Transition Coordinator. Her role is vast as she helps students and their families think about what will happen after high school and what can be done while they are still in school to prepare for those post-secondary visions. She provides staff with professional development, works with students and families individually, and conducts transition evaluations. The highlight of Katie's role is collaborating with families and interagency partners to design creative solutions.

She has received her post-masters education from UMass Boston on Transition Leadership with her focus area being on self-determination. Katie has worked with this Transition Leadership program as an instructor and mentor since 2016. She has participated in research studies on the topics of transition and self-determination with the University of Northern Colorado, Boston University and Northeastern University. Katie presents on the topic of self-determination and resilience for students with disabilities and at-risk youth. Partnering with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and local and state stakeholders has allowed her to share her knowledge and perspective, and push others to look for how they too can help students envision lives with integrity and purpose.

JOHN CROCKER | Director of School Mental Health & Behavioral Services, Methuen Public Schools

John Crocker has worked in public education for over 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 leader for the National Coalition for the State Advancement of School Mental Health (NCSA-SMH).

In his role as the director of school mental health & behavioral services, he is 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 one-hundred and fifty 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 was the 2019 Massachusetts School Counselors Association (MASCA) Administrator of the Year.

ANNELISE EATON | Research Director, Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy

Annelise joined the Rennie Center with experience in public sector strategic planning, research, and program evaluation. Prior to joining the Rennie Center, Annelise worked as a consultant at Public Consulting Group, where she specialized in K-12 education and technology strategy. Annelise has partnered with school districts and state agencies across the nation to analyze and act upon their data, with the goal of improving programmatic efficiency and effectiveness. Before working in consulting, Annelise served as an AmeriCorps fellow at Tenacity, where she delivered tennis and literacy programming to students in Boston Public Schools. She received a B.A. in English and a M.A. in Applied Developmental and Educational Psychology from Boston College.

TIFFANY LILLIE | Director of Community Resource Development, Framingham Public Schools

Tiffany Lillie currently serves as the Director of Community Resource Development (CRD) for Framingham Public Schools. In her role, Tiffany manages the Out of School Time programs for over 2500 students and 200 employees. The department works with over 30 local non-profits and community partners to provide equity and access for all students and programs. Prior to joining the MetroWest community, Ms. Lillie has worked around the state with several community-based organizations and municipal government for over 10 years including You Inc., YWCA, Girls Inc, and the City of Cambridge.

Tiffany's educational background includes a bachelor's degree in Neuroscience Psychology from the University of Massachusetts Boston and a master's degree in Urban Planning from Boston University. Ms. Lillie also serves on the board of RIA House and Pelham Lifelong Learning Center Advisory Board. Beyond her love for community, Tiffany also enjoys photography, cooking, and traveling.

SENATOR KAREN E. SPILKA | Senate President, Massachusetts General Court

Senate President Karen E. Spilka (D-Ashland) represents the MetroWest communities of Ashland, Framingham, Franklin, Holliston, Hopkinton, Medway and Natick which comprise the 2nd Middlesex & Norfolk district.

Before being voted in as president by her Senate colleagues in 2018, she served as the Chair of the Massachusetts Senate Committee on Ways & Means beginning in January 2015. Prior to that, she served as the Senate Majority Whip (2013-2015), Assistant Majority Whip (2012-2013), Chair of the Joint Committee on Economic Development and Emerging

Technologies (2009-2012), and Chair of the Joint Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities (2005-2009), a committee she helped originate. She began her legislative career as a State Representative for the Seventh Middlesex district in 2001.

Prior to becoming a legislator, Senate President Spilka was in private practice as an arbitrator and mediator, specializing in labor and employment law and community and court mediation. In addition, she has been a facilitator and fact finder in disputes in the public and private sectors, as well as a trainer of adult mediation and school-based peer mediation programs, collaborative-based collective bargaining and conflict resolution strategies. She has also previously worked as a labor and employment attorney on behalf of employees, unions, the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) and the Commonwealth.

Senate President Spilka is a graduate of Northeastern Law School and holds a B.S. in Social Work from Cornell University. She has been married for over thirty five years to Joel S. Loitherstein, an environmental engineer, and has one adult step-daughter two adult sons—Heather, Scott and Jake—and two rescue dogs, Lincoln and Mikasa.

SOPHIE ZAMARRIPA | Associate, Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy

Sophie brings to the Rennie Center a combination of experience in consulting, education research and policy, data analysis, and hands-on classroom engagement. Throughout her experiences and coursework, she has developed a strong commitment to correcting and preventing educational inequities in public education.

Prior to joining the Rennie Center, Sophie worked as a consultant at District Management Group, where she partnered with districts across the country to evaluate and recommend improvements to special education, social-emotional and behavioral, and intervention practices. In addition to her consulting work, Sophie has supported Rennie on a previous project to infuse equity considerations into continuous improvement processes.

During her graduate studies in Educational Leadership and Policy at the University of Michigan, she joined the Education Trust-Midwest's Data and Policy Analysis team as a Graduate Student Fellow where she analyzed opportunity gaps in Michigan schools. She received a B.A. in Political Science and Educational Studies from Tufts University, throughout which she worked as a teacher's assistant in a Kindergarten classroom.