

**Dinda Davis**

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**Sent:** Thursday, April 20, 2023 12:44 PM  
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April Issue



# Newsletter



## Newsletter Highlights

- KCP Updates
- Opportunities
- Educational Resources
- Poem of the Month
- College & Career News
- Events

### **Lessons in Continuous Improvement Insights, Resources & Tools from Education Organizations**

PSCCN is pleased to announce that we were recently highlighted in a Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation publication called [Lessons in Continuous Improvement: Insights, Resources & Tools from Education Organizations](#). This report highlights common emerging themes, promising practices, and tools that PSCCN and other Model Design Initiation (MDI) grantees utilized to implement a continuous improvement approach within their K-12 and postsecondary work.



Specifically, PSCCN's [King County Promise Leadership](#) structure was shared as a practice that builds in community feedback and co-creation within the fabric of its various workgroups. While some aspects of the workgroup structures have stayed the same, many have shifted and adapted now that King County Promise is in its first year of implementation. Continuous improvement is not about being right, but getting it right over time. Here are some of PSCCN's key learnings from piloting the model across K-12, CBO, and postsecondary spaces:

**Working in a big group to change the status quo is challenging. Learn from and celebrate all agreements.** When you work in multi-partner arrangements with complex contexts, even making a little decision can be a big win because it teaches you something about how to collectively come to an agreement.

**Be flexible to get the right cooks in the right kitchen.** The King County Promise has 7 partners, PSCCN, and DCHS in the educational kitchen, each with its own leadership and staff structures. Oftentimes, the working group structure helps to get the right expertise for the right topics. We don't want to waste anyone's time. But sometimes, the pastry chef is needed at breakfast and not just dessert. And the executive chef can't make decisions about the menu unless they know details about what's in the pantry. We are learning how and when to bring in the most relevant voices.

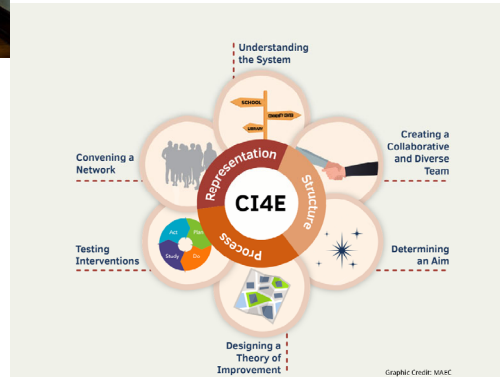


**Hold in-person meetings for community building.** our years ago, this would have been obvious. All the planning, branding, and financial backing cannot take the place of getting to know each other and building relationships. Zoom and Teams are less than ideal for building off-the-agenda, authentic relationships.

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King County Promise is full of phenomenal leaders, and leveraging their skill and deep experience with students is a work in progress. We appreciate their consistent commitment and flexibility as we learn together.

**Get out of the way and let the experts do their thing.** We as PSSCN want to ensure that our KCP partners are the ones driving the outcomes of our meetings. As a System Supporting Organization (SSO), we hope to provide the right scaffolding to support decision-making, co-planning, and logistics support, as needed.



**Center students and practitioners early and often in every working group.** Partners will have different goals and interests. It's the shared goal of supporting youth and students and their needs that glue everyone together.

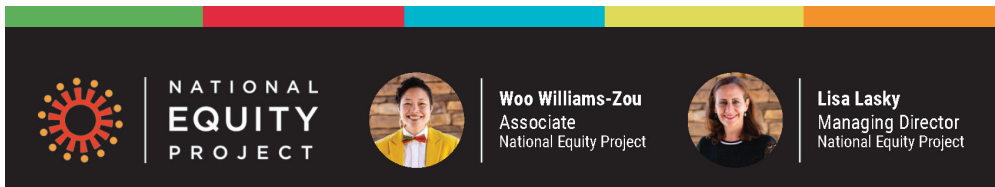




### Job opportunity with PSCCN at PSESD

PSCCN is excited to continue the expansion of our team! We are hiring for a Lead Director of Postsecondary to provide regional leadership, policy and data analysis to achieve agency goals, coordinating support and technical assistance for postsecondary services, projects and initiatives, and activities ensuring strong gap-closing Puget Sound College & Career Network (PSCCN) program implementation across King and Pierce Counties.

