AURORA INSTITUTE

Virtual Symposium 2020

A New Dawn for Every Learner

October 26-28

AURORA INSTITUTE

A New Dawn for Every Learner

Our Mission

The mission of Aurora Institute is to drive the transformation of education systems and accelerate the advancement of breakthrough policies and practices to ensure high-quality learning for all.

Our Vision

We envision a world where all people are empowered to attain the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to achieve success, contribute to their communities, and advance society.

Our Values

STUDENT-CENTERED

We do everything to focus on what is best for all students. We believe that learning environments should begin and end with the learners in mind, empowering them to participate in shaping their learning experience.

CREDIBLE

We are non-partisan. We serve with objectivity and integrity. We activate change by being proximate and responsive to the field.

EQUITY-DRIVEN

Our moral purpose is to transform education such that each child has what they need to develop their full academic, social and personal capacity. We strive to disrupt the structural inequities driving the systems we've inherited. Access to high-quality, appropriately designed learning models and technologies can and should drive equitable opportunities and outcomes.

KNOWLEDGE-DRIVEN

We are a learning organization that is grounded in research in learning sciences and technologies. We contribute to and amplify the knowledge base to inform and influence both policy and practice.

FUTURE-FOCUSED

We are a forward-leaning, dynamic organization committed to pushing and leading the field beyond incremental improvement towards transformation, inspired by domestic and global innovations and advancements in learning sciences and technologies.

COLLABORATIVE

We are part of a larger community. We work together with stakeholders and allies to transform conditions and advance the field.

JOIN THE CONVERSATION: #AURORA2020

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	Anchoring the Educational Ecosystem – The Emerging Role of the Intermediary *Paul Leather, Gretchen Morgan, Center for Innovation in Education; Ellen Hume-Howard, New Hampshire Learning Initiative; Rebecca Holmes, Colorado Education Initiative; Tony Monfiletto, Future Focused Education*	**CLICK TO JOIN**
	A Promise for Equitable Futures: New Research and Strategies for Advancing Universal Pathways and Ecosystems *Dr. Katherine Casey, imaginEDU*	**CLICK TO JOIN**
	Creating High-Quality Professional Learning: Enabling Choice, Ownership, and More Focused Support *Beth Rabbitt, Juliana Finegan, The Learning Accelerator; Errika Baker, Chicago Public Schools; Kristen Watkins, Dallas Independent School District*	**CLICK TO JOIN**
	Designed to Thrive: Creating Culminating Assessment for Learning Experiences Wherein All Students Can Thrive *Alcine Mumby, Abby Benedetto, Envision Learning Partners*	**CLICK TO JOIN**
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	Multiple Pathways Through Learning and Into Work: Innovations in Youth Apprenticeship & Work-Based Learning *Taylor White, Joyce Hwang, New America; Martha Ross, Brookings Institution*	**CLICK TO JOIN**
	Quality with an Equity Lens: In Pursuit of a Culturally-Sustaining School Quality Review *Diana Lebeaux, Peter Piazza, The Center for Collaborative Education*	**CLICK TO JOIN**

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Making It: What Today's Kids Need for Tomorrow's World Stephanie Malia Krauss	**CLICK TO JOIN**
Pathways to Personalization: A Framework for School Change Shawn Rubin, Cathy Sanford	**CLICK TO JOIN**
Putting Students First: A Game Plan for Personalized Learning Marsha Jones, Laureen Avery, Joseph DiMartino, Shelly Poage	**CLICK TO JOIN**
Scheduling for Competency-Based Education Doug Finn III, Michelle Finn	**CLICK TO JOIN**
The NEW Team Habits: A Guide to New School Rules Anthony Kim, Keara Mascareñaz, Kawai Lai	**CLICK TO JOIN**
The Power of Student Agency: Looking Beyond Grit to Close the Opportunity Gap Anindya Kundu *Moderator: Chris Liang-Vergara, World Class Education*	**CLICK TO JOIN**

