

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

Educators FIRST!

Growing by Learning from Each Other



May 20, 2023, 8:15 a.m. - 3:15 p.m. | 12 Taft Court, Rockville

8:15 A.M. - 9:00 A.M. REGISTRATION & LIGHT BREAKFAST

9:00 A.M. - 9:30 A.M. KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Speakers: Minority Scholars Program Student Leaders

Biography: The Minority Scholars Program is a student led, student based, and student driven program, aimed at closing the opportunity gap.

The Minority Scholars Program works toward improving academic achievement, raising student voice, developing leaders, enhancing cultural capital and sense of belonging, and reaching out to our community. All Minority Scholars Program efforts are aimed at positively changing the various school cultures such that success and achievement are no longer predictable by race, class, ethnicity and/or gender.

MCEA proudly welcomes the Minority Scholars Program Student Leaders to our conference.

9:45 A.M. - 10:45 A.M. SESSION 1

Room A: Teaching with an Equity Lens

Description: For the session “Teaching with an Equity Lense,” participants will engage with one another, through discussions, collaborations and reflections. There will be a three-part objective for the time together: reflecting on self, centering the marginalized students, and reshaping the environment that we can control.

Presenter Bio: Mrs. Janelle Spalding has been a classroom teacher with MCPS for 23 years. She is currently an equity leader and Restorative Justice coach at her school, committed to anti-racist work in education.

Room B: Teaching Shakespeare and Social Justice

Description: This presentation examines current best practices for teaching Shakespeare and the intersection of social justice issues like racism, homophobia and the #MeToo Movement. It also highlights the newly approved English elective "Shakespeare, Race and Gender."

Presenter Bio: Mr. Corey Ahearn (he/him) is a part-time professional Shakespearean actor who has studied teaching Shakespeare extensively, most recently under Dr. Ralph Alan Cohen of the American Shakespeare Center. Corey has been teaching at Northwood for 14 years and is currently preparing for a show with the Baltimore Shakespeare Factory.

Room C: Healing from the Trauma of Student Violence and Opioid Abuse in Our Schools through Storytelling

Description: Story Based Trauma Healing Groups give educators who have suffered trauma due to student violence, opioid and verbal abuse, and the lack of administrative support an opportunity to share their stories with others. Sharing one's story in a safe, trusted, and respected environment is the first step to healing.

Presenter Bio: Mrs. Laura Ellis is a veteran librarian who has always advocated for the best possible options for students and educators. She became a Story Based Trauma Healing facilitator in 2020 after attending a trauma healing group due to losing family members.

Room D: Class Starters for African American & Women's History Month in Mathematics

Description: Explore "Problems of the Day" that connect concepts in mathematics to African-American and women STEM contributors who made or who have some conceptual connection to their field.

Presenter Bio: Mr. Anthony Armbrister. A native Floridian, Mr. Armbrister served as a teacher, mathematics curriculum specialist and Math Coach for over 25 years before moving to the DMV and taking a job and teaching at JFK High School in MCPS. He has a BS in Mathematics from his beloved HBCU Southern University, a master's degree from Nova Southeastern University and Specialist in Math Education from Florida State University. He is married with two sons and a daughter, who are 15, 17 and 27 years old respectively.

Room E: Developing Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving Skills in Students

Description: We will discuss the benefits of developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills, such as: enhancing student creativity and innovation; supporting lifelong learning and adaptability; improving decision-making and judgment skills; fostering independent and autonomous learners; sharing research findings and examples of successful critical thinking and problem-solving practices.

Presenter Bio: Mr. Leo De Valoes' background in education is multicultural in nature, which he believes to be a key asset in this position. Effectively representing teachers at all grade levels and in all disciplines requires fostering discussion, bringing about problem-solving and overcoming differences. His career has been characterized by an aptitude to find common ground, while maintaining faith in his core values. Fluent in five languages, Mr. De Valoes has been fortunate to have received his formal education in several cultures, in multiple languages, and on three continents. As a language teacher, he knows that the ability to communicate well is a major factor in professional success. He has also, at the college level, taught courses in Multicultural Education and Hispanic Culture, because he believes that fostering understanding is key to an effective education.

10:50 A.M. - 11:50 A.M. SESSION 2

Room A: Anti-Racism Is Not a Fad: Students' View of Improving our Educational Environment

Description: This interactive session on Anti-Racism will be run by Minority Scholars Program students and staff. It allows participants to gain insights on race and equity from the student perspective and will arm participants with strategies, rationales, and methods to improve instruction and classroom/school atmosphere.

Presenter Bios:

Mr. Michael Williams is the co-founder and co-county coordinator of the Minority Scholars Program, as well as a 20-year veteran educator. The former MCPS Teacher of the Year serves as an educator in the Social Studies Department at Rockville High School.

Amira Mohamed is a student leader in the Minority Scholars Program.