For more information, [click here](#).



### National Equity Project: Liberatory Design Lab

How do we move from "talking about it" to "being about it?" How do we move our values and beliefs about racial equity from personal commitments to collective action for change?

You are cordially invited to join a learning and design space hosted by PSESD and [The National Equity Project](#).

Our liberatory design lab will build on our region's collective commitment to lead with racial equity by offering a collaborative space for learning, reflecting and healing and moving forward with the beautiful and challenging work of integrating racial equity into our educational systems.

Registration:

Event information can be found on [pdEnroller](#), please register your team for the series by contacting Leila Crist at [lcrist@psed.org](mailto:lcrist@psed.org). All labs will be at the PSED office in Renton in the Duwamish Room.

This design lab will be a space where you can:

- Learn about and practice Liberatory Design, a collaborative approach to interrupt patterns of systemic inequities and to create more opportunities for greater belonging and justice for all.
- Strengthen equity mindsets and behaviors while building skill and capacity to identify and design solutions to your organization's equity challenges.
- Engage in collective problem-solving with colleagues from other districts and organizations who share a commitment to centering values related to diversity, equity, inclusion and justice.

Cost:

- Road Map district teams of 3-6 members register for free, sponsored by The Gates Foundation.
- District or organization teams of 3-6: \$2000 per team.
- Teams that include at least one Youth, Parent or Community Leader of Color: \$1500 per team.

Dates:

Lab 1: June 22, 2023 | 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Lab 2: August 22, 2023 | 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Lab 3: August 24, 2023 | 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Click on the [Flyer](#) for more information



**Street Data Institute Application 2023-24**

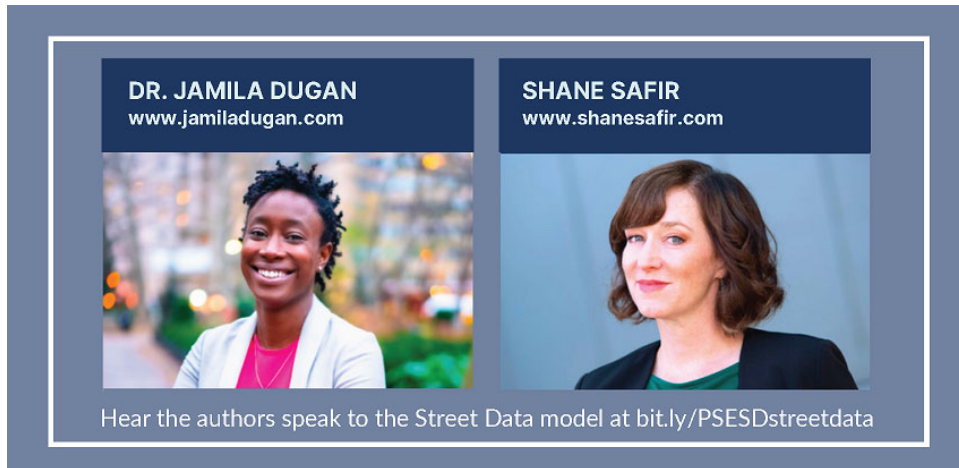
PSED in partnership with [Street Data](#) co-authors Dr. Jamila Dugan and Shane Safir is excited to share that they are now accepting applications for next year's Street Data Institute.

They are offering 4 workshops facilitated by the authors along with monthly coaching. Given this personalized level of support for teams, they will have space for 12 schools to join.

The Street Data Institute will be tailored to school teams, but the application includes an interest form for non-school teams to submit. Any organization interested in learning more about Street Data is welcome to complete the form as a district team.

For more information or to apply, click on one of the links below:

- [Flyer](#)
- [Street Data Institute Overview](#) with more details
- [Application](#) due Monday 5/1 at 12 noon



### **Learning Heroes: Go Beyond Grades Campaign Launches Today**

Go Beyond Grades helps families team up with teachers at the end of the school year around summer learning and by connecting families to curated local programming. With ESSER federal dollars expiring soon, now is the time for families to take advantage of all the district and community resources.