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Conference-at-a-Glance

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	Continuity of Learning in Texas: What We Learned from Blended, Personalized Learning Schools Andrew Hodge, Texas Education Agency; Kristen Watkins, Dallas Independent School District; Kathy Horner, Winters Independent School District; Kellie Wilks, Lauren Tavarez, Ector County Independent School District; Dr. Heather Greenhalgh-Spencer, Texas Tech University	**CLICK TO JOIN**
	Distance Learning for All: Strategic Implementation of Remote Learning for 40,000 Students and 3,000 Staff Steve Kong, Steven Dunlap, Christalle Hart, Riverside Unified School District	**CLICK TO JOIN**
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	Scheduling for Personalized Competency-Based Education Doug Finn, Marzano Resources	**CLICK TO JOIN**

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This newsletter provides:
- Webinar announcements
- Publications releases
- News digests
- Policy updates impacting the field
- Event information, including annual Symposium

Conference-at-a-Glance

Wednesday, October 28, 2020		Links to Join
11:00-11:30 AM ET	**Student Panel Plenary – Students are Catalysts for Change: Youth Perspectives on Education** *Nia Innis, Walter Payton College Preparatory High School* *Ashley Lin, Union High School* *Julius Pedro, Native American Community Academy* *Eloisa Trujillo-Carrillo, Denver Public Schools (Current), Westminster Public Schools (Former)* *Dayvon Woodard, Nashville Big Picture High School* *Moderator: Chris Liang-Vergara, World Class Education*	**CLICK TO JOIN**
11:30-11:45 AM ET	**Break**	
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	Equity-Driven Design Thinking: Enhancing Traditional Human-Centered Design with an Equity Lens *Constance Parham, Lizz Rene, DC Public Schools Design Lab*	**CLICK TO JOIN**
	How Intentional Equity Serves All Students *Bennison Ntsakey, Brooklyn Laboratory High School; Lillian Hsu, Latitude High School; Eric Collazo, Washington Leadership Academy; Andy MacMannis, Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts*	**CLICK TO JOIN**
	Increasing the Racial, Ethnic, and Linguistic Diversity of the Educator Workforce *Mark Kostin, Great Schools Partnership; Ventura Rodriguez, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education; Jess DeCarolis, Vermont Agency of Education; Sam Galloway, Bristol Board of Education; Dr. Terrell M. Hill, Windsor Public Schools*	**CLICK TO JOIN**
	Partnering with Families to Shape the Post-COVID World *Gretchen Morgan, Doannie Tran, Paul Leather, Center for Innovation in Education*	**CLICK TO JOIN**
	Positioning Competency-Based Education as an Equity Strategy: Theory, Practice, and Evidence to Push the Field *Eric Toshalis, Virgel Hammonds, KnowledgeWorks*	**CLICK TO JOIN**
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Conference-at-a-Glance

