Dear School Redesign in Action Participants,

Welcome to our eighth annual School Redesign in Action Conference. The past eight years have demonstrated our collective capacity to positively impact the lives of many of our students. Over 87% of high school freshmen graduate within four years. The percentage of recent graduates enrolling in a two- or four-year college has increased to 60%. When we combine this rate with engagement in internship programs and service in our armed forces, many high school graduates are off to promising futures.

Despite this good news, we continue to face a persistent achievement gap. Only 76% of our economically disadvantaged students graduate in four years—a rate 17 points behind their non-economically disadvantaged peers. The college enrollment gap among the same two groups of students is over 20%, with only 46% of economically disadvantaged enrolling in two- or four-year colleges within a year of graduation. Students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and non-white students face similar challenges to success in schools across our region.

While we should be proud of our progress, we should also be fundamentally disturbed by the very significant achievement gaps that remain largely unchanged for far too many of our students. We clearly have not met our desire, intention, and moral obligation to create a fair and equitable learning system.

We can address this bleak news. Educators, students, state agency staff, policy makers, parents, and community members have joined together to create opportunities and support for deeper learning. We have progressed from requiring seat time to actual demonstrations of learning and created new and varied pathways for students. Educators routinely refine their instructional practice and modify organizational designs to put students in charge of their own learning. All of this bodes well.

Now is the time to double down on our efforts and address the needs of students we have supported the least historically. As we move to implement proficiency models of graduation, we can fundamentally reshape learning for and with our students. Instead of working to fit students into a single-sized system, we can combine the wisdom and skills of our teachers, the passion and commitment of our students, and the ongoing support of our parents and communities to design a system that serves all kids. Our ability to change inequitable outcomes is only limited by our imagination, our dedication, and our commitment.

For far too long we have had a false culture of accountability, believing that “others” were responsible for our collective shortcomings. We must move away from accountability systems that shame and blame someone else and find ways to support, trust, and believe in each other to take shared responsibility. We must find ways to make use of actionable data, to reach students, and to fund and support our schools. We must expect students to fully engage. And we must thoughtfully participate in discourse that recognizes our efforts and pushes us beyond what we previously believed was possible. Creating a just and equitable learning system that supports each student is a common endeavor, and one that now more than ever, is fundamental to our collective well-being.

Sincerely,

David J. Ruff
Executive Director, Great Schools Partnership
AGENDA

Monday, March 27

8:00 a.m. Registration (Pre-Function Area)
9:00 a.m. Pre-Conference Sessions (Pre-Registration Required)
11:30 a.m. Registration + Lunch On Your Own (Pre-Function Area)
1:00 p.m. Opening Plenary Session (Ballroom)
2:15 p.m. Concurrent Sessions: Round 1 (14 Sessions)
   Riverside Meeting Rooms: 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17
   Cityside Meeting Rooms: 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27
3:30 p.m. Break (Break Stations)
3:45 p.m. Concurrent Sessions: Round 2 (14 Sessions)
   Riverside Meeting Rooms: 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17
   Cityside Meeting Rooms: 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27
5:00 p.m. Networking, Hors d’oeuvres, + Cash Bar (Pre-Function Area)
6:30 p.m. Dinner (On Your Own)

Tuesday, March 28

7:00 a.m. Continental Breakfast (Pre-Function Area)
8:00 a.m. Friday Morning Plenary Session (Ballroom)
9:15 a.m. Concurrent Sessions: Round 3 (14 Sessions)
   Riverside Meeting Rooms: 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17
   Cityside Meeting Rooms: 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27
10:30 a.m. Break (Break Stations)
10:45 a.m. Concurrent Sessions: Round 4 (14 Sessions)
   Riverside Meeting Rooms: 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17
   Cityside Meeting Rooms: 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27
12:00 p.m. Lunch (Ballroom)
1:15 p.m. Concurrent Sessions: Round 5 (13 Sessions)
   Riverside Meeting Rooms: 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17
   Cityside Meeting Rooms: 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27
2:30 p.m. Adjournment (No Closing Ceremony)

Check out our online interactive scheduler!
newenglandssc.org/conference/scheduler/
Pre-Conference Sessions*
*Pre-registration + fee required.

Monday, March 27 9:00-11:30 a.m.

Extreme Differentiation in the Math Classroom
Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School, MA
Room 13 | Strand: Teaching + Learning

Tailoring instruction to meet each student’s specific needs is an essential aspect of personalized learning. Differentiated instruction—a practice many expert teachers have employed for years—is one way to accomplish this.

In this session, participants will learn techniques to differentiate in the math classroom, first by experiencing learning as a student and then reflecting alongside fellow participants. Participants will be led through a unit design process that will also provide an opportunity to try out the activities from a student's point of view.

A portion of this design process includes the development of more challenging, open-ended assessment tasks aligned to school graduation standards that encompass the Common Core Mathematical Practices. Participants will complete an assignment and experience the possibilities for differentiation as they work authentically with the same problem. Participants will also have the opportunity to examine student work on this same problem and discuss the variety of ways that students can show success.

Presenter: Dawn Crane (Math Teacher)

Recalibrating School-Wide Discipline and Student Support: Building a Restorative and Accountable Approach
Engaging Schools, MA
Room 14 | Strand: Student, Family, + Community Engagement

Students, teachers, administrators, and district leaders all over the country are seeking to create innovative systems for reducing discipline problems in schools. With secondary school principals playing leading roles, these stakeholders are seeking alternatives to ineffective and inequitable disciplinary policies and practices that result in the use, overuse, and disproportional use of punitive and exclusionary sanctions that adversely impact students academically, socially, developmentally, and emotionally. Most educators aspire to help students develop the habits and skills of self-management, self-discipline, and social and emotional efficacy. However, the gap between these goals and current disciplinary practices is often great, the strategies for creating change are not clear, and the core elements of a different approach are not evident.

In this workshop, participants will (1) develop an integrated vision of school-wide discipline and student support, (2) improve their understanding of the role of school climate and culture in discipline and student support, (3) explore the qualities of an accountable and restorative model, (4) learn the components of an effective system of discipline and student support, (5) think together about a school’s vision (it’s mission, beliefs, and values) and how it provides direction for a school-wide discipline and student support model, and (6) explore school-wide initiatives that can become part “of the culture” and create an improved school climate.

Presenter: Larry Dieringer (Executive Director)

Reflection and Collaboration to Enhance Instructional Practice
Great Schools Partnership, ME
Room 15 | Strand: Teaching + Learning

While the end of the school year is in sight, there is still time to reach each of your students and ensure they all finish the year well. Which students are thriving? Which ones, despite your best efforts, are still struggling? How might you use an extended block of time with colleagues from across the country to reflect on your practice in a way that allows you to hone in on specific elements that will help students reach their year-end goals? Using a self-assessment tool, participants will identify areas of focus to enhance their instructional practice. Through reflecting on elements of effective instruction, participants will consider ways that attention to these elements can help teachers reach all learners. Participants will leave with a set of strategies to enhance their own practice, strengthen work with their professional learning group, or design school-wide professional development.

Presenters: Jean Haeger (Senior Associate), Nicole Bradeen (Senior Associate)

2 Pre-Conference Sessions, Monday, 9:00-11:30 a.m.
**On Your Way!: The Proficiency-Based Learning Journey Simplified**  
*Great Schools Partnership, ME*

**Room 16 | Strand: Teaching + Learning**

Proficiency-based teaching and learning systems are designed to help students take charge of their learning by asking these three questions: Where do I want to be? Where am I now? How can I close the gap? In this interactive workshop, participants will hear about the fundamental components of an effective proficiency-based teaching and learning system and learn about an array of resources to support them along their journey. Participants will also begin to develop a plan that addresses policies, practices, and community-engagement activities that will lead to the successful implementation of proficiency-based learning.

**Presenters:** Tony Lamair Burks II (Senior Associate), Kate Gardoqui (Senior Associate)

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**Empowering Parents and Families: Building Leadership Skills and Capacity Inside and Outside the School System**  
*Annenberg Institute for School Reform, RI*

**Room 17 | Strand: Student, Family, + Community Engagement**

In this interactive, hands-on, strategy-development session led by a team from the Annenberg Institute for School Reform, participants will think critically about how to design equity-driven school-family partnerships informed by Karen Mapp's Dual-Capacity Building Framework for School-Family Partnerships and the Annenberg Institute for School Reform's Family Leadership Framework. Putting Annenberg’s “smart education systems” idea into practice, participants will also reflect on how their current school, district, and community structures and practices align with these frameworks, and develop ideas and action steps to improve current practice or implement new ones.

The session will be organized into three parts: Learning, Reflection, and Planning. By the end, participants will have completed a quick analysis of their schools’ current school-family partnership practices and developed a plan for how to deepen their work to build dual capacity and support family leadership.

**Presenters:** Sam Ashley (Graduate Research Assistant), Keith Catone (Associate Director of Community Organizing and Engagement), Joanna Geller (Senior Research Associate), Angela Romans (Co-Director of District and Systems Transformation)

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**Assessing Learning in a Proficiency-Based Learning System**  
*Great Schools Partnership, ME*

**Room 25 | Strand: Teaching + Learning**

As schools move to implement personalized learning and enable students to demonstrate their learning in more individualized ways, the role of assessment becomes increasingly paramount. How can we ensure that while we personalize learning, we continue to define consistent and equitable standards for all students? In this session, coaches from the Great Schools Partnership will share strategies and resources that educators can use to create schools and classrooms in which students and teachers use a variety of methods to get a clear understanding of students’ strengths and weaknesses. Through discussion, interactive activities, and the review of examples, participants will consider how students can produce evidence of learning, and will explore how educators can use task-neutral scoring criteria to assess what students know and can do when they are engaged in different learning experiences.

**Presenters:** Mary Hastings (Senior Associate), Christina Horner (Senior Associate), Steve Sell (Senior Associate)

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**League of Innovative Schools Networking Meeting**  
*Great Schools Partnership, ME*

**Room 26/27 | Strand: Teaching + Learning**

This meeting is for current League members. We will engage in interactive, collegial conversations and learning meant to deepen our understanding of equity, and will consider strategies for reaching the most vulnerable populations and ensuring their success.
The New England Secondary School Consortium is pleased to acknowledge the unwavering effort and support exhibited by our 2017 NESSC Champions. The following individuals have made significant contributions toward the fulfillment of the goals, objectives, and strategies of the NESSC through unique efforts to promote and implement changes in instructional practice, to support passage of key policy, and to enhance public engagement in education. They have championed the ideals of the NESSC to ensure high-quality, equitable learning for all students, and have influenced all of us in this process.

Regional

Virginia M. Barry Ph.D. was sworn in as Commissioner of Education on June 1, 2009, by Governor John Lynch and re-appointed on March 20, 2013. The New Hampshire Executive Council unanimously confirmed Governor Margaret Wood Hassan’s nomination to the position. The commissioner is responsible for the organizational goals of the department and represents the public interest in the administration of improving the effectiveness and efficiency of administrative and instructional services to all public schools in New Hampshire. The commissioner has direct responsibility for school administrative units for promoting excellence in education and the provision of resources through state and federal programs for all students. Dr. Barry has been recognized nationally for supporting a more holistic assessment of student achievement in support of students being college and work ready. Dr. Barry has over 30 years of experience in education as a teacher, leader, tenured university professor, and provost and vice president for academic affairs. Her teaching interests are embedded in the principles of human development and educational leadership. Dr. Barry is deeply committed to collaborative leadership and works closely with the school and business communities to create open communication among stakeholders and create a culture of innovation and excellence. Commissioner Barry is committed to keeping the best interests of the children of New Hampshire at the forefront. She received her B.S., from Florida State University and M.S., from Queens College City University of New York and State University of New York at Stony Brook., Ph.D. Florida State University with post-doctoral studies at New York University, Harvard and William and Mary.
Connecticut

State Representative Joe Aresimowicz was first elected to the Connecticut General Assembly in 2004 to represent the 30th House District, which includes Berlin and Southington, and is currently serving his seventh term. On January 4, 2017, his colleagues elected him Speaker of the House. He previously served as House Majority Leader for the 2013-2016 legislative sessions.