Despite heroic efforts of educators through the pandemic, 90% of parents nationally believe their child is at/above grade level in reading and math even though the Nation's Report Card and the [EducationRecoveryScorecard.org](https://www.educationrecovery.org/) data paint a much different reality. Eight in ten parents (80%) report their children get mostly B's and

above. But there are other important factors beyond grades to know how a child is developing and achieving in school. Teachers say ongoing communication is the best way to know how a child is achieving, with only 30% saying report card grades are one of the most important ways.

### Get Schooled: Support for Students with College & Career

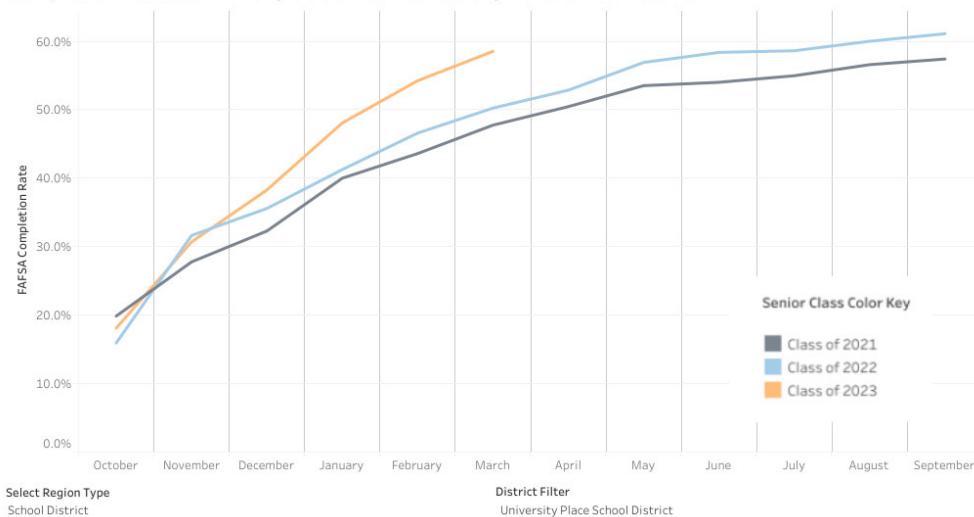
Did you know that Get Schooled provides direct support to students with scholarships, applications, resume review, and more? Students can find help under the Resources tab at [www.getschooled.com](http://www.getschooled.com).



### Best Practices & Learnings: University Place School District

Members of the PSCCN team sat down with Erica Rollosson - College and Career Guidance Specialist, and Bethany Hartfield - College and Career Coordinator from the University Place School District (UPSD) to discuss the noticeable increase in this school year's financial aid completion rates as shown below:

Completion Rate Over Time by School Year: University Place School District



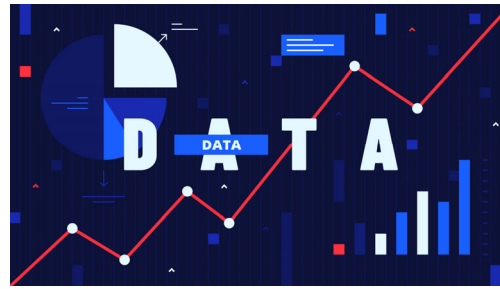
While much of the financial aid completion and academic success is due to factors and challenges outside the control of school staff, we wanted to hear their take on their district's improvement this year. We wanted to learn more about the work they have done in the past and what they are doing differently this academic year at Curtis High School.

Notably, Erica, who leads all financial aid efforts, is new this academic year. She individually works with all seniors at Curtis, which is the only high school in the district. Early in the academic year, over a three-day period, every senior creates an FSA ID during the school day. Some of the new things Curtis has done differently this year:

- Financial aid advising day: She addresses all seniors in the school theater to talk them through the timeline and why FAFSA should matter to them.
- College Success at College Fair: Providing on-site individualized FAFSA support during the high school's college fair.
- Attending WSAC's College Success Workshops
- Presenting to the Financial Literacy Class in October.
- Social media outreach



Some things Erica and Bethany have continued include building in the FAFSA to students' High School and Beyond Plan on the XELLO platform, hosting workshops, and connecting students to other workshops in the area. Their regular strategies for outreach include their Curtis College and Career Center [website](#),



### Data

Erica uses data for strategizing outreach and scheduling.

