

**Offered at the May 2018 Teacher Leader Fellowship Program Institute:**

**Teacher Leadership and Authentic Voice: Leading from the Classroom**

Ms. Cheri Burke, Ms. Jaime Mischke, and Ms. Doreen O’Sullivan

Learn from three educators in a small regional district of approximately 2,600 students, from the towns of Harwinton and Burlington, how the district and schools have organized to provide teacher voice and shared decision-making to teachers. Hear from the district’s director of student learning and two teacher leaders—Teacher Leader Council (TLC) members—how Connecticut Regional School District #10 implemented a TLC at both the district and school levels. Insights will be shared regarding teacher leadership as a vehicle for effective feedback and dialog between and among teachers, principals, and central office administrators to build a coherent vision for effective teaching and learning practices.

**Using Teacher-Led Professional Development and Choice to Empower Teacher Leaders**

Mr. Robert Sullivan and Ms. Michelle Middleton

Teachers leading teachers is one of the most powerful tools we have to impact instruction positively in our districts. The success of this initiative relies on the willingness of teachers to facilitate professional development for their peers. This session will discuss the attempts to bring teacher choice to both district-led and building-based professional development sessions. All aspects of Enfield’s full-day teacher choice professional development day will be reviewed, including the planning, execution, and feedback from staff. Also highlighted will be the offshoot of this endeavor implemented by Enfield High School in the 2016-2017 school year.

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**SEEDS OF CHANGE: A GRASSROOTS APPROACH TO CREATING A POSITIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE**

Do you want your voice to be heard? Are you ready to make positive changes at your school or district? If you are looking to be inspired to create your own change, come join three elementary school teachers from Tolland -- **Anthea Grotton, Lauren D’Agata, and Lisa Patriarco** – who initiated a grassroots movement to help improve their school’s climate. You will hear their story of why they saw the need for change, how they included teachers’ voices, and how they worked collaboratively with administration. Their focus was and is on positive communication and possible solutions. They will also discuss how they learned about and started applying the Theory of Change Framework. Participants will be given time to discuss this approach, ask questions, and brainstorm changes appropriate to their settings. Participants will have an opportunity to use the Theory of Change Framework to discuss their issues.

**Offered at the May 2023 Teacher Leader Fellowship Academy Institute:**

**BUILDING A CULTURE OF JOY, EMPATHY AND BELONGING: UNEARTHING JOY**

ALLYSON M. POWER – RIDGEFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS & MICHELLE D. MCKNIGHT – SOUTH WINDSOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Now, more than ever, we need to plan boldly for pursuing joy in our lives and in our classrooms. Allyson and Michelle will share lessons learned about re-centering joy in our schools from their book study of Gholdy Muhammad’s “Unearthing Joy.” This will include the why and how of creating joyful classroom environments. It will be a hands-on, interactive session designed to give you strategies for routines and procedures that encourage, prioritize, and cultivate joy.

**BUILDING A CULTURE OF JOY, EMPATHY AND BELONGING: CULTIVATING SCHOOL CULTURE & CLIMATE**  
ADRIANNE CARTER-BROWN, DIANA LIPMAN, KRISTEN LEWIS & SARHANNA K. SMITH – BRIDGEPORT  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The stress that comes with teaching in a post-pandemic world can often make one lose sight of what it means to feel joyful. Students face similar levels of stress from increased academic demands as well as from interacting on social media and among peer groups. The Read School team will outline strategies they have used to cultivate and support a strong school culture and climate – one that fosters a sense of belonging among students and staff. Finding moments of joy, expressing empathy and feeling as if you belong in school can happen only when you identify as part of a school family. During this break-out session, participants will partake in a community building activity and hear first-hand accounts from members of the Read School Family, including stories from students and staff members. This school team hopes to spark ideas about how you can cultivate joy and promote a sense of belonging within your school community.