Room B: Breaking Walls and Building Bridges: Using Literature to Build Solidarity and Anchor Our Visions for New Worlds

Description: We will brainstorm ways to build solidarity with literary characters. How might literature anchor our visions for new worlds? We will use examples from an ELD class studying *A Raisin in the Sun* and *All-American Boys*. The session includes identifying shared values, neighborhood walks and interviews, character silhouettes, and empathy graphing.

Presenter Bio: Dr. Bryan Cockrell grew up in Damascus, MD and graduated from MCPS schools. After working in museums, he became an ELD teacher in 2018. He believes, following the Zapatistas, that another world is possible. He loves to read, cook, and do yoga.

Room C: Self-Care 201: It's No Joke!

Description: We are inundated with the message, "Self-care is important, make sure you are taking care of yourself." Then the conversation ends. In this workshop, let's explore what self-care looks like in reality and how to make sure we are doing it!

Presenter Bio: Coach Teri Boragno. ‘Coach Teri’ is a tennis and pickleball coach turned educator. After years as a school administrator, she is now a third-grade teacher, looking for that perfect life balance. She has learned the hard way the value of true self-care.

Room D: The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teachers

Description: Regardless of where you are in your education career, this PD will share 7 highly effective habits for instructional growth and student success. Participants will learn how the 7 habits align to the 7 MCPS teaching standards.

Presenter Bio: Mr. Don Milner has taught at MCPS for 24 years and has served as a Teacher, Content Specialist, and Consulting Teacher. He enjoys instructional leadership and helping educators and students grow.

Room E: Incorporating Executive Functioning Skills into Your Lesson Plans for Secondary Teachers

Description: Executive Functioning skills are critical for student success. At the middle and high school level, especially, they have a huge impact on student's grades. It is important that we support students by building them into our lesson plans for both long term and short-term student success.

Presenter Bio: Ms. Maisie Lynch has been a high school teacher for 17 years. She is currently a College and Career teacher at Sherwood High School and a Certified Professional Life Coach with a focus on neurodivergent teens. Most importantly, she is the mother of two teenage daughters, one with ADHD and one with "teenagitis".

12:00 P.M. - 12:45 P.M. LUNCH

12:50 P.M. - 1:50 P.M. SESSION 3

Room A: Mentoring Male Educators of Color

Description: A significant but frequently overlooked problem in America’s schools is the lack of ethno-racial representation among educators. There are very few male teachers of color in the classroom. Their turnover rate is disproportionately high. Why does this matter? Research shows that retaining teachers of color is pivotal in narrowing the achievement gap.

Presenter Bio: Mr. Robert Barnes is an award-winning educator of 32 years. He is certificated in Social Studies and Special Education. Mr. Barnes has taught in both DCPS and MCPS. He is currently on leave working with MCEA as a Member Organizer.

Room B: Safe Zone: Creating a Safe Space for LGBTQIA+ Students

Description: Participants will learn best practices for creating a safe classroom space for LGBTQIA+ students.

Presenter Bio: Alex Robinelli (she/her) is a general music teacher and chorus director at Sherwood Elementary in Sandy Spring, MD. She holds a Bachelor of Music Education from Shenandoah University and is currently pursuing a Master of Music Education from George Mason University. Alex has a passion for LGBTQIA+ advocacy and loves to help other educators make their classrooms a safer space for LGBTQIA+ students. In her free time Alex loves to go rock climbing with her wife and spend time cuddling her cat.

Room C: Professional Advocacy 101

Description: Educators work to maximize student success, to promote access and equity for all students. Educators also design and deliver lessons that improve student outcomes while utilizing the curriculum they are provided. To achieve this, educators must be prepared to engage in professional advocacy to address barriers. This interactive presentation will share the work of a school counselor group who used professional advocacy to gain a seat at the table and elicit change.

Presenter Bios:

Ms. Jessica Conter is currently a HS Counselor at Blake, and next year will be the RC at QO. She is also the SSL Coordinator, HS Counseling CTL representative, Counseling Advocacy Committee Leadership Team member, and an MCEA Bargaining member. She has been in Education for 18 years as both a Spanish/ESOL Teacher (Arizona) and HS Counselor (MCPS).

Laura Williams, MEd, CAS has worked as a school counselor at both the middle and high school level in MCPS. She began her career in education as a middle school English teacher.

Dr. Maureen Ponce has 25 years' experience as a school counselor and is passionate about promoting the counseling profession. Dr. Ponce has presented at National, Regional and State conferences on the intersection of diversity, equity, & inclusion, counseling leadership and advocacy.

Room D: Exploring Migrating & Moving: An Intro to using PZ & Museum Resources in the Classroom

Description: This is a presentation that the presenter has previously given at the National Gallery of Art for Washington International School's Summer Institute for Teachers Museum Day. It is an intro to using Harvard Project Zero Ideas and museum resources in the classroom.