Wednesday, October 28, 2020		Links to Join
12:45-1:00 PM ET	**Break**	
1:00-2:00 PM ET	**Breakout Sessions**	
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	Designing an SEL-Focused Advisory as the Foundation for School Transformation (Including in Remote/Hybrid Models) *Rupa Gupta, Sown to Grow; James Bailey, Leading Learners Institute; Kimberly Collins*	**CLICK TO JOIN**
	How Do you Teach, Assess, and Report the Transferable Social Emotional Skills on your Portrait of a Graduate? *Cory Henwood, Iron County School District; Heather Lambert, Cody Christenson, Launch High School*	**CLICK TO JOIN**
	Ola Ka Honua: Education as Ecosystem *Gary Chapin, Educating for Good; Cheryl Ka'uhane Lupenui, Kohala Center*	**CLICK TO JOIN**
	Social Emotional Learning: Tension and Complement to Blended and Personalized Learning *Dr. Heather Greenhalgh-Spencer, Dr. Jeasik Cho, Texas Tech University; Claudia Meza, Spring Branch Independent School District*	**CLICK TO JOIN**
	The Power of Two: Strategies to Strengthen Instruction through Effective Home/School Communication *Dr. Sean Smith, University of Kansas; Dr. Kavita Rao, University of Hawaii*	**CLICK TO JOIN**
	The Skills They Need: Tools and Resources to Accelerate the Development of Skills and Dispositions in Learners *Jonathan Vander Els, Ellen Hume-Howard, New Hampshire Learning Initiative; Paul Leather, Center for Innovation in Education*	**CLICK TO JOIN**
	Use the Learning Sciences to Empower the Learner to Become an Agent and Advocate of their Own Learning *Kathleen McClaskey, Make Learning Personal, Empower the Learner, LLC; Andelee Espinosa, Brookfield Center High School*	**CLICK TO JOIN**
2:00-2:15 PM ET	**Break**	
2:15-3:00 PM ET	**Closing Plenary – Top Trends for the Future of K–12 Education: A Path Forward & Equitable Futures** *Nicholas Donohue, President and CEO, Nellie Mae Education Foundation* *Virgel Hammonds, Chief Learning Officer, KnowledgeWorks* *Felicia Cumings Smith, Senior Director, US Regions, National Geographic* *Moderator: Susan Patrick, President and CEO, Aurora Institute*	**CLICK TO JOIN**

Note: Each keynote and session across the Symposium 2020 program has a capacity limit. Should you receive a notification that a session is at capacity, we welcome you to join a different breakout session, and we invite you to view the session recordings for any sessions you may have missed, which will be openly available on our website after the Symposium.

Opening Keynote Plenary
Monday, October 26, 11:00-11:50 AM ET

Future of Education: Leapfrogging in a Time of Crisis

CLICK TO JOIN

There is an opportunity and urgency for fundamental systems change in K-12 education across the United States. The context of teaching and learning has changed, but the systems in which they are situated have not. Now, more than ever, there is an imperative to leapfrog and create ecosystems for learning anytime and anywhere.

In this keynote, presenters will describe a macro approach for leapfrogging education inequity, the need for innovative future-ready teaching and learning, and the complex systems shifts that need to occur. Education transformation needs to occur in four dimensions: teaching and learning; recognition of learning; diversifying people and places; and harnessing technology. This keynote will draw on leading-edge research on strategies to realize that vision, from policy to innovative programs, to new ways of thinking about learning ecosystems that transcend education, communities, and the workforce. Join this conversation to hear from education leaders driving the transformation of education systems, accelerating breakthrough policies and practices, and creating broad learning ecosystems that advance equitable futures and create pathways for all youth.

Opening and Facilitation

Susan Patrick
President and Chief Executive Officer
Aurora Institute

Leapfrogging Inequality: Remaking Education to Help Young People Thrive

Dr. Rebecca Winthrop
Co-Director and Senior Fellow, Center for Universal Education
The Brookings Institution

Global Competence, Equity, and Education Systems Change

Dr. Tony Jackson
Vice President for Education
Asia Society

A Promise for Equitable Futures: Enabling Systems Change to Scale Educational and Economic Mobility Pathways

Dr. Katherine Casey
Founder and Principal
imaginEDU

Keynote Plenary
Monday, October 26, 12:00-12:50 PM ET

Systems Change: Bright Spots in Driving Collective Design

CLICK TO JOIN

Join this keynote presentation of bright spots — programs and initiatives from organizations driving innovations for equity at the local, state, and national levels — to accelerate education systems change. Be inspired by leaders as they share deep shifts in thinking to create more innovative approaches to address long-standing issues and tackle problems in novel ways. The session will highlight their work and offer snapshots to build knowledge on promising work across the field to support equity-driven, future-focused education.