Honorably discharged from the United States Army Reserve where he served as a combat medic for almost a decade, Joe finds veterans’ issues very important. During his tenure in the legislature he has served as a long-time member of the Veterans’ Affairs Committee. He has also served on the Public Safety and Security Committee, the Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee, the Commerce Committee, and was vice chair of the Government Administration and Elections Committee.

Community and public service are very important to Joe. Prior to being elected to the legislature, Joe served three terms on the Berlin Town Council. In 2016, he was named the head coach of the Berlin High School Football Team. Previously, he was the coach of Berlin High School’s Freshman Football Team. Joe has also directed Berlin Midget Football for the past 16 years, and coached Berlin Little League and the New Britain Rising Stars AAU Basketball Team.

In addition to serving in the legislature, Joe is the Education Coordinator for the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees Council 4.

A lifelong Berlin resident, Joe attended public schools in Berlin through high school. He and his family reside in Berlin, where his two youngest children, Ryan and Katie, attend Berlin public schools and his oldest son, Michael, coaches football in Guilford while finishing his criminal justice degree.

Maine

Mary Nadeau is the principal of Nokomis Regional High School, where she has worked as a teacher and administrator for 25 years. During that time, she has worked as a business education teacher, an academic support teacher, the director of guidance, and assistant principal. Ms. Nadeau has been involved in a wide variety of extra-curricular activities throughout her over 25-year tenure in education. Currently, Ms. Nadeau serves on committees for the Maine Principals’ Association, and is a member of the Kennebec Consortium for School Administrators, Husson University’s School of Education Advisory Board, and Unity College’s Teacher Advisory Board.

In 2007, Mary was named assistant principal of the year by the Maine Principals’ Association. She has a Bachelor’s Degree in business administration from Husson University and a Master’s Degree in educational leadership from the University of Maine.

New Hampshire

Dr. Brian J. Blake is the superintendent of schools for the Sanborn Regional School District. He is in his 15th year as a superintendent. He is the past president of the New Hampshire School Administrators Association and serves on several boards. Dr. Blake has been recognized by his colleagues as the New Hampshire superintendent of the year for 2016. He is a strong advocate for professional learning communities and competency-based grading and assessment. Dr. Blake’s commitment to education has been instrumental in the creation of a learning environment that students, parents and staff find welcoming and supportive. He has co-presented workshops at both the state and national level and has been instrumental in the development of the PACE initiative in New Hampshire.
Rhode Island

Dr. Arthur Lisi is the principal of Alan Shawn Feinstein Middle School of Coventry, Rhode Island. Prior to his four-year tenure as principal, Arthur served as an elementary teacher, a middle-level school counselor, assistant principal at the high school, and district director of guidance in his 28 years with Coventry Public Schools. Arthur’s 2003 dissertation addressed personalizing schools by strengthening adult-student relationships. He helped develop the high school’s state-mandated proficiency-based graduation requirements. He has presented at numerous national and regional conferences on the impact of school counseling programs, embedded response to intervention programs, and using growth mindset to develop personalized learning and flexible pathways in the middle school. His school was one of two middle schools in New England to receive an initial NextGen Personalized Learning Grant, and Arthur recently co-wrote and received a grant to fully fund a video-production classroom as a cross-curricular pathway to help students develop and strengthen writing skills by using scripting and video production.

Dr. Lisi is on the executive board of the Rhode Island Middle-Level Educators and Rhode Island School Counselor Association, and teaches a data and measurement class in the graduate program at Providence College. Arthur lives in East Greenwich, RI, with his wife, Peggy. He has three, grown (and married!) daughters and four grandchildren (who are the love of his life!).

Vermont

Ken Cadow came to education via a circuitous route. At the age of six, he opened a candy store, over time adding berries (picked by himself, in season), freshly dug clams, and artwork. He has also been a newspaper boy, exhibiting artist, store clerk, taxi driver, waiter, naval officer, town treasurer, business owner, writer, and editor. At one point during his ten-year stint as business owner, he employed over 90%* of the year’s local high school graduates. After selling the business, it was working with kids that he missed the most, so he found his way into education.

In the traditional classroom, what Ken missed most was tangible and sustained opportunities for students to witness firsthand how and where their newfound knowledge applied to the working world. In 2012, as part of work he was doing for a regional economic development strategy committee, Ken reviewed 60 rural economic strategic plans from across the country. The findings, though in formal, were alarming. While many strategic plans listed area high schools as detractors (and most failed to mention them at all) only one (the 60th reviewed), listed its traditional area public high school as a regional asset. Now as Director of Career Pathways and Workforce Development at Randolph Union High School, Ken’s work has been to create the deployed classroom: a model that allows schools and regional businesses to partner, creating equal opportunities for teacher-accompanied classes to meet core graduation standards through rigorous programs that are tied to thorough assessments.

The success of the “Introduction to Manufacturing” deployed classroom with GW Plastics, of Bethel, Vermont, has come to the attention of exactly the right people: Vermont businesses, economic development professionals, Agency of Education officials, area school administrators, and, most importantly, Vermont students.

*Full disclosure: The business was on Block Island, which graduated only 13 students that year, 12 of whom worked in Ken’s business.
Concurrent Sessions

Strands
We have labeled the conference sessions by the following four strands—using terminology from *Global Best Practices, 2nd Edition*—to help you plan your schedule for the conference: Student, Family, + Community Engagement; Organizational Design; School + District Leadership; and Teaching + Learning.

1 Monday, March 27  2:15–3:30 p.m.

Implementing Restorative Practices: Successes and Lessons Learned
Central Falls High School, RI

Room 11 | Strand: Organizational Design

Data over the past several years show a substantial decline in the number of suspensions at Central Falls High School throughout their restorative practice implementation. Restorative practice is a dynamic, ongoing process and the approach at Central Falls High School integrates the perspective and work of multiple team members.

Throughout the presentation, the team will elaborate on the successes and lessons learned in developing protocols, incorporating student voice, establishing data collection protocols, and coordinating with community agencies such as the Central Falls Police Department and youth service organizations. In addition, specific data trends in discipline referrals, suspensions, and recidivism will be shared.

Participants will gain practical knowledge about the implementation of restorative practices at an urban high school, specifically the key aspects of the implementation process: daily protocols and systems, data collection and decision-making, student voice, and partnerships with community organizations.

**Presenters:** Joseph Bolvin (SRO), Amy Burns (Director of Transformation), Roberto Rivera (Restorative Coach), Troy Silvia (Principal)

**Contact:** Troy Silvia | silviat@cfschools.net

Preparing Students for What's Next with Project-Based Learning
Randolph Union High School, VT

Room 12 | Strand: Teaching + Learning

In this session, participants will get a glimpse into Randolph Union High School's project-based learning program and learn how it prepares students for their required senior capstone project, which encapsulates the transferable skills that will prepare students for the next stage of their lives. Presenters will share student outcomes of project-based learning to illuminate how students are benefiting from their exposure to this work.

Participants in this session will hear about the strategies and resources Randolph Union High School has used to move the program forward, including their *Project-Based Learning Handbook* and *Senior Project Manual*, and they will also have the opportunity to hear from teacher and student presenters about their experiences in the program.

**Presenters:** Elijah Hawkes (Co-Principal), Jamie Koehnlein-Connor (English Teacher), Scott Sorrell (Social Studies Teacher), Caty Sutton (Director of Project-Based Learning)

**Contact:** Caty Sutton | csutton@orangesouthwest.org

Making the Move to Mastery: Lessons Learned at Windsor Locks Middle School
Windsor Locks Middle School, CT

Room 13 | Strand: School + District Leadership

Windsor Locks Middle School has been implementing a mastery-based, student-centered learning system since 2013. Over the course of the last three years, they have achieved considerable success and faced some interesting challenges. Leaders and teachers from the Middle School will share these experiences and emphasize key practices and policies that have helped them to course-correct and refine their commitment to ensuring that all students achieve academic success within a personalized teaching and learning system.
Participants will engage in thought-provoking discussions to analyze potential pitfalls they will face in their journey, and to consider the strategies they can employ to overcome those pitfalls or avoid them altogether. They will be able to use the experiences and lessons learned from an “early innovator” school to guide their own change process and examine school practices and policies that promote mastery-based, student-centered learning.

**Presenters:** Erick Knickerbocker (Teacher), Doug Knowe (Teacher), David Prinstein (Principal)

**Contact:** David Prinstein | dprinstein@wlps.org

**How Committed is Your School to Equity?: A Whole-School Collaborative Assessment and Readiness Tool**

**Great Schools Partnership, ME**

**Room 14 | Strand:** Organizational Design

What does a school committed to equity look like? How can you help your school community develop understanding of research on effective school practices? What are practical, specific strategies to use to improve student learning? In this session, participants will actively engage with the second edition of Global Best Practices, the New England Secondary School Consortium’s self-assessment tool, to address these questions. Participants will leave with concrete strategies for leading whole-school assessment and action planning, as well as additional tools and resources to dig deeper into equity issues in schools.

**Presenters:** Craig Kesselheim (Senior Associate), Ken Templeton (Senior Associate), Andi Summers (Senior Associate)

**Contact:** Craig Kesselheim | ckesselheim@greatschoolspartnership.org

**Beyond Points and Percentages: Assessing for Proficiency in Mathematics**

**Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School, Devens, MA**

**Room 15 | Strand:** Teaching + Learning

The way educators assess can drive the way they teach. Moving toward proficiency-based assessment means changing the way students’ work is scored, how teachers give students feedback, and what students are expected to do with that feedback once it’s received. In mathematics classes, this means changing the way teachers design and score more traditional assessments, such as tests and quizzes. It also means incorporating new and different assessments to give students to demonstrate their proficiency.

In this session, participants will see sample assessments, rubrics, and student work samples from mathematics classes in a school that uses portfolio-based promotion. They will analyze two tests—one traditional assessment and one more authentic, open-ended performance task. Participants will explore a continuum of assessment options to determine which assessment type is the right tool for the job, and examine model rubrics for use with tests and open-ended performance tasks.

**Presenters:** Kalista Kintzing (Division 1 Math, Science, and Technology Teacher), Diane Kruse (Math, Science, and Technology Domain Leader)

**Contact:** Diane Kruse | dkruse@theparkerschool.org

**Reaching Across Language and Culture: Engaging Multilingual Families from Diverse Backgrounds**

**Portland Public Schools Multilingual + Multicultural Center, ME**

**Room 16 | Strand:** Student, Family, + Community Engagement

In many districts and schools, the membership of important groups, from the school board to the PTO, and the attendees of open houses, events, and other activities do not reflect the diversity of the student body. How can schools increase parent and family involvement, particularly among culturally diverse or non-English-speaking families? What are the typical barriers and how can schools overcome them? Portland Public Schools in Portland, Maine, serves more than 2,400 students, including 1,700 English-language learners, who come from homes in which approximately 60 different native languages are spoken—a situation that clearly makes family engagement particularly challenging. In this context, the district’s Multilingual and Multicultural Center works to empower learners by ensuring proficiency in English and other world languages, deepen appreciation and understanding of cultural identity, and build supportive relationships among families, educators, and the community.

In this workshop, participants will examine common teacher, staff, and parent expectations about family involvement, and how culture influences perceptions and understanding of the roles that parents, teachers, school leaders, and other staff can or should play the education of students. Participants will leave with practical strategies they can use to successfully reach out
to, communicate with, and actively engage multilingual families in the life of the school, including those who are recent arrivals to the United States.

**Presenters:** Maureen Clancy (Language Access Coordinator), Grace Valenzuela (Director)

**Contact:** Grace Valenzuela | valeng@portlandschools.org

### Separating Academic Performance and Habits of Work: Lessons Learned and Shared

**New Haven Academy, CT**

**Room 17 | Strand:** Teaching + Learning

What do schools need to consider when separating academic performance and habits of work? What challenges does this separation present? What works well? Many schools implementing mastery-based learning disaggregate academic performance and habits of work, but opportunities for schools to gather and explore these questions are not common.