Presenter Bio: Mrs. Sher Anderson-Petty, a proud fourth generation public school educator, is a veteran MCPS educator with over 20 years of service. She has taught Advanced Placement Language & Composition, International Baccalaureate Diploma Program Literature A (year 1), English 9-12, and Maryland State Department of Education Teacher Certification Courses. She is a professional developer for Washington International School's Summer Institute for Teachers where she is a learning group leader, museum course presenter, museum day plenary co-presenter and global webinar presenter. When she is not being a student of her students, she may be found hiking along the C&O Canal or fishing with her husband Joel; to be factual she's not actually fishing but present and usually reading a good book when the fishing occurs.

Room E: Aligning Social Emotional Learning and Restorative Practices for Elementary

Description: This session will help to align social emotional learning and restorative practices for elementary school educators.

Presenter Bio: **Mrs. Rebecca Harman-Fraley** has been teaching at MCPS for 20 years. She taught MCPS' course on Skillful Teaching for Paraeducators in an effort to build capacity of educators in meeting a myriad of needs. Mrs. Harman-Fraley leads presentations in Reading Night and Math Night informational meetings for parents to build an understanding of curriculum expectations.

1:55 P.M. - 2:55 P.M. SESSION 4

Room A: Bringing Race, Culture, and Identity into Early Career Teacher Mentorship

Description: Early career teacher (ECT) turnover is significantly higher compared with experienced teachers. Turnover factors include ECTs' race; gender; racial/ethnic identity of students; school racial diversity and micropolitics (Bendixen et al., 2022). This presentation discusses the role race, culture, and identity can play in mentoring ECTs and in increasing retention.

Presenter Bio: **Mr. Joseph Bayeck** is an experienced teacher at Benjamin Banneker Middle School where he currently teaches French. He is also a mentor teacher.

Room B: Equitable Practices for ELL students: Toolkit for your Classroom

Description: This PD will begin with the “what” and “why” of Equitable Practices with a focus on English Language Learner students. Teachers will learn and practice strategies that promote equity in the classroom. Teachers will take home a toolkit of strategies that can easily be incorporated into their everyday teaching and can benefit all students.

Presenter Bio: **Mrs. Eunbyul Morstein** has been with MCPS for 16 years. She has been an ESOL teacher in 1st, 2nd, 4th, and 5th grades and also has been a classroom teacher in kindergarten, 2nd grade, 8th grade science, and 8th grade history. She has been an EFR and a MCEA Building Representative. She is constantly finding new ways to hone her craft as a teacher. She is looking forward to attending the MSEA conference to hear viewpoints and learn new research on education, learning, child development, equity, and pedagogy. She wants to get out of her comfort zone and have courageous conversations about what is needed to help our students succeed. She is also looking forward to getting out of her microcosm of her school and seeing what is going on in the larger world of education.

Room C: Understanding the Nervous System, Restorative Yoga and Mindfulness to Guide Instruction & Initiate the Relaxation Response

Description: *Previous yoga experience is not required. An exploration of restorative yoga practices, including asana and mindfulness along with a scaffolded experience to better understand the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous system and systems for health, healing, and longevity in teaching and in life.

Presenter Bio: **Mrs. Jeanne Johnston** is a mother, wife, dog-mommy and teacher to many, as a K-2 reading teacher in the French Immersion Program, ELD instructor at Sligo Creek Elementary and MCPS staff instructor of restorative yoga and summer Tier 3 Mindfulness for Educators Retreat. Jeanne is a certified yoga teacher, teaching adults and children yoga and yogic practices as an antidote to stress and means of life-long support. She is the curator of the MCPS summer mindfulness video series featuring Guard Dog and Brainy. Jeanne is a breast cancer survivor, is passionate about East meets West healing practices and enjoys connecting with nature, holistic and ethnic cooking, and getting her pottery-hungry hands in clay.

Room D: How Artificial Intelligence is Coming Into our Classrooms

Description: A discussion of some of the recent advances in AI, how to use them for your benefit, and how to avoid students misusing them.

Presenter Bio: **Mr. Anthony Shadman** is the innovative computer teacher at Wootton High School. With a talent for making complex concepts simple and a passion for exploring the latest developments in AI, he inspires his students to dream big and think creatively.

Room E: Trauma, SEL and Verbal De-Escalation: A Snapshot

Description: More and more, educators are confronting the realities of trauma and stress related behavior in our day-to-day work. It can be overwhelming to consider all the factors that lead to escalated student behavior and how they impact the learning environment. But with some basic understandings of how trauma and stress impact learning, how the social/emotional domain is key to that learning and how to use practical, next-day strategies to help students manage stress responses- it doesn't have to be so daunting. Join MSEA's Center for Education Policy and Practice for a real-world snapshot of how to manage escalated student behavior.

Presenter Bio: **Mr. Evan West** is an Organizational Development Specialist with the Maryland State Education Association's Center for Education Policy and Practice. Prior to working for MSEA, Evan was a Secondary English and Language Arts Teacher in Maryland for 15 years.