- She keeps a dashboard recording trends of what days and months families are applying. This allows her to schedule workshops when they will be most useful for families.
- Internal data allows her to reach out to groups of students that qualify for certain aid such as priority applications, College Bound, and Running Start.

### Quick Tips

Erica named that the biggest challenge is delivering information when people are receptive to hearing it. The information is delivered through many channels, but students and parents still give the feedback that they did not know when or how they should be doing the FAFSA. Here are two small strategies from PSCCN's perspective, rooted in observations about what's working at Curtis:

1. Schedule events alongside other well-attended school events to increase attendance to financial aid workshops. In March, for example, they held their workshop before and after Spring Parent Sports Night. Families already there for sports night were more likely to drop in while they were already at the school.
2. Find a way to reach parents that is embedded in an already established channel rather than creating a new one. Among all the methods parents are targeted (a parent flyer, website, social media, workshops), the method of

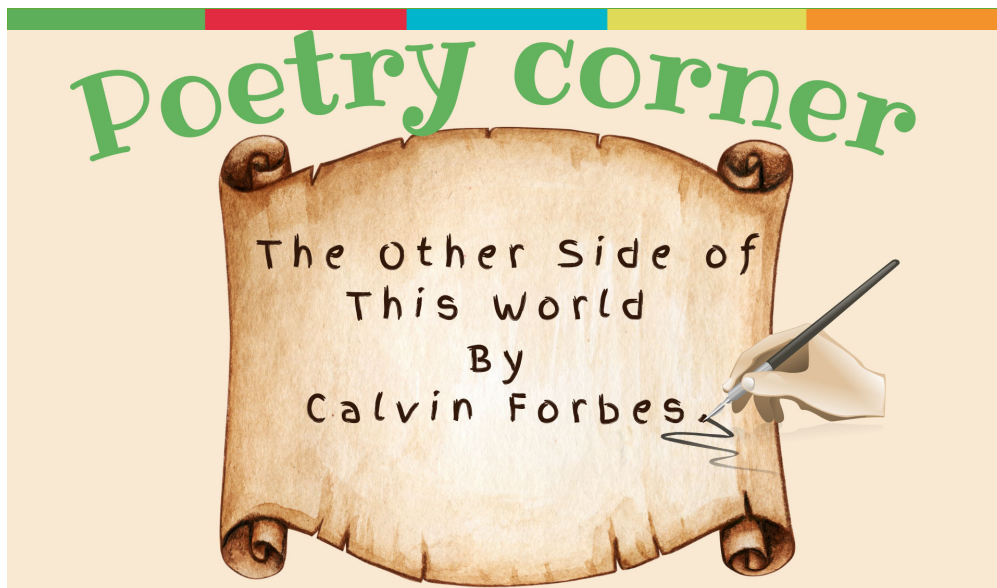


posters, school events, daily announcements, the principal message home, Google Classroom, teachers, Airtame (TV messages across campus) and Curtis High School Network (Video Production). Erica and Bethany collaborate often with administrative staff, and counselors in supporting students through the financial process.

outreach that tends to reach parents the most is a message from the principal. It is sent through Skyward and followed up with a phone call.



In February 2023, the FAFSA completion in University Place was at 54.2% as compared with the same month in 2019 (51.5%), 2020 (46.0%), 2021 (43.6%), and 2022 (46.6%). While we hesitate to use any casual language, this kind of upswing in one year does not often happen on its own and it's not independently occurring in surrounding districts. We appreciate Erica and Bethany for opening up their space to share what is working for them.



This month, we are highlighting "[A Poem for my mother, a Vietnam boat refugee](#)" by Sah Pham, Seattle's own Youth Poet Laureate. The poem is based on the harrowing story of Diem Pham who became a refugee of the Vietnam War at the age of eight. Here is a transcript of Diem's story of perseverance in a spoken-word poem.

*Mama, can you tell me the story of your escape from Vietnam?*

"It was shortly after the war."

*It was 1980.*

"And my parents, who are your grandparents, decided that they would go ahead and let me go first without them."

*You were 8 years old.*

"And we were in a small dark room."

*Ba, your mother, was sewing gold in your shirt seams.*

*Ong, your father, was in shadows pushing freedom up by its shoulders.*

"To give me a future is to take that risk and put me on that boat."