**BUILDING A CULTURE OF JOY, EMPATHY & BELONGING: TEACHING & LEADING WITH EQUITY IN MANSFIELD**

ANTHEA ZIZZAMIA GROTTON & LAUREN RODRIGUEZ – MANSFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Join Anthea Grotton, first grade teacher, and Lauren Rodriguez, Mansfield Elementary School principal, as they discuss one of Mansfield's six core values, leading with equity. In Mansfield we believe that all children are supported to learn and develop in a safe environment that is free from discrimination and prejudice, and conscious efforts and intentional actions ensure equitable opportunities for all students. Anthea will share classroom practices as well as work done throughout the district. Lauren will share what equity looks like through the lens of a principal supporting staff, students, and the school community. Anthea and Lauren want to hear about the amazing things you are doing in your districts as well - we are all learning and growing as we build our equitable practices. There will be time for open discussion and to map out next steps for your district so everyone has the opportunity to leave with an actionable plan and collective resources

**PORTRAIT OF A TEACHER LEADER**

JENN NORMAN - CTECS & MEGAN BIDDELL – STRATFORD

Many CT districts have created a Portrait of a Graduate. In this session we will describe the attributes, knowledge and skills a professional teacher needs to develop to coach and facilitate learning for those graduates. In addition, we pay attention to conditions in the educational system that are needed for teachers to learn, lead and thrive in this rapidly changing environment. Come to engage in a discussion with your colleagues about your views of what a Portrait of a Teacher Leader should be.

**IMPLEMENTING PRESENTATIONS OF LEARNING (POLs): CREATING A CULTURE OF REFLECTION**

COURTNEY HAWES & KATHY MENDEZ – GREENWICH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Presentations of Learning (PoLs) provide a rich opportunity for cross-disciplinary, summative assessment while developing students' abilities to reflect meaningfully on their work. As such, PoLs are a key ingredient in deep, project-based learning and help students tap into their passion and commitment to growth. In this workshop, you will begin crafting a plan to implement PoLs that fit the unique needs of your students, curriculum and school. Resources - including sample videos, rubrics, and written work - will be examined to learn how PoLs work, and then used to personalize the experience to fit your goals. By the end of the workshop, you will be well-equipped to go forth and implement PoLs as an ongoing part of your student experience and learning culture!

## **Offered at the May 2024 Teacher Leader Fellowship Academy Institute:**

### **Generate joy in your classroom!**

Allyson M. Power, Ridgefield Public Schools; Jenn Leniart, Stratford Public Schools; Michelle Amann-Wojenski, CT Technical Education & Career System

Members of the Teacher Leader Fellowship Academy Joy Interest Group will present tips and tricks on how to spark joy as you get to know your students, complete daily routines and present content. During the workshop, you will engage in reflective activities and learn practical applications.

### **Fostering Joyful Teams in Elementary Education: Strategies and Benefits for Building Synergic Teams that Support Risk-taking and Cultivating Joy**

Kate Hosey McCoy, Mansfield Public Schools Erika LaBella, Mansfield Public Schools

Join us for an enlightening exploration into the realm of joyful teams in elementary education! This presentation aims to equip elementary teachers and administrators with practical strategies to cultivate joy within their teams, enhancing collaboration, productivity and ultimately, the learning environment for our youngest students.

We will delve into the significance of joyful teamwork, highlighting its profound impact on teacher morale, student engagement and overall classroom atmosphere. Through interactive discussions and real-life examples, attendees will discover actionable techniques for promoting positivity, fostering a supportive work culture and effectively managing challenges. They will:

- Understand the importance of joy in teamwork.
- Learn techniques to build a culture of appreciation and support.
- Learn strategies for enhancing communication and collaboration.
- Discuss how to overcome obstacles and maintain morale during challenging times.

Together, let's embark on a journey to create joy-filled teams that elevate the elementary school experience for both teachers and students. Join us to unlock the transformative power of joyful collaboration in education!

### **Cultivating Joy: Through Play-Based Block Teams**

Georgina Rivera, West Hartford Public Schools Rebecca Boyce, West Hartford Public Schools Rachel Burnett, West Hartford Public Schools

Join Kindergarten educators as they share ways to integrate play-based learning through block teams. You will get to see kindergarten children in action as they select, design and create block structures from all over the world. As the block teams engage in this playful center, they develop both academic and social-emotional learning skills. When taking block play to the next level, students develop agency and a stronger sense of identity while increasing their skills and intellect. You will not want to miss this interactive session with actual footage and photos of children engaged in authentic play.