



# LEADING TRANSFORMATIONAL LEARNING

## *Shaping the Future*

A Conference for Superintendents and Education Leaders

**MARCH 20, 2024 | 7.30AM - 3.30PM**  
**Bristol Events Center, 112 Century Drive, Bristol, CT**

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

**7.30 - 8.30AM | REGISTRATION BEGINS • EXHIBITS OPEN • BREAKFAST**  
*Event Center - Century Ballroom*

**8.30AM | WELCOME**

*Event Center - Century Ballroom*

Christine Carver, CAPSS President

Fran Rabinowitz, CAPSS Executive Director

Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Commissioner, Connecticut Department of Education

**8.45AM | KEYNOTE ADDRESS: Instructional Decision-Making in the Core as the Social Justice Imperative**

**Zaretta Hammond**

*Event Center - Century Ballroom*

Transformational learning begins within the instructional core. In our quest for equity, we must improve instruction so teachers are more responsive to students who are struggling, who have disengaged, or who have plateaued. We can do that by leveraging culturally responsive instruction and the science of learning. Too often we think that focusing on the “culture” aspect is the path forward, rather than on helping build teacher capacity to be more responsive through instructional decision-making, which is the essence of being a culturally responsive educator. In this presentation, Ms. Hammond will help us understand the critical role instructional decision-making places in our ability to build student capacity. We will then look at what leaders need to do in order to support this type of transformational teaching and learning.

## 10.05 AM - 10.55AM — SECTION A BREAKOUT SESSIONS

**Engaging and Reengaging HS Students (RISE)**

**Louis Bronk, Peter Civitello, James Donewald, Bethany McKie**

*Event Center - Niznick Lecture Room*

In the Meriden Public Schools, with funding and support from the RISE Network, along with creative resource allocation, Meriden developed a data warehouse that allows staff to disaggregate and analyze student data to design support systems for students to be on track and college and career-ready. This system helps to mitigate the achievement gap within our district and evaluate processes that could impede sub groups within our student population. Tracking D's and F's by individual teachers and sharing these results transparently in department and administrator meetings allowed our schools to find areas of growth for student supports. Discussion around B's or better ensued and now this data is used as a key indicator of college readiness. Subsequently, our graduation rates and post-secondary planning systems have improved significantly.

**Actualizing Transforming Schools through Implementation Science**

**Lisa M. H. Sanetti, Alexandra Pierce & Melissa A. Collier-Meek**

*Home2 - Paragon Room*

The extent to which school change actually impacts K-12 students hinges on educators' consistent implementation of practices to support students' academic, social-emotional, and behavioral functioning. Although sufficient implementation is typically assumed; in reality, it is usually variable or limited. Implementation science is the study of actualizing integrated change in applied settings, like schools. This presentation will orient superintendents to implementation science and highlight practical strategies to support school leaders to monitor and improve school-based implementation.

## **How Can Good Mental Health Practices Transform Classroom Teaching?**

**Alice Forrester**

*Home2 - Summit Room*

How can understanding mental health and child brain development help in keeping a classroom safe, healthy and responsive? In this presentation, we will review a brief understanding of chronic stress and its impact on the brain, how practices related to stress management and restorative practices can actually deescalate tensions in the classroom when dealing with a child or youth who is living under high chronic stress.

## **Transforming Schools: Leaders of a Thriving Future**

**Connie Kamm**

*DoubleTree - A. English Room*

This highly interactive session engages educators in a rich dialogue about pivotal changes needed in education to ensure that schools and districts are the shapers of an empowered and vibrant future for our students, staff, and communities. Participants will gain invaluable insights and receive powerful tools to expand awareness and steer transformative growth in teaching, learning, and leading.

## **Leaders of Their Own Learning: Using Student-Engaged Assessment for School Improvement**

**Ron Berger**

*DoubleTree - B. Golden Room*

The most important assessment that happens in school is not the yearly state tests: It is the ongoing assessment for quality that takes place inside students' minds all day, every day. Students assess their understanding, their participation, their work, and their behavior, and adjust it to the standards they hold. How do we get into their heads to raise those standards? This workshop will examine 8 key practices of Student-Engaged Assessment: Empowering students to own their progress, track their progress, and formally present evidence of their growth, challenges, and goals. This shift puts students in the driver's seat of their education, and acts as a powerful engine for whole-school improvement.

## **Leading the Science of Reading Beyond the MasterClass**

**Matthew J. Conway, Jr., Erica Forti, Gaeton (Guy) Stella**

*DoubleTree - C. White Room*

Participants will walk away from this presentation with a clear understanding of the why, what, and how of the CT Department of Education/CAPSS-supported Science of Reading (SOR) MasterClass.

Hear from the superintendents of two districts and their SOR Executive Coach about a two-year journey with SOR --- commitments made, challenges faced, and benefits gained. Learn how leadership teams were empowered and supported in deepening their knowledge of the science of reading and building aligned systemic practices with a focus on helping all students become independent readers by grade 3.