In this session, staff from New Haven Academy will present their approach to establishing this separation as a way to start a conversation among peers who are in the implementation phase of mastery-based learning.

Participants will engage in critical reflection on the essential questions posed above. They will be asked to share their own strategies for separating academic performance and habits of work, and will have the chance to hear strategies and lessons learned from New Haven Academy presenters and their fellow participants.

**Presenters:** Greg Baldwin (Principal), Peter Kazienko (History Teacher), Leszek Ward (English Teacher)

**Contact:** Greg Baldwin | gregory.baldwin@nhboe.net

### Liberating Learning Through Extended Learning Opportunities

**Winnacunnet High School, NH**

**Room 21 | Strand:** Organizational Design

Winnacunnet High School is liberating learning through the implementation of extended learning opportunities (ELOs). ELOs break free from traditional school structures and allow students to participate in personalized experiences that are authentic demonstrations of learning through school and community contexts. Building off of presentations from previous years, Winnacunnet High School will discuss systemic changes that continue to be made to their school-wide program.

The session will describe Winnacunnet High School’s ELO program structure, which provides rigorous, valid, and authentic components of individualized and group ELO experiences. Participants will receive tools to support the structure and implementation of an ELO program, including project planning templates, formative and summative assessment criteria, worksheets, and rubrics.

**Presenters:** Aaron Abood (Assistant Principal), Donna Couture (ELO Coordinator), Mike Handwork (Science Teacher), David Hobbs (Curriculum Coordinator), William McGowan (Principal)

**Contact:** Donna Couture | dcouture@warriors.winnacunnet.org

### Supporting Teacher Growth through Personalized Professional Learning Pathways

**Thompson School District, CO**

**Room 22 | Strand:** School + District Leadership

In Colorado’s Thompson School District, the learning services department gathered feedback from staff around the professional learning experiences that were being offered. After reviewing the feedback, the department developed a Personalized Professional Learning Pathway model, which provided 29 pathways teachers could access for their professional learning.

The pathways shifted professional learning from one-size-fits-all to experiences that were based on the personal passions of teachers, allowing for continued growth and the opportunity to implement the new learning in daily classroom practice.

Presenters will explain how the personalized pathway model for teachers and school administrators was created, implemented, and revised over the course of two years. They will share their modified Ed Camp model, which includes social, emotional, and academic pathway offerings. They will highlight important components of the pathways program, including the expectations for facilitators and teachers.

Participants will learn how to create a plan to engage and empower teachers to design their own professional learning experiences that provide personalized growth opportunities and support teacher leadership.

**Presenters:** Jeri Crispe (Director of Secondary Education), Carmen Williams (Director of Assessment + Professional Development)

**Contact:** Carmen Williams | carmen.williams@thompsonschools.org
Taking Back Tutorials: Creating a Student-Centered, Collegiate Learning Commons at Your High School
Baxter Academy for Technology + Science, ME
Room 23 | Strand: Teaching + Learning
Hear from the student director of the Baxter Learning Commons (BLC) about how to start a student-centered, student-directed learning lab modeled after a college writing center. Using the BLC’s three-tiered approach to academic support, students are able to book appointments with a peer tutor, with a teacher, or at an independent work-station for support in courses across the curriculum. They are empowered to seek help of their own accord.
Participants in this session will examine data from the BLC entrance and exit surveys and hear about the programmatic and philosophical essentials required to start a learning commons of their own. This session will also address the role of advisors, response to intervention coordinators, guidance counselors, parents/guardians, and special educators in launching and supporting this unique, positively framed learning center.

Presenters: Caroline “Ross” Ross (Student Director of the Baxter Learning Commons), Aleah Starr (Faculty Director of the Baxter Learning Commons)
Contact: Aleah Starr | aleah.starr@baxter-academy.org

Avoiding the Equity Traps: Personalized and Proficiency-Based Learning to Improve Outcomes for All Students
Montpelier High School, VT
Room 24 | Strand: Teaching + Learning
To improve outcomes for all students, schools around Vermont are working hard to shift to personalized, proficiency-based learning. There is a growing concern, however, that without thoughtful implementation, flexible pathways and proficiency-based graduation requirements could actually exacerbate the achievement gap. This session will explore the potential “equity traps” posed by these challenges and examine the new systems and structures needed to provide all students with the resources they need, both in the classroom and beyond.
Through professional dialogue and examples from the field, participants will gain a deeper understanding of the importance of clarity, supports, and learner agency in the context of high school redesign initiatives. Participants will have the opportunity to examine their own schools’ systems and structures through the lens of improving equity for all students. Presenters will provide useful community-based learning, curriculum, and communications resources for schools to borrow or build from.

Presenters: Michael Martin (Director of Curriculum + Technology, Montpelier Public Schools), Matt McLane (Community-Based Learning Coordinator, Montpelier High School), Mike McRaith (Principal, Montpelier High School)
Contact: Michael Martin | mikem@mpsvt.org

Opening Doors: How Home Visits Can Strengthen School-Family Relationships in the Upper Grades
1647, MA + Lawrence High School Learning Center, MA
Room 25 | Strand: Student, Family, + Community Engagement
How can school leaders and teachers design and conduct home visits, particularly when teachers might have more than 100 students on their rosters? How can schools connect home visits with college, career, and life planning? How can home visits spark stronger and more supportive partnerships between parents and teachers? And do teenagers even want their teachers to come to their homes? Based in Boston, 1647 is a nonprofit organization that helps school systems and educators design and implement effective home-visit programs using the core principles of the Relationship-Building Home Visit Model developed by the Parent-Teacher Home Visit Project. An abundance of research studies have shown that a family’s involvement in their child’s education can accelerate educational progress and achievement, and home visits provide unique opportunities for teachers and families to build meaningful relationships and shared goals for supporting a child’s school success. In this workshop, participants will learn evidence-based home-visit strategies from coaches, teachers, and parents who will share their experiences with successful home visits and family engagement in Lawrence, Massachusetts. Participants will hear stories, receive data, and learn nuts-and-bolts techniques for implementing high-impact home visits at middle school and high school levels.

Presenters: Elizabeth Canada (Director of Coaching, 1647), Heather Fabiano (High School Teacher, Lawrence High School Learning Center)
Contact: Elizabeth Canada | elizabeth.canada@1647families.org
**Personalizing Learning with Student Voice and Choice**  
*Alan Shawn Feinstein Middle School, RI*

**Room 26 | Strand: Teaching + Learning**

Alan Shawn Feinstein Middle School, which serves over 1,100 students, has been moving towards developing a more personalized learning environment. After teachers worked to develop a growth mindset and examined what personalized learning could look like in their classrooms, student choice and voice emerged as a key personalization structure they wanted to examine and to attempt.

In this session, participants will hear from a team of seventh-grade students and teachers about their journeys through academic units that were primarily taught via student choice and voice. Teachers will provide adaptable materials and concrete solutions for creating a personalized unit. Students will share their thoughts on what personalized learning looks like—from the curriculum, to learning targets, menus of choices, assessments, and parent responses. They will also offer their unique perspective on the challenges and joys this approach to learning brings to the classroom.

**Presenters:** Wendy Bettez (Teacher), Carolyn Cleary (Teacher), Linda Grandchamp (Teacher), Jennifer Kilduff (Resource Teacher), Arthur Lisi (Principal), Susan Squillante (Teacher)

**Contact:** Arthur Lisi | lisiarthur@coventryschools.net

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**Building a Positive School Culture and Community Using Restorative Practices**  
*Prospect Hill Academy Charter School, MA*

**Room 27 | Strand: Student, Family, + Community Engagement**

Every school that is committed to educational equity needs to put in place systems and practices that ensure positive outcomes for all students, including those who are historically underserved. At Prospect Hill Academy Charter School in Cambridge, Massachusetts, the entire school community—administrators, teachers, and staff—believes that equity, high expectations, and a positive culture of support and encouragement built on systems-wide restorative practice drive educational success and aspirations. It’s one of the reasons that 95% of school’s students, including a significant of first-generation youth, choose to attend college after graduation.

In this workshop, participants will learn how to use restorative practices and three-tiered interventions to build a positive school culture and educational community through active learning, including a role-playing activity based on restorative circles. In addition, participants will explore the four frames of the restorative window using behavioral vignettes to develop a shared understanding of the context, rationale for, and impact of restorative practices in schools. Presenters will also share practical insights about the essential structures and systems that school leaders and educators can use to initiate restorative practices at their own school.

**Presenters:** Angela Allen (Head of School), Chad Burnett (Upper School Principal), Christine Douglas (Collegiate Institute Principal), JD Fergus (Restorative Justice Coordinator), Emma Stellman (Chief Academic Officer)

**Contact:** Angela Allen | aallen@phacs.org

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Plan your schedule online!  
[newenglandssc.org/conference/scheduler](http://newenglandssc.org/conference/scheduler)
Policy for Practitioners: Bridging the Divide

Great Schools Partnership, ME

Room 11 | Strand: Organizational Design

The shift to personalized and proficiency-based practices at the classroom, school, district, and system level necessitates changes to local and state policy. Too often practitioners (i.e., teachers and building-leaders) are left out of policy conversations and end up feeling as though policy-changes are being made to them, not with them. As a practitioner, having an understanding of the policy landscape where you live and work empowers creative, proactive, innovative student-centered practices, elevates your voice in the building, and enables you to facilitate meaningful changes for students. This understanding can help educators distinguish between which practices are truly required, and which are simply perceived to be required among their peers. Participants will learn how policy can be a driver for change at the building and classroom level, and how it can protect practices in the face of district turnover. Participants will have an opportunity to learn about the local policies that may be impacted by a switch to proficiency-based learning, review sample local policies, and discuss state and federal policy contexts.

Presenters: Erin Dukeshire (Senior Associate), Sarah Linet (Policy Specialist), Duke Albanese (Senior Policy Advisor)

Contact: Sarah Linet | slinet@greatschoolspartnership.org

From Passive to Active: Self-Directed Learning in Science

Proctor Jr./Sr. High School, VT

Room 12 | Strand: Teaching + Learning

Teachers and students from Proctor Junior/Senior High School will highlight their efforts to change their school model from one that was teacher-centered to a student-centered, proficiency-based learning environment. They will focus particularly on strategies for transitioning to an asynchronous classroom in science courses, where students work at their own pace through a collaborative, inquiry-based approach to labs.

Presenters will share several key efforts that have been part of this transition to a learner-centered paradigm, including the separation of habits of work from academic expectations, capacity-building for students to track their own progress against content proficiencies and drive their own learning through formative and summative assessments, and the role that Proctor’s ‘earned honors credit’ policy plays in a larger proficiency-based approach to teaching and learning.

Participants will leave with some concrete strategies for cultivating self-direction in their students, including managing self-paced environments, creating self-directed resources for students, and enabling students to track their own progress against clear proficiencies and identify their own areas of need.

Presenters: Alena Digan (Teacher), Sarah Marcus (Teacher), Deborah Rodolfy (Principal), Adam Rosenberg (Director of Curriculum + Instruction), Emma Shaw (Student), Grace Tate (Student)

Contact: Adam Rosenberg | adam.rosenberg@rcsu.org

Story Exchange: A Tool for Culturally Responsive Teaching

High School in the Community Academy for Law + Social Justice, CT

Room 13 | Strand: Teaching + Learning

High School in the Community set out to build professional development around teaching, learning, and leading across differences knowing they needed to provide the space for teachers and students to connect and truly understand the value and purpose of culturally responsive education.

With support from Narrative 4, an organization that strives “to build a community of empathic global citizens who improve the world through the exchange of personal narratives,” teachers and students joined together for a story exchange. The story exchange model challenges participants to walk in another person’s shoes by trading personal stories and then retelling their partners’ stories as if they were their own.