The Power of Voice and Ownership in Designing for Equity and Excellence

Oscar Santos
Executive Director
Center for Collaborative Education

Mastery Transcript Consortium

Stacy Caldwell
Chief Executive Officer
Mastery Transcript Consortium

Future Workforce Now

Rachael Stephens
Program Director, Workforce Development & Economic Policy
National Governors Association

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Breakout Sessions
Monday, October 26, 1:00–2:00 PM ET

Advancing Equity in Classrooms, Schools, and Districts through Assessment for Learning Practices

CLICK TO JOIN

Developing assessment practices that lead to equitable opportunities for learning requires shedding certain entrenched ways of doing things. Teachers need to establish classrooms where students feel they belong and create opportunities for students to examine their work for evidence of learning toward a goal. This session features ways teachers, schools, and districts (re-)structured feedback processes to be alert to issues of equity, privilege, and status and support meaningful learning. We will also talk about assessment for learning practices in the time of COVID.

Learning Outcomes:

» Learn about classroom practices that help students and adults feel valued and their identities affirmed.

» Learn routines and feedback practices that help students and adults set meaningful learning goals for themselves and then work toward achieving them.

» Learn under what conditions institutional structures can connect educators in different roles to learn together.

Dr. Ann Jaquith, Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education; Alec Barron, Escondido Union High School District; Pam Betten, Sunnyside Unified School District; Trish Liguori, Leadership Public Schools

Anchoring the Educational Ecosystem – The Emerging Role of the Intermediary

CLICK TO JOIN

For learner-centered, competency-based education to arise in schools and districts all across this country, state-level and national intermediary organizations have become critically important within state educational ecosystems. As education generally has become more political, and subject to electoral changes, it has become increasingly difficult for federal and state agencies and leaders to support the work necessary over time. A panel of intermediary leaders will share learning experiences.

Learning Outcomes:

» Gain information in what it means to be an equity seeking leader in a new learning ecosystem supporting all students.

» Gain skills in organizational development and positioning necessary to establish an intermediary function in their state or locality.

» Learn ways to interrogate their own systems with regards to creating an equity-seeking capacity to ensure opportunities for all students.

Paul Leather, Gretchen Morgan, Center for Innovation in Education; Ellen Hume-Howard, New Hampshire Learning Initiative; Rebecca Holmes, Colorado Education Initiative; Tony Monfiletto, Future Focused Education

A Promise for Equitable Futures: New Research and Strategies for Advancing Universal Pathways and Ecosystems

CLICK TO JOIN

Fewer than one in five American students follow a clear and uninterrupted path from high school through college to career. The promise of a public education is to prepare all learners to engage in, contribute to, and achieve purpose in the world, both as it is today and as it will be tomorrow. And yet, the American education system as we know it is insufficient to realize this commitment. This fall, the Aurora Institute released a book, *A Promise for Equitable Futures: Enabling Systems Change to Scale Educational and Economic Mobility Pathways,* that issues a call to action to states to enact a Learner Promise: a commitment that every learner will have access and support to pursue pathways with system-wide opportunities that guarantee entry into meaningful, chosen careers that will build social and economic capital over the course of their lives. Operating under this promise, states would enact systems of governance, policy, and infrastructure to certify that learners who demonstrate competencies in K12, postsecondary, workforce, and community settings along supported pathways with access to continuing education and a purposeful, living wage career. States would commit to taking the systemic policy actions necessary to disrupt inequities in access, engagement, and attainment for Black, Latinx, Indigenous and low-income students. And, states would reimagine education not as a linear, time-bound sequence of learning that occurs within institutions of formal education,

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but as a learning ecosystem: an equitable, dynamic, and responsive system in which learners can customize their learning experiences as they navigate learning experiences and pathways across schools, workplaces, and communities. Join co-author Dr. Katherine Casey to learn about the book's findings and explore strategies for action.

Learning Outcomes:

» Understand critical forces shaping and reshaping the future of education, employment, and equity.

» Understand key components of thriving pathways and ecosystems, including culture, learning systems, and infrastructure.

» Identify opportunities to affect multi-level systems change.