## **11.15 - 12.05PM — SECTION B BREAKOUT SESSIONS**

### **Make a Difference in PK-3rd Grade to Improve Outcomes through High School**

**Karen L. List, Amy Fedigan, Joe Macrino**

*Event Center - Niznick Lecture Room*

Contemporary research in child development shows widespread evidence investments in quality early childhood education programs produce lifelong benefits. Creating and leading coherent, integrated systems from PreK to grade 3 have shown learning gaps can be reduced, achievement and opportunities for success enhanced. You'll learn the neuroscience of early development, the significance of a continuum across the grade levels, and hear from successful practitioners doing this work in their schools.

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## **Leading the Curriculum Development Process**

**Imma Canelli, Rosanne Daigneault, John Freeman, Angela Nelson, Kelly Sanders**

*Home2 - Summit Room*

Curriculum is essential to any education system. It articulates the knowledge, concepts, and skills teachers teach and students learn, along with instructional plans for how and when content is taught. A strong curriculum supports students and teachers, helping to ensure common learning expectations and experiences.

This session addresses a pressing need, as Connecticut is one of many states across the country to pass legislation requiring school districts to ground their reading curriculum in the science of reading. Participants will be introduced to a tool designed for district teams to use as they develop a robust K-3 reading curriculum for their district.

Participants will also explore related topics, such as the difference between “curriculum” and “program,” the benefits of a district-developed K-3 reading curriculum, and critical insights into the leadership moves necessary in the curriculum development process.

## **Enhancing Curriculum: Learning for the Emerging Future**

**Connie Kamm**

*DoubleTree - A. English Room*

This highly interactive session focuses on engaging practices that support the development of student innovation, critical thinking, collaboration, and agency. Participants will receive techniques and resources to use in their schools to enrich teaching and learning within their current curriculum.

## **Culturally Responsive Teaching & the Brain**

**Zaretta Hammond**

*DoubleTree - B. Golden Room*

A bold, brain based teaching approach to culturally responsive instruction.

Classrooms need a proven framework for optimizing student engagement and facilitating deeper learning. In this session Zaretta Hammond will use neuro-science research to offer an innovative approach for designing and implementing brain-compatible culturally responsive instruction.

## **AI in the Classroom: Navigating the Future of Education with Emerging Technologies**

**Matt Mervis**

*DoubleTree - C. White Room*

This session delves into the transformative role of artificial intelligence in reshaping educational practices and preparing students for a future deeply integrated with AI. The session addresses ethical considerations and explores practical applications in curriculum and administration.

**12.15PM - 1.00PM | LUNCH**

*Event Center - Century Ballroom*

**1.00PM - 2.00PM | KEYNOTE ADDRESS | Inspiring Students to Care**

**Ron Berger**

*Event Center - Century Ballroom*

The success of students is most closely linked to one thing: How much they care about their learning. We will examine strategies to inspire students to be passionate about their growth and about their work. Using examples of extraordinary student work and student success, and case studies of unusually successful schools and districts, we will look at effective, concrete practices you may want to celebrate or amplify in schools across your district.

## **2.20PM - 3.30PM — SECTION C BREAKOUT SESSIONS**

### **Leading with Wellbeing: An Innovative Approach to Inspire Transformation from the Inside Out**

**Joanna Curry-Sartori & Kath Serino**

*Event Center - Niznick Lecture Room*

Creating transformational learning communities requires a foundation in well-being that begins with us. Leadership teams who appreciate the psychological dynamics that drive our inner processes, are empowered to consciously direct the outer dynamics that are critical for authentic community transformation. In this workshop, through anecdotes and practical exercises, leaders will learn about the Self-Leadership Collaborative approach - a systemic, integrative, sustainable and culturally responsive approach to nurture whole community well-being. Uniquely inspired by Internal Family Systems (IFS), this model “cracks the code” for us to understand, practice and nurture the essential inner paradigm shift that allows outer transformation to take root.

## **Redefining Leadership: Leading Transformational Change**

**Lisa Nouri, Maddy Sims, Poorvaja Sundar**

*Home2 - Paragon Room*

Over the past three years, the Center for Public Research and Leadership (CPRL) has collaborated with district, school, and instructional leaders through the Connecticut Innovation Cohort to rethink long-held assumptions, redesign systems, redefine students' and families' role in public schooling, and recruit all innovations—big and small—to the task of helping all kids and communities learn and flourish. Explore how cohort members have embraced CPRL's evidence-based leadership framework to overcome common obstacles to innovation and sustain momentum. Participants will have the opportunity to:

1. Learn about key indicators of the leadership framework and aligned system design;
2. Conduct a self-assessment of their team to identify (a) the degree to which learning mindsets, behaviors, and practices are present and (b) how their leadership team has supported or inhibited uptake; and
3. Begin to develop an action plan to address one area for growth identified via the self-assessment to take back with them to their district.

## **How to Maximize the Impact of Your Vision/Portrait of the Graduate: Motivating Innovation Throughout Your Learning Organization**

**Christine Carver & Kathleen Grieder**

*Home2 - Summit Room*

**Why:** Why creating and implementing a Vision of the Graduate is essential for student success now and in the future?

**What:** What are the systems and structures to create innovation throughout your learning organization aligned to your Vision of a Graduate?

**How:** How do you and all members of your learning organization utilize the systems and structures to create high-level implementation at the classroom level?

Participants will leave the presentation with an understanding of how to ensure a Vision of the Graduate is embedded in all aspects of innovative teaching, learning, assessment and programming knowing the shifts in the knowledge and competencies needed in our ever-changing world community.

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