Participants in this workshop will learn about High School in the Community’s experience with the story exchange model and receive strategies for using the model in their schools to promote equity and voice for students and teachers. They will also gain an understanding of the importance of building relationships and strengthening communication when working to establish culturally responsive instructional practices.
Going Deeper: The Power of Integrating Proficiency-Based and Project-Based Learning

New Tech Network, CA + Great Schools Partnership, ME

Room 14 | Strand: Teaching + Learning

To ensure that students meet cross-curricular standards, we must provide them with opportunities to develop the necessary 21st century skills. If we don’t provide meaningful ways for students to demonstrate proficiency in those skills or design truly meaningful ways to assess them, we run the risk of paying lip service to those standards.

In this session, participants will learn how project-based learning can help students experience deeper learning (i.e., master core academic content, think critically, work collaboratively, communicate effectively, and develop self-direction). Presenters will share the project-based learning approach developed and implemented by the New Tech Network in their 200+ schools across the country, and will discuss how the integration of project-based learning and proficiency-based learning can accelerate a school’s implementation of Global Best Practices. Finally, presenters will discuss how the New Tech Network’s technology can be used to assess and verify cross-curricular Standards.

Presenters: Dan Liebert (Senior Associate, Great Schools Partnership), Stacia Snow (District + School Development Director, New Tech Network)

Contact: Stacia Snow | ssnow@newtechnetwork.org + Dan Liebert | dliebert@greatschoolspartnership.org

Hitting the Mark: Learning Targets for a Competency-Based Learning Environment

Henry County Schools, GA

Room 15 | Strand: Teaching + Learning

This interactive session will focus on the creation and use of high-quality learning targets to facilitate student agency and rigorous instruction in a competency-based learning environment. Participants will deconstruct social studies and science performance indicators to identify key vocabulary and concepts, consider the depth of knowledge needed for instruction and assessment, and pinpoint what a student must know and be able to do to demonstrate mastery. They will then have the opportunity to create their own student-friendly learning targets.

Participants will leave with K-12 sample learning targets for social studies and science, as well as the skills and resources needed to duplicate the process in their own school or system.

Presenters: Kaneice Bembry (Science Coordinator), Regina Holland (Secondary Social Studies Teacher on Special Assignment), Heather MacKenzie (Instructional Coordinator for Social Studies and World Languages)

Contact: Heather MacKenzie | hmackenzie@henry.k12.ga.us

Being an Adult Ally: Practical Strategies for Empowering Youth Voice, Agency, and Leadership

Providence Student Union + Young Voices, RI

Room 16 | Strand: Student, Family, + Community Engagement

How can educators and other adults create authentic opportunities for youth to assume leadership roles, advocate for issues that truly matter to them, and have their voices not only be heard but acted upon by district, school, and community leaders? What is the difference between being an adult advisor and being a true adult ally? How can adults working with youth move beyond support to achieve genuine empowerment? Throughout New England and the country, educators, parents, and community members have realized that the voices, needs, and priorities of students need to be at the forefront of school improvement. Drawing on their experiences working with hundreds of youth leaders and organizers in Providence, Rhode Island, the facilitators will share lessons and best practices for empowering youth voice and action in schools and communities. In this interactive workshop, participants will learn about the common challenges adults face when working with youth, alternative student-driven approaches educational decision-making, and practical techniques that adult allies can use to elevate youth agency in everything from municipal policy and school governance to classroom instruction and curriculum design.

Presenters: Karen Feldman (Executive Director, Young Voices), Zack Mezera (Executive Director, Providence Student Union)

Contact: Zack Mezera | zack@providencestudentunion.org + Karen Feldman | karenfeldman1@gmail.com
We've Come Miles and Have Miles to Go

**Gorham Middle School, ME**

**Room 17 | Strand: Teaching + Learning**

Participants will hear teacher and student perspectives on Gorham Middle School’s journey toward developing a proficiency-based teaching and learning system. Presenters will discuss creating performance indicators for skills for life (work habits) and the proficiency-based learning process in a student-centered classroom, from criteria to creation to self-evaluation.

Participants will be engaged in self-reflective formative assessment and use guiding questions to provoke critical thinking about proficiency based learning. Participants will be provided a structured environment where they can begin to explore how to make PBL a reality in their classrooms and schools; for this reason, you are warmly invited to contribute working drafts of their schools’ graduation standards and performance indicators, any and all rubrics and scoring criteria, and student work samples.

**Presenters:** Amy Cousins (Teacher), Meghan Rounds (Teacher)

**Contact:** Meghan Rounds | meghan.rounds@gorhamschools.org

Liberating Learning Through Extended Learning Opportunities

**Winnacunnet High School, NH**

**Room 21 | Strand: Organizational Design**

Winnacunnet High School is liberating learning through the implementation of extended learning opportunities (ELOs). ELOs break free from traditional school structures and allow students to participate in personalized experiences that are authentic demonstrations of learning through school and community contexts. Building off of presentations from previous years, Winnacunnet High School will discuss systemic changes that continue to be made to their school-wide program.

The session will describe Winnacunnet High School's ELO program structure, which provides rigorous, valid, and authentic components of individualized and group ELO experiences. Participants will receive tools to support the structure and implementation of an ELO program, including project planning templates, formative and summative assessment criteria, worksheets, and rubrics.

**Presenters:** Aaron Abood (Assistant Principal), Donna Couture (ELO Coordinator), Mike Handwork (Science Teacher), David Hobbs (Curriculum Coordinator), William McGowan (Principal)

**Contact:** Donna Couture | dcouture@warriors.winnacunnet.org

Teachers as Designers: A Human-Centered Approach to Solving Problems and Creating New Opportunities in Schools

**Business Innovation Factory, RI**

**Room 22 | Strand: Student, Family, + Community Engagement**

Over the past few years, “design thinking” has emerged as one of the most effective collaborative strategies that leaders, educators, and students can use to tap into the intrinsic capacities that all individuals and groups possess, but that tend to be overlooked by more conventional approaches to leadership, problem-solving, and collective action. By bringing a human-centered approach to investigating and solving problems, design thinking helps organizations and groups create experiences and products that will provide the best outcomes for everyone involved. Over the past several years, the Business Innovation Factory in Providence, Rhode Island, has been working with teachers to harness the creativity and critical-thinking skills they use everyday to solve tough problems in education—from creating student-centered schools to elevating the priorities of teachers in school governance to creating, testing, and implementing classroom activities and pedagogical approaches that meet the needs of every student.

In this workshop, participants will (1) develop a working understanding of the value and methodology of design thinking and how it can be applied to their practice, (2) learn specific exercises for using design thinking to tackle challenges in classrooms, schools, districts, and communities, and (3) be introduced to Teachers Design for Education (TD4Ed), a free, online platform that the Business Innovation Factory’s Student Experience Lab co-created with teachers.

**Presenters:** Jessica Brown (Student Experience Lab Associate), Kirtley Fisher (Experience Designer), Stephanie Lanoue (Talent Associate)

**Contact:** Jessica Brown | jbrown@businessinnovationfactory.com
Students as Change Agents for Personalization: Infusing Purpose, Meaning, and Hope in School Redesign

UP for Learning, VT

Room 23 | Strand: Teaching + Learning

Vermont has an unprecedented opportunity to help students believe in themselves as learners and reach their full potential through personalized learning and proficiency-based assessment, yet research conducted with 2,490 Vermont high school students and 378 faculty members suggests that existing mental models of key stakeholder groups stand in the way of this happening. Data collected by UP for Learning's Communicating School Redesign schools surfaces some of the basic challenges that arise in shifting mental models as a new student-teacher paradigm is introduced.

Participants will learn about how the data have informed the efforts of 12 Vermont high schools committed to positioning students at the center of implementing personalized learning through team-generated communications campaigns. Presenters will share compelling tools and effective dialogue strategies that highlight the capacity and power of students as change agents in the school redesign process.

Participants will learn how students, working in youth-adult teams, are taking a lead role in encouraging personalized learning throughout Vermont in a variety of creative mediums. Participants will also take away a new student peer-to-peer advisory teaching model, “M3: Mindset, Metacognition and Motivation,” to help build students’ independent learning skills in readiness for personalized learning opportunities.

Presenters: Helen Beattie (Executive Director), Asia Bernatchy (Student Facilitator), Clara Lew-Smith (Student Facilitator), Bruce G. Perlow (Associate Director), Mary Schell Whalen (Director), Anneka Williams (Student Facilitator)

Contact: Helen Beattie | helen@upforlearning.com

When Developing a Vibrant Community of Learners, Which Comes First: Students or Teachers?

Ellington Middle School, CT

Room 24 | Strand: Organizational Design

Can there be a vibrant culture of learning and risk taking for students in schools without first establishing one for the adults who teach them? In this session, Ellington Middle School will share its approach to developing such a vibrant professional learning culture using structures like teacher-led book clubs, schoolwide learning walks, and professional inquiry groups focused on personalized learning.

Presenters will share the practical strategies they used to foster a school culture and climate where adult learners regularly participate in, and lead, high-level personalized learning and group-based professional conversations. Participants will have the opportunity to use Backchanneling, an interactive digital platform, in real time.

Participants will discover how Ellington Middle School used the Great Schools Partnership's Proficiency-Based Learning Self-Assessment as a framework for individual and schoolwide reflection and goal-setting. This session will also zero in on the NESSC’s Global Best Practices Indicator 1.8: Learning Communities.

Presenters: Nicole Bolduc (Teacher), Danielle Leone (Teacher), Mike Nash (Technology Specialist), David Pearson (Administrator), Jenn Reynolds (Literacy Coach), Mary Walsh (Teacher)

Contact: David Pearson | dpearson@ellingtonschools.net

Opening Doors: How Home Visits Can Strengthen School-Family Relationships in the Upper Grades

1647, MA + Lawrence High School Learning Center, MA

Room 25 | Strand: Student, Family, + Community Engagement

How can school leaders and teachers design and conduct home visits, particularly when teachers might have more than 100 students on their rosters? How can schools connect home visits with college, career, and life planning? How can home visits spark stronger and more supportive partnerships between parents and teachers? And do teenagers even want their teachers to come to their homes? Based in Boston, 1647 is a nonprofit organization that helps school systems and educators design and implement effective home-visit programs using the core principles of the Relationship-Building Home Visit Model developed by the Parent-Teacher Home Visit Project. An abundance of research studies have shown that a family's involvement in their child's education can accelerate educational progress and achievement, and home visits provide unique opportunities for teachers and families to build meaningful relationships and shared goals for supporting a child's school success.

In this workshop, participants will learn evidence-based home-visit strategies from coaches, teachers, and parents who will share their experiences with successful home visits and family engagement in Lawrence, Massachusetts. Participants will hear...
stories, receive data, and learn nuts-and-bolts techniques for implementing high-impact home visits at middle school and high school levels.

**Presenters:** Elizabeth Canada (Director of Coaching, 1647), Heather Fabiano (High School Teacher, Lawrence High School Learning Center)

**Contact:** Elizabeth Canada | elizabeth.canada@1647families.org

### Personalizing Learning with Student Voice and Choice

**Alan Shawn Feinstein Middle School, RI**

**Room 26 | Strand: Teaching + Learning**

Alan Shawn Feinstein Middle School, which serves over 1,100 students, has been moving towards developing a more personalized learning environment. After teachers worked to develop a growth mindset and examined what personalized learning could look like in their classrooms, student choice and voice emerged as a key personalization structure they wanted to examine and to attempt.

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**Contact:** Arthur Lisi | lisiarthur@coventryschools.net

### Performance Based Assessment: Learning for Life

**Revere High School, MA**

**Room 27 | Strand: Teaching + Learning**

In this session, presenters will outline a framework for planning and assessing units of study that engages students in the dynamic integration of content with real-world literacies, such as reading, writing, and numeracy.

Participants will learn how to plan an authentic performance task that will provide acceptable evidence of student learning, and will consider how performance-based assessments contribute to a student-centered learning environment, enabling students to explore future roles in a safe rehearsal space while demonstrating proficiency on learning standards.