*So when the Communists started building concentration camps out of sandcastles,*

*You ran to ship / afloat in Saigon ashes*

*Sang Vượt Biên sea-songs in tropical storm*

*Tossed boat and identity into same belly.*

*Mama, how could you still love water after swallowing an ocean of trauma?*

"I think when I was first on the boat, and in the storm, the cold water at night flooding through the boat was terrifying. But there was a moment during the boat trip that I was able to come up to the surface, and there I could see dolphins swimming. They say dolphins are lucky. "

*So when currents pulled you far from home / refugee camp in Malaysia,*

*You learned to swim between fault lines of seawater and soul;*

*Became courageous girl gazing at the horizon.*

"The sea is beautiful in that when I was at camp, I would look out at the sea and I knew that I wouldn't be stuck here forever. And it was hope, because I knew that on the other side of the sea was where my parents were, and that one day I would be able to see them again."

*Even when alone,*

*Sea cradled your hurt.*

*You — holding onto seaglass,*

*Your laughter brushed ashore,*

*Swimming into sunset,*

*You knew only this: love survives.*

"Just as the sea has storms and huge waves, but if we're able to harness that energy and ride like the wave riders, the surf riders, we can come safely to shore and enjoy that ride."

*So here, floating on salted waters, above shadows*

*In the places where freedom sails,*

*I find my mother.*

*Here, where sea meets shore,*

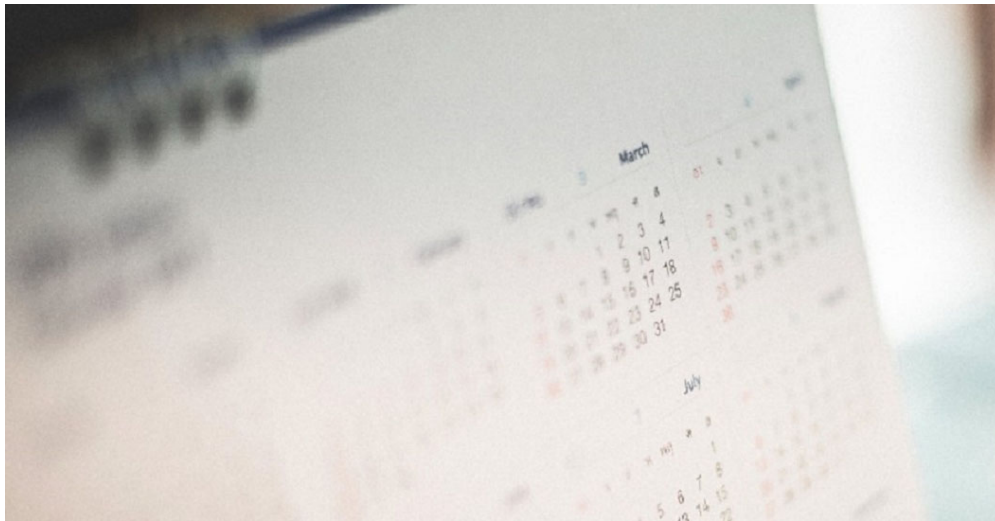
*Trauma and resilience converge.*

[Click on this link](#) for the audio reading



#### **College and Career News in Washington State:**

- DCHS Blog: [The latest with the Puget Sound Taxpayer Accountability Account \(PSTAA\)](#)
- The Seattle Times: [Academic coaches help students finish community college](#)
- The Seattle Times: [WA high school graduation rates are up. Here's who saw the biggest gains](#)
- The Seattle Times: [Seattle Schools' focus on Black male students is meant to help all kids](#)
- The Seattle Times: [A 'game changer' for immigrants: Job-ready college classes in their native language](#)
- The Seattle Times: [We wrote about lucrative jobs in the trades, and your feedback was a bonus](#)



## Events

### National Equity Project: Liberatory Design Lab

- Lab 1: June 22, 2023 | 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm
- Lab 2: August 22, 2023 | 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm
- Lab 3: August 24, 2023 | 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Click on the [Flyer](#) for more information

### Street Data Institute Application 2023-24

- June 13, 2023 at PSESD
- September 19, 2023 at PSESD
- September 20, 2023 at PSESD

More information to come for the workshops below:

- January 2024 date TBD virtual
- June 2024 date TBD at PSESD

Click on the [Flyer](#) for more information



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