**Presenters:** Antonio Cinelli (ELA Teacher), Meaghan Murphy (Math Teacher), Charles Willis (History Teacher)

**Contact:** Charles Willis | cwillis@revere.mec.edu

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**Give us your feedback!**

Please leave your completed session evaluations in the blue bin near the door.
Wingman: A Student-Centered Approach to Social and Emotional Learning
New Fairfield Middle School, CT

Room 11 | Strand: Teaching + Learning

The Wingman program at New Fairfield Middle School strives to make every student feel accepted. This student-led program is run primarily by the 7th and 8th grade Pack Leadership Team, which teaches lessons throughout the year to classmates dealing with a wide variety of topics such as empathy, teamwork, and the power of words. The Wingman program teaches students through activities encouraging reinforcement, and also recognizes students throughout the school year who step up for their fellow classmates.

Co-advisors Joel Pardalis and Rachel Wilson and their Pack Student Leadership students will present the framework of the program and share tips for getting a Wingman program up and running in their school. Participants will leave with model lessons and strategies that have made this program successful and sustainable in New Fairfield.

Presenters: Joel Pardalis (Humanities Curriculum Coordinator), Brandon Perillo (Student), Samantha Ruggiero (Student), Ryan Tavolilla (Student), Reagan Tenaglia (Student), Rachel Wilson (8th Grade Science Teacher), The Pack Leadership Team

Contact: Joel Pardalis | pardalis.joel@newfairfieldschools.org

From Passive to Active: Self-Directed Learning in Science
Proctor Jr./Sr. High School, VT

Room 12 | Strand: Teaching + Learning

Teachers and students from Proctor Junior/Senior High School will highlight their efforts to change their school model from one that was teacher-centered to a student-centered, proficiency-based learning environment. They will focus particularly on strategies for transitioning to an asynchronous classroom in science courses, where students work at their own pace through a collaborative, inquiry-based approach to labs.

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Contact: Adam Rosenberg | adam.rosenberg@rcsu.org

Celebrating Authentic Student Work and Reflection with the Senior Portfolio
Metropolitan Business Academy, CT

Room 13 | Strand: Teaching + Learning

At Metropolitan Business Academy, seniors are required to present on work that demonstrates mastery of the school’s six interdisciplinary graduation standards to fulfill their senior graduation portfolio requirement.

In this interactive session, participants will learn through direct analysis of relevant student work and artifacts, and review and discuss New Haven’s 21st century competencies, exemplar portfolios, portfolio templates, and student reflections. They will hear directly from current seniors and recent graduates about their experiences building, improving, and presenting their senior portfolios. Students will share excerpts from their portfolios that highlight their areas of strength and growth, and show how personalized this form of performance-based assessment can be.

Presenters will also discuss how graduation portfolios tell the full story of adolescent learning more than narrow forms of assessment like standardized testing, and a senior advisor will share best practices and lessons learned after two successful years of 100% student participation.

Presenters: Leslie Blatteau (Teacher), Jann Kyla Gonzales (Student), Briana Patterson (Student), Caitlin Willis (Student)

Contact: Leslie Blatteau | leslie.blatteau@new-haven.k12.ct.us
Promoting High Achievement through Teacher Collaboration using Critical Race Theory and Harro’s Cycle of Liberation

Metropolitan Learning Center for Global + International Studies, CT

Room 14 | Strand: Teaching + Learning

In this critical conversation, participants will explore collaborative processes to support academic achievement for diverse learners. Using Critical Race Theory and the Cycle of Liberation as conceptual frameworks, the presenters will use private reflection, group discussion, and teamwork to consider the effects teacher collaboration can have on academic outcomes for diverse learners.

Guided by the work of Lopez and Lopez (2010) on counter-storytelling, participants will consider the following three questions: How do racism, sexism, classism and other forms of subordination shape the experiences of students in the U.S? How do institutions of education maintain race, gender, class and immigration status (alienage) discrimination? How does education work as a tool to remedy these problems?

By engaging in this session, participants will explore how teacher-collaboration can be used to enhance learning opportunities for diverse learners and promote academic achievement.

Presenter: Sasha Douglas (Principal), Lisa Sepe (Instruction and Climate Support Specialist)

Contact: Sasha Douglas | sdouglas@crec.org

From Closed to Open: Rethinking the Math Problems We Pose to Students

Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School, Devens, MA

Room 15 | Strand: Teaching + Learning

For many students, math has been understood and taught as a subject of “correct answers”, but math is really a subject of patterns and creativity. In this workshop, participants explore the power of open-ended problems in mathematics: those with multiple entry and exit points and more than one solution. Presenters will encourage an understanding of how problems empower student exploration, creativity, and involvement in the work.

Participants will look at the traditional closed-ended problems posed in math class and rewrite them to allow for more freedom, flexibility, and creativity in the work that students create, allowing for multiple entry and exit points.

Presenter: Dawn Crane (Math Teacher)

Contact: Dawn Crane | dawn@theparkerschool.org

Being an Adult Ally: Practical Strategies for Empowering Youth Voice, Agency, and Leadership

Providence Student Union + Young Voices, RI

Room 16 | Strand: Student, Family, + Community Engagement

How can educators and other adults create authentic opportunities for youth to assume leadership roles, advocate for issues that truly matter to them, and have their voices not only be heard but acted upon by district, school, and community leaders? What is the difference between being an adult advisor and being a true adult ally? How can adults working with youth move beyond support to achieve genuine empowerment? Throughout New England and the country, educators, parents, and community members have realized that the voices, needs, and priorities of students need to be at the forefront of school improvement. Drawing on their experiences working with hundreds of youth leaders and organizers in Providence, Rhode Island, the facilitators will share lessons and best practices for empowering youth voice and action in schools and communities.

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Presenters: Karen Feldman (Executive Director, Young Voices), Zack Mezera (Executive Director, Providence Student Union)

Contact: Zack Mezera | zack@providencestudentunion.org + Karen Feldman | karenfeldman1@gmail.com

Assessing Learning Targets Through Project-Based Learning

Great Bay Charter School, NH

Room 17 | Strand: Teaching + Learning

At Great Bay Charter School, students engage in project-based learning that assesses the knowledge and skills they have gained throughout the course of a quarter, semester, and year in a competency-based system. In this presentation, participants will be introduced to the school’s approach to project-based learning that encompasses the entire school community, grades 7–12, including interdisciplinary study classes.

Great Bay Charter School’s administrators and English and math teachers will share their experiences writing and
implementing projects that allow students to meet competencies through real-life situations and creative means. Presenters will share examples of projects, including school-wide multidisciplinary exhibition projects, short-term Quickfire projects, advisory projects, and interdisciplinary projects between two or more classes. Participants will discover how to approach both classroom-based and school-wide projects, and will hear how teachers can use these projects to assess learning targets. Participants will leave with several sample projects that have been successful at Great Bay Charter School.

**Presenters:** Stacey Clark (Asst. Director/Teacher), Lisa Hammond (Teacher), Kristianne Lemieux (Assistant Director/Teacher), Peter Stackhouse (Executive Director)

**Contact:** Peter Stackhouse | pstackhouse@gbecs.org

**Authentic School-Family Partnerships: What Works and Why It Matters**

*Lawrence CommunityWorks, MA*

**Room 21 | Strand: Student, Family, + Community Engagement**

How do school-family partnerships work and why do they matter? What are the most effective ways that schools, families, and local organizations can work together to support the success of all children and youth in a community? And how can schools get historically disengaged and marginalized groups to the table and ensure that their voices are both heard and honored? At Lawrence CommunityWorks, a nonprofit community-development corporation based in Lawrence, Massachusetts, a team of community organizers has been working closely with the administrators, educators, students, and families of Lawrence Public Schools for the past three years on a variety of engagement activities, including two primary strategies: Community Education Circles, a series of relationship-building events and conversations between teachers and families, and The Marketplace, a regularly held school-wide networking night designed to build trust and mutual support between families and school staff. In this workshop, participants will learn about effective community-organizing strategies, school structures that tend to facilitate or impede authentic school-family partnerships, and several practical dialogue and networking techniques that will work in any school system or community. The presenters will also model a capacity-building training activity and provide participants with a practical, step-by-step toolkit of best practices developed for educators, students, and families.

**Presenters:** Sebastian Brown (Community Organizer), Carmen Hernandez (Community Organizer), Spencer Buchholz (Director of Network Organizing)

**Contact:** Spencer Buchholz | sbuchholz@lawrencecommunityworks.org

**What's Equity Got to Do With It?: Creating a Pathway for All Students to Succeed**

*Everyday Democracy, CT*

**Room 22 | Strand: Student, Family, + Community Engagement**

In an effort to remove barriers to student success, many schools employ evidence-based best practices in classroom design, utilize the latest technology to engage students, and implement strategies to reach out to parents as partners. And yet, many of those schools still observe some of their students, particularly those who have been historically marginalized, still falling behind. All too often, barriers to student achievement are difficult to see and therefore difficult to address. In this interactive workshop, presenters will share how one Connecticut school opened its doors to explore how race, ethnicity, and class can impact student achievement. Presenters will explain how the strategy revealed and addressed some of the hidden barriers to student success. Participants will leave with tools to unpack how certain practices and policies serve as racialized structural barriers to all students succeeding. Participants will be offered the opportunity to practice activities and explore how white privilege, implicit bias, school culture, and unconscious expectations work to perpetuate student disadvantages.

**Presenters:** Carolyne Abdullah (Director of Strengthening Democratic Capacity Team), Gwen Whiting (Director of Training and Leadership Development)

**Contact:** Gwen Whiting | gwhiting@everyday-democracy.org
Where Equity and Engagement Meet: From Funding to Implementation of Community-School Partnerships that Close Opportunity Gaps

Puget Sound Educational Service District, WA

Room 23 | Strand: Student, Family, + Community Engagement

While our national dialogue on public education in the United States has long been focused on achievement gaps, educational leaders are beginning to pay more attention to opportunity gaps—or the lack of access to resources and opportunities that create further disparities across race, socioeconomic status, English proficiency, and other factors. This more systemic view puts the responsibility on our institutions rather than on our students and families. Partnerships that bridge in-school and out-of-school time become a key strategy to create more access and opportunity for students in the gap. Funding, creating, and implementing community-school partnerships while using practices that promote equity, authentic engagement, and relationship-building takes time, patience, a commitment to continuous improvement, and the ability to persist through essential (but often difficult) conversations. The Puget Sound Educational Service District, one of nine regional educational agencies serving school districts in Washington State, has made a commitment to becoming an anti-racist multicultural organization—a critical lens when doing authentic engagement and partnership work.

In this workshop, participants will explore promising practices and lessons learned through authentic community-school partnerships in Washington State, including strategies for overcoming common institutional practices that can perpetuate inequities in family and community engagement. The presenters will focus on projects, funded through a regional Race to the Top Grant, designed to improve outcomes for students by integrating student and family engagement strategies and by extending learning time beyond the school day.

Presenters: Matthew Gulbranson (Community Partnerships and Systems Director, Puget Sound Educational Service District), Hamdi Abdulle (Executive Director, Somali Youth and Family Club, King County Washington)

Contact: Matthew Gulbranson | mgulbranson@psesd.org

Individualized Education Plans: Personalized Learning Come to Life

Kids RSU #2, ME

Room 24 | Strand: Teaching + Learning

In this session, participants will see how a student’s individualized education plan (IEP) is personalized learning coming to life. Presenters will share the journey of a student with an IEP, as the student receives specially designed instruction and participates with peers in the general curriculum.

Participants will gain insight and practical applications about using strategies to meet higher-level standards while incorporating the skill-acquisition needed to meet proficiency. They will leave with a meaningful understanding of the connections students with disabilities and their teachers create in the journey through student-centered, proficiency-based learning.

Presenters: Deb Murphy (Special Education Director, KIDS RSU 2), Eric Palleschi (Special Education Teacher, Monmouth Middle School)

Contact: Deb Murphy | dmurphy@kidsrsu.org

When Developing a Vibrant Community of Learners, Which Comes First: Students or Teachers?

Ellington Middle School, CT

Room 25 | Strand: Organizational Design

Can there be a vibrant culture of learning and risk taking for students in schools without first establishing one for the adults who teach them? In this session, Ellington Middle School will share its approach to developing such a vibrant professional learning culture using structures like teacher-led book clubs, schoolwide learning walks, and professional inquiry groups focused on personalized learning.

Presenters will share the practical strategies they used to foster a school culture and climate where adult learners regularly participate in, and lead, high-level personalized learning and group-based professional conversations. Participants will have the opportunity to use Backchanneling, an interactive digital platform, in real time.

Participants will discover how Ellington Middle School used the Great Schools Partnership’s Proficiency-Based Learning Self-Assessment as a framework for individual and schoolwide reflection and goal-setting. This session will also zero in on the NESSC’s Global Best Practices Indicator 1.8: Learning Communities.

Presenters: Nicole Bolduc (Teacher), Danielle Leone (Teacher), Mike Nash (Technology Specialist), David Pearson (Administrator), Jenn Reynolds (Literacy Coach), Mary Walsh (Teacher)

Contact: David Pearson | dpearson@ellingtonschools.net
Elements of an Engaging Learning Experience: What Students Have to Say

Harwood Union Middle/High School, VT

Room 26 | Strand: Teaching + Learning

Coordinated student engagement can help students explore their interests, learn self-advocacy, and better understand why what they are learning is important. In this session, a student will discuss the action research project she employed to solicit student feedback and will review the qualitative and quantitative data she collected. She will also share the conditions that exist at Harwood Union Middle/High School that influence student engagement.

Participants will hear from students how student engagement is prioritized and encouraged at Harwood Union Middle/High School. They will engage in a student-facilitated Socratic dialogue around a central question derived from the action research, bringing forth a depth of diverse thinking from within the room. The Socratic dialogue will allow participants to think, in small and large groups, about conditions in their own schools and new ways to support student engagement.

Presenters: Ellen Berrings (Teacher), Kathy Cadwell (Teacher), Noah Carr (Student), Kaia Cormier (Student), Seth Davidson (Student), Wynne Plagge (Student), Amy Rex (Administrator), Tyler Skroski (Student), Anneka Williams (Student), Grace Woodruff (Student)

Contact: Anneka Williams | awilliams2017@wwsu.org

Teaching and Assessing Transferable Skills Across the Curriculum

Essex High School, VT + Great Schools Partnership, ME

Room 27 | Strand: Teaching + Learning

Communication, self-direction, problem-solving, collaboration, and informed thinking. Whether you call these transferable skills, cross-curricular standards, 21st century skills, or by any other title, they are critical for success in postsecondary education and careers. Many educators wonder how to break down transferable skills into their components; how to teach, assess, and give feedback on components; and how to integrate components with content knowledge and skills in authentic ways. This interactive workshop will give educators a chance to work with a variety of tools and resources designed to help meet these challenges, and participants will explore effective practices for teaching and assessing these skills across content areas.

Presenters: Linda Cloutier-Namdar (Teacher, Essex High School), Kate Gardoqui (Senior Associate, Great Schools Partnership), Erica LeClair (Teacher, Essex High School), Becky Wilusz (Senior Associate, Great Schools Partnership)

Contact: Kate Gardoqui | kgardoqui@greatschoolspartnership.org

Visit our interactive schedule!

newenglandssc.org/conference/scheduler
Wingman: A Student-Centered Approach to Social and Emotional Learning

New Fairfield Middle School, CT

Room 11 | Strand: Teaching + Learning

The Wingman program at New Fairfield Middle School strives to make every student feel accepted. This student-led program is run primarily by the 7th and 8th grade Pack Leadership Team, which teaches lessons throughout the year to classmates dealing with a wide variety of topics such as empathy, teamwork, and the power of words. The Wingman program teaches students through activities encouraging reinforcement, and also recognizes students throughout the school year who step up for their fellow classmates.

Co-advisors Joel Pardalis and Rachel Wilson and their Pack Student Leadership students will present the framework of the program and share tips for getting a Wingman program up and running in their school. Participants will leave with model lessons and strategies that have made this program successful and sustainable in New Fairfield.

Presenters: Joel Pardalis (Humanities Curriculum Coordinator), Brandon Perillo (Student), Samantha Ruggiero (Student), Ryan Tavolilla (Student), Reagan Tenaglia (Student), Rachel Wilson (8th Grade Science Teacher), The Pack Leadership Team

Contact: Joel Pardalis | pardalis.joel@newfairfieldschools.org

Hitting the Mark: Learning Targets for a Competency-Based Learning Environment

Henry County Schools, GA

Room 12 | Strand: Teaching + Learning

This interactive session will focus on the creation and use of high-quality learning targets to facilitate student agency and rigorous instruction in a competency-based learning environment. Participants will deconstruct social studies and science performance indicators to identify key vocabulary and concepts, consider the depth of knowledge needed for instruction and assessment, and pinpoint what a student must know and be able to do to demonstrate mastery. They will then have the opportunity to create their own student-friendly learning targets.

Participants will leave with K–12 sample learning targets for social studies and science, as well as the skills and resources needed to duplicate the process in their own school or system.

Presenters: Kaneice Bembry (Science Coordinator), Regina Holland (Secondary Social Studies Teacher on Special Assignment), Heather MacKenzie (Instructional Coordinator for Social Studies and World Languages)

Contact: Heather MacKenzie | hmackenzie@henry.k12.ga.us

The Gradebook Whisperer: Using Traditional Tools to Support Mastery Based Learning and Assessment

Academy of Information Technology + Engineering, CT

Room 13 | Strand: Teaching + Learning

Can’t wait to get started with mastery-based learning and assessments? In this session, teachers from the Academy of Information Technology and Engineering, a public magnet school in the urban district of Stamford, Connecticut, share their successful strategies for implementing mastery-based learning in their classrooms without waiting for district-wide changes in technology infrastructure.

The thoughtful early adoption of mastery-based learning and assessment discussed in this session will inform participants about piloting this model within their own school cultures, and help identify pitfalls, opportunities, and best practices before widespread implementation.

Participants will learn how to develop a culture supporting mastery-based learning while using current gradebook software and existing assessments as tools for communication and empowerment rather than summative judgment, putting students at the center of their own learning. They will also learn how to use parent outreach to create a community of personalized learning in their own classrooms.

Presenters: Jeanne Lauer (Business + Technology Teacher), Vin Urbanowski (Mathematics + Engineering Teacher)

Contact: Vin Urbanowski | vurbanowski@aitestamford.org
Taking Back Tutorials: Creating a Student-Centered, Collegiate Learning Commons at Your High School

_Hospitality Academy for Technology + Science, ME_ 1

**Room 14 | Strand: Teaching + Learning**

Hear from the student director of the Baxter Learning Commons (BLC) about how to start a student-centered, student-directed learning lab modeled after a college writing center. Using the BLC's three-tiered approach to academic support, students are able to book appointments with a peer tutor, with a teacher, or at an independent work-station for support in courses across the curriculum. They are empowered to seek help of their own accord.

Participants in this session will examine data from the BLC entrance and exit surveys and hear about the programmatic and philosophical essentials required to start a learning commons of their own. This session will also address the role of advisors, response to intervention coordinators, guidance counselors, parents/guardians, and special educators in launching and supporting this unique, positively framed learning center.

**Presenters:** Caroline “Ross” Ross (Student Director of the Baxter Learning Commons), Aleah Starr (Faculty Director of the Baxter Learning Commons)

**Contact:** Aleah Starr | aleah.starr@baxter-academy.org

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Implementing Restorative Practices: Successes and Lessons Learned

_Central Falls High School, RI_ 1

**Room 15 | Strand: Organizational Design**

Data over the past several years show a substantial decline in the number of suspensions at Central Falls High School throughout their restorative practice implementation. Restorative practice is a dynamic, ongoing process and the approach at Central Falls High School integrates the perspective and work of multiple team members.

Throughout the presentation, the team will elaborate on the successes and lessons learned in developing protocols, incorporating student voice, establishing data collection protocols, and coordinating with community agencies such as the Central Falls Police Department and youth service organizations. In addition, specific data trends in discipline referrals, suspensions, and recidivism will be shared.

Participants will gain practical knowledge about the implementation of restorative practices at an urban high school, specifically the key aspects of the implementation process: daily protocols and systems, data collection and decision-making, student voice, and partnerships with community organizations.

**Presenters:** Joseph Bolvin (SRO), Amy Burns (Director of Transformation), Roberto Rivera (Restorative Coach), Troy Silvia (Principal)

**Contact:** Troy Silvia | silviat@cfschools.net

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Reaching Across Language and Culture: Engaging Multilingual Families from Diverse Backgrounds

_Portland Public Schools Multilingual + Multicultural Center, ME_ 1

**Room 16 | Strand: Student, Family, + Community Engagement**

In many districts and schools, the membership of important groups, from the school board to the PTO, and the attendees of open houses, events, and other activities do not reflect the diversity of the student body. How can schools increase parent and family involvement, particularly among culturally diverse or non-English-speaking families? What are the typical barriers and how can schools overcome them? Portland Public Schools in Portland, Maine, serves more than 2,400 students, including 1,700 English-language learners, who come from homes in which approximately 60 different native languages are spoken—a situation that clearly makes family engagement particularly challenging. In this context, the district’s Multilingual and Multicultural Center works to empower learners by ensuring proficiency in English and other world languages, deepen appreciation and understanding of cultural identity, and build supportive relationships among families, educators, and the community.

In this workshop, participants will examine common teacher, staff, and parent expectations about family involvement, and how culture influences perceptions and understanding of the roles that parents, teachers, school leaders, and other staff can or should play the education of students. Participants will leave with practical strategies they can use to successfully reach out to, communicate with, and actively engage multilingual families in the life of the school, including those who are recent arrivals to the United States.

**Presenters:** Maureen Clancy (Language Access Coordinator), Grace Valenzuela (Director)

**Contact:** Grace Valenzuela | valeng@portlandschools.org
Assessing Learning Targets Through Project-Based Learning

**Great Bay Charter School, NH**

**Room 17 | Strand: Teaching + Learning**

At Great Bay Charter School, students engage in project-based learning that assesses the knowledge and skills they have gained throughout the course of a quarter, semester, and year in a competency-based system. In this presentation, participants will be introduced to the school's approach to project-based learning that encompasses the entire school community, grades 7–12, including interdisciplinary study classes.

Great Bay Charter School's administrators and English and math teachers will share their experiences writing and implementing projects that allow students to meet competencies through real-life situations and creative means. Presenters will share examples of projects, including school-wide multidisciplinary exhibition projects, short-term Quickfire projects, advisory projects, and interdisciplinary projects between two or more classes.

Participants will discover how to approach both classroom-based and school-wide projects, and will hear how teachers can use these projects to assess learning targets. Participants will leave with several sample projects that have been successful at Great Bay Charter School.

**Presenters:** Stacey Clark (Asst. Director/Teacher), Lisa Hammond (Teacher), Kristianne Lemieux (Asst. Director/Teacher), Peter Stackhouse (Executive Director)

**Contact:** Peter Stackhouse | pstackhouse@gbecs.org

Authentic School-Family Partnerships: What Works and Why It Matters

**Lawrence CommunityWorks, MA**

**Room 21 | Strand: Student, Family, + Community Engagement**

How do school-family partnerships work and why do they matter? What are the most effective ways that schools, families, and local organizations can work together to support the success of all children and youth in a community? And how can schools get historically disengaged and marginalized groups to the table and ensure that their voices are both heard and honored? At Lawrence CommunityWorks, a nonprofit community-development corporation based in Lawrence, Massachusetts, a team of community organizers has been working closely with the administrators, educators, students, and families of Lawrence Public Schools for the past three years on a variety of engagement activities, including two primary strategies: Community Education Circles, a series of relationship-building events and conversations between teachers and families, and The Marketplace, a regularly held school-wide networking night designed to build trust and mutual support between families and school staff.

In this workshop, participants will learn about effective community-organizing strategies, school structures that tend to facilitate or impede authentic school-family partnerships, and several practical dialogue and networking techniques that will work in any school system or community. The presenters will also model a capacity-building training activity and provide participants with a practical, step-by-step toolkit of best practices developed for educators, students, and families.

**Presenters:** Sebastian Brown (Community Organizer), Carmen Hernandez (Community Organizer), Spencer Buchholz (Director of Network Organizing)

**Contact:** Spencer Buchholz | sbuchholz@lawrencecommunityworks.org

How Committed is Your School to Equity?: A Whole-School Collaborative Assessment and Readiness Tool

**Great Schools Partnership, ME**

**Room 22 | Strand: Organizational Design**

What does a school committed to equity look like? How can you help your school community develop understanding of research on effective school practices? What are practical, specific strategies to use to improve student learning? In this session, participants will actively engage with the second edition of Global Best Practices, the New England Secondary School Consortium’s self-assessment tool, to address these questions. Participants will leave with concrete strategies for leading whole-school assessment and action planning, as well as additional tools and resources to dig deeper into equity issues in schools.

**Presenters:** Craig Kesselheim (Senior Associate), Ken Templeton (Senior Associate), Andi Summers (Senior Associate)

**Contact:** Craig Kesselheim | ckesselheim@greatschoolspartnership.org
Moving Toward Collaboration: Lessons from Research in Rural Areas

*Plymouth State University, NH*

**Room 23 | Strand: Community Engagement**

Research has shown that, on average, high school students with disabilities are 3.4 years behind grade level in reading and 3.2 years behind in math. Statewide and national reform efforts seek to close that gap. But how do we do that? One way is to provide multi-tiered levels of support within the inclusionary classroom, but such delivery models require specific knowledge and skills. This session will inform participants about what teachers need to collaboratively deliver instruction. Presenters will share findings from research in rural areas that indicate that a meaningful sense of shared responsibility is not consistently present in schools, and the necessary structures to promote this variable are not currently in place. Participants will gain an understanding of the context that supports shared responsibility and the action steps necessary to increase meaningful collaboration in their school. Finally, participants will be able to examine their own school context and develop steps to promote collaborative teaching systems.

**Presenters:** Ann Berry (Associate Professor Special Education, Plymouth State University), Janet Eccelston (Special Education Coordinator, Campton Elementary School), Heather Worthen (Special Education Elementary Coordinator, Mascoma Valley Regional School District), Brooke Ross (Special Education Teacher, Canaan Elementary School)

**Contact:** Ann Berry | abberry@plymouth.edu

Performance Based Assessment: Learning for Life

*Revere High School, MA*

**Room 24 | Strand: Teaching + Learning**

In this session, presenters will outline a framework for planning and assessing units of study that engages students in the dynamic integration of content with real-world literacies, such as reading, writing, and numeracy. Participants will learn how to plan an authentic performance task that will provide acceptable evidence of student learning, and will consider how performance-based assessments contribute to a student-centered learning environment, enabling students to explore future roles in a safe rehearsal space while demonstrating proficiency on learning standards.

**Presenters:** Antonio Cinelli (ELA Teacher), Meaghan Murphy (Math Teacher), Charles Willis (History Teacher)

**Contact:** Charles Willis | cwillis@revere.mec.edu

Building a Positive School Culture and Community Using Restorative Practices

*Prospect Hill Academy Charter School, MA*

**Room 25 | Strand: Student, Family, + Community Engagement**

Every school that is committed to educational equity needs to put in place systems and practices that ensure positive outcomes for ALL students, including those who are historically underserved. At Prospect Hill Academy Charter School in Cambridge, Massachusetts, the entire school community—administrators, teachers, and staff—believes that equity, high expectations, and a positive culture of support and encouragement built on systems-wide restorative practice drive educational success and aspirations. It’s one of the reasons that 95% of school’s students, including a significant of first-generation youth, choose to attend college after graduation.

In this workshop, participants will learn how to use restorative practices and three-tiered interventions to build a positive school culture and educational community through active learning, including a role-playing activity based on restorative circles. In addition, participants will explore the four frames of the restorative window using behavioral vignettes to develop a shared understanding of the context, rationale for, and impact of restorative practices in schools. Presenters will also share practical insights about the essential structures and systems that school leaders and educators can use to initiate restorative practices at their own school.

**Presenters:** Angela Allen (Head of School), Chad Burnett (Upper School Principal), Christine Douglas (Collegiate Institute Principal), JD Fergus (Restorative Justice Coordinator), Emma Stellman (Chief Academic Officer)

**Contact:** Angela Allen | aallen@phacs.org

Concurrent Session 4, Tuesday, 10:45–12:00 p.m. 25
Elements of an Engaging Learning Experience: What Students Have to Say

Harwood Union Middle/High School, VT

Room 26 | Strand: Teaching + Learning

Coordinated student engagement can help students explore their interests, learn self-advocacy, and better understand why what they are learning is important. In this session, a student will discuss the action research project she employed to solicit student feedback and will review the qualitative and quantitative data she collected. She will also share the conditions that exist at Harwood Union Middle/High School that influence student engagement.

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**Presenters:** Ellen Berrings (Teacher), Kathy Cadwell (Teacher), Noah Carr (Student), Kaia Cormier (Student), Seth Davidson (Student), Wynne Plagge (Student), Amy Rex (Administrator), Tyler Skroski (Student), Anneka Williams (Student), Grace Woodruff (Student)

**Contact:** Anneka Williams | awilliams2017@wwsu.org

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Student Voice in Learning

Great Schools Partnership, ME + Kids RSU #2, ME

Room 27 | Strand: Teaching + Learning

When schools think of student voice, they often think of student representation on student councils, leadership teams, and even school boards. In those models, students learn to interact effectively with adults, represent their peers, and take responsibility for school-wide decisions. But what happens when student leaders take that experience back to classrooms? This session will explore the ways in which a focus on student leadership can shift to a focus on student voice in learning. Participants will identify the links between their own student leadership systems and greater student agency in the classroom.

**Presenters:** Evan Burnell (Student, Monmouth Academy), Grace Moulton (Student, Hall-Dale High School), Thomas Neal (Student, Monmouth Academy), Moises Nuñez (Senior Associate, Great Schools Partnership), Rose Warren (Student, Hall-Dale High School), Don Weafer (Senior Associate, Great Schools Partnership)

**Contact:** Moises Nuñez | mnunez@greatschoolspartnership.org

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Give us your feedback!

Please leave your completed session evaluations in the blue bin near the door.
Teachers as Designers: A Human-Centered Approach to Solving Problems and Creating New Opportunities in Schools

Business Innovation Factory, RI

Room 11 | Strand: Student, Family, + Community Engagement

Over the past few years, “design thinking” has emerged as one of the most effective collaborative strategies that leaders, educators, and students can use to tap into the intrinsic capacities that all individuals and groups possess, but that tend to be overlooked by more conventional approaches to leadership, problem-solving, and collective action. By bringing a human-centered approach to investigating and solving problems, design thinking helps organizations and groups create experiences and products that will provide the best outcomes for everyone involved. Over the past several years, the Business Innovation Factory in Providence, Rhode Island, has been working with teachers to harness the creativity and critical-thinking skills they use everyday to solve tough problems in education—from creating student-centered schools to elevating the priorities of teachers in school governance to creating, testing, and implementing classroom activities and pedagogical approaches that meet the needs of every student.

In this workshop, participants will (1) develop a working understanding of the value and methodology of design thinking and how it can be applied to their practice, (2) learn specific exercises for using design thinking to tackle challenges in classrooms, schools, districts, and communities, and (3) be introduced to Teachers Design for Education (TD4Ed), a free, online platform that the Business Innovation Factory’s Student Experience Lab co-created with teachers.

Presenters: Jessica Brown (Student Experience Lab Associate), Kirtley Fisher (Experience Designer), Stephanie Lanoue (Talent Associate)

Contact: Jessica Brown | jbrown@businessinnovationfactory.com

What's Equity Got to Do With It?: Creating a Pathway for All Students to Succeed

Everyday Democracy, CT

Room 12 | Strand: Student, Family, + Community Engagement

In an effort to remove barriers to student success, many schools employ evidence-based best practices in classroom design, utilize the latest technology to engage students, and implement strategies to reach out to parents as partners. And yet, many of those schools still observe some of their students, particularly those who have been historically marginalized, still falling behind. All too often, barriers to student achievement are difficult to see and therefore difficult to address.

In this interactive workshop, presenters will share how one Connecticut school opened its doors to explore how race, ethnicity, and class can impact student achievement. Presenters will explain how the strategy revealed and addressed some of the hidden barriers to student success.

Participants will leave with tools to unpack how certain practices and policies serve as racialized structural barriers to all students succeeding. Participants will be offered the opportunity to practice activities and explore how white privilege, implicit bias, school culture, and unconscious expectations work to perpetuate student disadvantages.

Presenters: Carolyne Abdullah (Director of Strengthening Democratic Capacity Team), Gwen Whiting (Director of Training and Leadership Development)

Contact: Gwen Whiting | gwhiting@everyday-democracy.org

Preparing Students for What's Next with Project-Based Learning

Randolph Union High School, VT

Room 13 | Strand: Teaching + Learning

In this session, participants will get a glimpse into Randolph Union High School’s project-based learning program and learn how it prepares students for their required senior capstone project, which encapsulates the transferable skills that will prepare students for the next stage of their lives. Presenters will share student outcomes of project-based learning to illuminate how students are benefiting from their exposure to this work.

Participants in this session will hear about the strategies and resources Randolph Union High School has used to move the program forward, including their Project-Based Learning Handbook and Senior Project Manual, and they will also have the opportunity to hear from teacher and student presenters about their experiences in the program.

Presenters: Elijah Hawkes (Co-Principal), Jamie Koehnlein-Connor (English Teacher), Scott Sorrell (Social Studies Teacher), Caty Sutton (Director of Project-Based Learning)

Contact: Caty Sutton | csutton@orangesouthwest.org
Making the Move to Mastery: Lessons Learned at Windsor Locks Middle School

Windsor Locks Middle School, CT

Room 14 | Strand: School + District Leadership

Windsor Locks Middle School has been implementing a mastery-based, student-centered learning system since 2013. Over the course of the last three years, they have achieved considerable success and faced some interesting challenges. Leaders and teachers from the Middle School will share these experiences and emphasize key practices and policies that have helped them to course-correct and refine their commitment to ensuring that all students achieve academic success within a personalized teaching and learning system. Participants will engage in thought-provoking discussions to analyze potential pitfalls they will face in their journey, and to consider the strategies they can employ to overcome those pitfalls or avoid them altogether. They will be able to use the experiences and lessons learned from an “early innovator” school to guide their own change process and examine school practices and policies that promote mastery-based, student-centered learning.

Presenters: Erick Knickerbocker (Teacher), Doug Knowe (Teacher), David Prinstein (Principal)

Contact: David Prinstein | dprinstein@wlps.org

Avoiding the Equity Traps: Personalized and Proficiency-Based Learning to Improve Outcomes for All Students

Montpelier High School, VT

Room 15 | Strand: Teaching + Learning

To improve outcomes for all students, schools around Vermont are working hard to shift to personalized, proficiency-based learning. There is a growing concern, however, that without thoughtful implementation, flexible pathways and proficiency-based graduation requirements could actually exacerbate the achievement gap. This session will explore the potential “equity traps” posed by these challenges and examine the new systems and structures needed to provide all students with the resources they need, both in the classroom and beyond.

Through professional dialogue and examples from the field, participants will gain a deeper understanding of the importance of clarity, supports, and learner agency in the context of high school redesign initiatives. Participants will have the opportunity to examine their own schools’ systems and structures through the lens of improving equity for all students. Presenters will provide useful community-based learning, curriculum, and communications resources for schools to borrow or build from.

Presenters: Michael Martin (Director of Curriculum + Technology, Montpelier Public Schools), Matt McLane (Community-Based Learning Coordinator, Montpelier High School), Mike McRaith (Principal, Montpelier High School)

Contact: Michael Martin | mikem@mpsvt.org

Story Exchange: A Tool for Culturally Responsive Teaching

High School in the Community Academy for Law + Social Justice, CT

Room 16 | Strand: Teaching + Learning

High School in the Community set out to build professional development around teaching, learning, and leading across differences knowing they needed to provide the space for teachers and students to connect and truly understand the value and purpose of culturally responsive education.

With support from Narrative 4, an organization that strives “to build a community of empathic global citizens who improve the world through the exchange of personal narratives,” teachers and students joined together for a story exchange. The story exchange model challenges participants to walk in another person’s shoes by trading personal stories and then retelling their partners’ stories as if they were their own.

Participants in this workshop will learn about High School in the Community’s experience with the story exchange model and receive strategies for using the model in their schools to promote equity and voice for students and teachers. They will also gain an understanding of the importance of building relationships and strengthening communication when working to establish culturally responsive instructional practices.

Presenters: Cari Strand (Curriculum Leader), Lee Keylock (Director of Programs)

Contact: Cari Strand | cari.strand@nhboe.net
Using Inquiry Tasks to Promote Higher Order Thinking

**Great Schools Partnership, ME**

Room 17 | Strand: *Teaching + Learning*

In this session, participants will examine inquiry tasks as a tool to promote higher order thinking and student engagement. We will look at several models of inquiry tasks, discuss different times and ways to build inquiry into units, and define conditions that support inquiry. Participants will also have an opportunity to apply these concepts to their own planning and to explore additional resources related to promoting inquiry and higher order thinking.

**Presenters:** Courtney Jacobs (Senior Associate), Katie Thompson (Senior Associate)

**Contact:** Katie Thompson | kthompson@greatschoolspartnership.org

Where Equity and Engagement Meet: From Funding to Implementation of Community-School Partnerships that Close Opportunity Gaps

**Puget Sound Educational Service District, WA**

Room 21 | Strand: *Student, Family, + Community Engagement*

While our national dialogue on public education in the United States has long been focused on achievement gaps, educational leaders are beginning to pay more attention to opportunity gaps—or the lack of access to resources and opportunities that create further disparities across race, socioeconomic status, English proficiency, and other factors. This more systemic view puts the responsibility on our institutions rather than on our students and families. Partnerships that bridge in-school and out-of-school time become a key strategy to create more access and opportunity for students in the gap. Funding, creating, and implementing community-school partnerships while using practices that promote equity, authentic engagement, and relationship-building takes time, patience, a commitment to continuous improvement, and the ability to persist through essential (but often difficult) conversations. The Puget Sound Educational Service District, one of nine regional educational agencies serving school districts in Washington State, has made a commitment to becoming an anti-racist multicultural organization—a critical lens when doing authentic engagement and partnership work.

In this workshop, participants will explore promising practices and lessons learned through authentic community-school partnerships in Washington State, including strategies for overcoming common institutional practices that can perpetuate inequities in family and community engagement. The presenters will focus on projects, funded through a regional Race to the Top Grant, designed to improve outcomes for students by integrating student and family engagement strategies and by extending learning time beyond the school day.

**Presenters:** Matthew Gulbranson (Community Partnerships and Systems Director, Puget Sound Educational Service District), Hamdi Abdulle (Executive Director, Somali Youth and Family Club, King County Washington)

**Contact:** Matthew Gulbranson | mgulbranson@pseasd.org

We’ve Come Miles and Have Miles to Go

**Gorham Middle School, ME**

Room 23 | Strand: *Teaching + Learning*

Participants will hear teacher and student perspectives on Gorham Middle School’s journey toward developing a proficiency-based teaching and learning system. Presenters will discuss creating performance indicators for skills for life (work habits) and the proficiency-based learning process in a student-centered classroom, from criteria to creation to self-evaluation.

Participants will be engaged in self-reflective formative assessment and use guiding questions to provoke critical thinking about proficiency based learning. Participants will be provided a structured environment where they can begin to explore how to make PBL a reality in their classrooms and schools; for this reason, you are warmly invited to contribute working drafts of their schools’ graduation standards and performance indicators, any and all rubrics and scoring criteria, and student work samples.

**Presenters:** Amy Cousins (Teacher), Meghan Rounds (Teacher)

**Contact:** Meghan Rounds | meghan.rounds@gorhamschools.org
Separating Academic Performance and Habits of Work: Lessons Learned and Shared

**New Haven Academy, CT**

**Room 24 | Strand: Teaching + Learning**

What do schools need to consider when separating academic performance and habits of work? What challenges does this separation present? What works well? Many schools implementing mastery-based learning disaggregate academic performance and habits of work, but opportunities for schools to gather and explore these questions are not common.

In this session, staff from New Haven Academy will present their approach to establishing this separation as a way to start a conversation among peers who are in the implementation phase of mastery-based learning.

Participants will engage in critical reflection on the essential questions posed above. They will be asked to share their own strategies for separating academic performance and habits of work, and will have the chance to hear strategies and lessons learned from New Haven Academy presenters and their fellow participants.

**Presenters:** Greg Baldwin (Principal), Peter Kazienko (History Teacher), Leszek Ward (English Teacher)

**Contact:** Greg Baldwin | gregory.baldwin@nhboe.net

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Celebrating Authentic Student Work and Reflection with the Senior Portfolio

**Metropolitan Business Academy, CT**

**Room 25 | Strand: Teaching + Learning**

At Metropolitan Business Academy, seniors are required to present on work that demonstrates mastery of the school’s six interdisciplinary graduation standards to fulfill their senior graduation portfolio requirement.

In this interactive session, participants will learn through direct analysis of relevant student work and artifacts, and review and discuss New Haven’s 21st century competencies, exemplar portfolios, portfolio templates, and student reflections. They will hear directly from current seniors and recent graduates about their experiences building, improving, and presenting their senior portfolios. Students will share excerpts from their portfolios that highlight their areas of strength and growth, and show how personalized this form of performance-based assessment can be.

Presenters will also discuss how graduation portfolios tell the full story of adolescent learning more than narrow forms of assessment like standardized testing, and a senior advisor will share best practices and lessons learned after two successful years of 100% student participation.

**Presenters:** Leslie Blatteau (Teacher), Jann Kyla Gonzales (Student), Briana Patterson (Student), Caitlin Willis (Student)

**Contact:** Leslie Blatteau | leslie.blatteau@new-haven.k12.ct.us

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Supporting Teacher Growth through Personalized Professional Learning Pathways

**Thompson School District, CO**

**Room 26 | Strand: School + District Leadership**

In Colorado’s Thompson School District, the learning services department gathered feedback from staff around the professional learning experiences that were being offered. After reviewing the feedback, the department developed a Personalized Professional Learning Pathway model, which provided 29 pathways teachers could access for their professional learning.

The pathways shifted professional learning from one-size-fits-all to experiences that were based on the personal passions of teachers, allowing for continued growth and the opportunity to implement the new learning in daily classroom practice.

Presenters will explain how the personalized pathway model for teachers and school administrators was created, implemented, and revised over the course of two years. They will share their modified Ed Camp model, which includes social, emotional, and academic pathway offerings. They will highlight important components of the pathways program, including the expectations for facilitators and teachers.

Participants will learn how to create a plan to engage and empower teachers to design their own professional learning experiences that provide personalized growth opportunities and support teacher leadership.

**Presenters:** Jeri Crispe (Director of Secondary Education), Carmen Williams (Director of Assessment + Professional Development)

**Contact:** Carmen Williams | carmen.williams@thompsonschools.org
Individualized Education Plans: Personalized Learning Come to Life

Kids RSU #2, ME 3

Room 27 | Strand: Teaching + Learning

In this session, participants will see how a student’s individualized education plan (IEP) is personalized learning coming to life. Presenters will share the journey of a student with an IEP, as the student receives specially designed instruction and participates with peers in the general curriculum.

Participants will gain insight and practical applications about using strategies to meet higher-level standards while incorporating the skill-acquisition needed to meet proficiency. They will leave with a meaningful understanding of the connections students with disabilities and their teachers create in the journey through student-centered, proficiency-based learning.

Presenters: Deb Murphy (Special Education Director, KIDS RSU 2), Eric Palleschi (Special Education Teacher, Monmouth Middle School)

Contact: Deb Murphy | dmurphy@kidsrsu.org

Thank you!

Please drop off your conference evaluation at the registration table as you leave—and pick up a snack for the trip home.

We hope to see you in 2018.
About NESSC

THE NEW ENGLAND SECONDARY SCHOOL CONSORTIUM is a pioneering partnership committed to fostering forward-thinking innovations in the design and delivery of secondary education across the New England region. The five partner states of Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont, along with the Great Schools Partnership, believe that our bold vision, shared goals, and innovative strategies will empower us to close persistent achievement gaps, promote greater educational equity and opportunity for all students, and lead our educators into a new era of secondary schooling.

Our Goals

1. Increase five year graduation rates across each of our five states.
2. Decrease annual dropout rates.
3. Increase the percentage of students enrolling in two- and four-year college degree programs or pursuing accredited, industry-certified postsecondary certificates.
4. Increase the percentage of students who graduate from high school college-ready.

Our Objectives

Our five states are committed to pursuing three long-term objectives:

1. **Diplomas that certify readiness for life:** High school graduation decisions that are based on students demonstrating proficiency on learning standards.
2. **Student-centered learning opportunities:** Personalized and flexible proficiency-based learning pathways for all students.
3. **Measuring what matters most:** Learner-centered accountability systems that utilize multiple measures of student achievement.

What We Do

The Consortium brings together state leaders and educators to pursue three overarching strategies:

- **Policy:** Advance a state-led policy agenda focused on three critical, high-leverage areas of schooling in the 21st century: graduation decisions, learning pathways, and accountability systems.
- **Practice:** Connect and support practicing educators across states through networking activities, best-practice exchange, and our League of Innovative Schools.
- **Public Will:** Build public understanding of and support for more innovative approaches to educating today’s students.

Why It Matters

**Strong schools are the best job-creation program we have.** Imagination, expertise, creativity, entrepreneurialism—these are the assets that drive innovation, create new industries, and produce the most sought-after workers. Preparing every student for success will strengthen our economy and empower our communities.

**Strong schools are the foundation of our society.** Democracy, opportunity, prosperity, equity—the values that have defined America—depend on an informed, engaged, well-educated citizenry. To prepare the next generation of citizens and leaders, we need great schools for every student.

**Strong schools create strong communities.** Schools are the cornerstones of our communities. We celebrate our students, cheer on our local teams, and welcome graduates into our workplaces, institutions, and families. To keep our communities vibrant, prosperous, and thriving, we need great schools.
League of Innovative Schools

Founded in 2011, the LEAGUE OF INNOVATIVE SCHOOLS is a regional professional learning community for schools that are working to personalize learning for all students and ensure they are ready for the colleges and careers of their choice. Participating schools become part of a growing network of learning institutions working to strengthen their programs, exchange professional expertise, and create better learning opportunities for their students.

Our Beliefs

The League of Innovative Schools is founded on three core beliefs:

- **Educators create great schools.** Skilled teachers and strong leaders matter far more than funding levels or facilities. Schools are only as effective as the educators who lead them.
- **Every school can improve.** Learning is a lifelong process—for students and educators. The highest performing schools are continually learning, improving, and seeking out what works.
- **Collaboration drives success.** In the world’s most effective schools, teachers work together and develop a sense of collective responsibility. They are committed to their students, to their community, and to one another.

Member Benefits

- Collective knowledge and experience of over 115 innovative secondary schools (grades 6–12) across New England.
- Regional conferences and state-level meetings devoted to learning with and from one another.
- Access to NESSC resources and tools designed to support the implementation of personalized learning.
- Dedicated members-only website and online collaboration space.
- Coordinated site visits to learn from communities about implementation of best practices.
- Job-alike professional learning groups.
- Virtual book study with experienced facilitation.

Become a Member

Membership is open to any NESSC member state middle or high school, grades 6–12—including charter schools, private schools, and career-and-technical institutions—committed to educational equity, student-centered learning, and ongoing improvement.

While there is no cost to join the League and benefit from the learning community, state-level meetings, and virtual supports, there are moderate fees for certain regional events and services.

If your school is interested in learning more, please visit our website and contact your state liaison for more details.
www.newenglandssc.org/league.
Convention Center Map

Ballroom A
Ballroom B
Ballroom C

Check out our online interactive scheduler!
newenglandssc.org/conference/scheduler/