Dr. Katherine Casey, imaginEDU

Creating High-Quality Professional Learning: Enabling Choice, Ownership, and More Focused Support

CLICK TO JOIN

The need to move towards more personalized, flexibly delivered professional learning for educators has never been more urgent; efforts to serve learners equitably during COVID-19 increased the demands teachers face as well as the need to support learning in remote and hybrid settings. This session will offer both a grounding framework around professional development through online means as well as various strategies and resources to start building and implementing new experiences. Research-informed recommendations will be complemented by the "on the ground" perspective of two district leaders actively translating theory to practice as they innovate in their systems. Participants will be given tools, insights, and examples of personalized and remote professional development in action to both reflect on their own practice as well as explore varied approaches to enable choice, ownership, and more focused support for their educators.

Learning Outcomes:

» Learn about key research-based quality drivers that support effective learning for educators in the remote and blended learning spaces.

» Learn about specific strategies used by districts that engage educators by allowing choice around pace, place, path, and even content to ensure ownership and personalization.

» Explore concrete resources and strategies to start building your own personalized remote and hybrid experiences for your educators.

Beth Rabbitt, Juliana Finegan, The Learning Accelerator; Errika Baker, Chicago Public Schools; Kristen Watkins, Dallas Independent School District

Designed to Thrive: Creating Culminating Assessment for Learning Experiences Wherein All Students Can Thrive

CLICK TO JOIN

Our session asks, "What kind of culminating performance assessment experience would we create to ensure that ALL learners thrive – especially those furthest from opportunity?" Participants will explore an example of a performance assessment, and refine it from the perspective of a vulnerable student in order to ensure that ALL students thrive.

Learning Outcomes:

» Analyze a type of performance assessment for its major components.

» Apply student personas to reflect on and revise their prototype to ensure that those students furthest from opportunity can thrive.

Alcine Mumby, Abby Benedetto, Envision Learning Partners

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on Twitter

Breakout Sessions
Monday, October 26, 1:00-2:00 PM ET

Making More Learning Visible: The Frontiers of Assessment and Credentialing

CLICK TO JOIN

This session takes an international perspective on innovation in assessment and credentialing. It showcases work underway to assess a broader range of skills and capabilities and to design more holistic high school credentials. We will look at examples from contexts in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the UK. Participants will be introduced to a set of principles for interrogating assessment designs, in particular assessment that will be used for high-stakes credentialing purposes.

Learning Outcomes:

» Learn about alternative approaches to assessing and credentialing learner capabilities.

» Examine real-world examples of practices in development in countries beyond the U.S.

» Learn about and practice applying a framework to evaluate assessment designs.

Dr. Amelia Peterson, London School of Economics

Multiple Pathways Through Learning and Into Work: Innovations in Youth Apprenticeship & Work-Based Learning

CLICK TO JOIN

Youth apprenticeship is a promising strategy for challenging persistent inequities in the educational and employment outcomes of youth, while simultaneously addressing the talent needs of employers in industries such as healthcare, IT, advanced manufacturing, business and professional services, and education. This session will explore some innovative youth apprenticeship models emerging around the U.S. and consider how the partnerships that make youth apprenticeship successful can strengthen and expand work-based learning ecosystems.

Learning Outcomes:

» Understand the dimensions and potential of high-quality youth apprenticeship.

» Learn about promising practices and programs youth apprenticeship partnerships emerging across the U.S.

» Consider how youth apprenticeship fits into emerging work-based learning systems.

Taylor White, Joyce Hwang, New America; Martha Ross, Brookings Institution

Quality with an Equity Lens: In Pursuit of a Culturally-Sustaining School Quality Review

CLICK TO JOIN

Do school quality reviews reinforce inequities? In this interactive session, participants will explore an alternative: an inclusive, holistic school quality review system that prioritizes culturally-sustaining practices and equitable outcomes. Participants will engage with the Center for Collaborative Education's (CCE) field-tested school quality tools, discuss culturally-sustaining approaches to school quality, and develop plans for how to build holistic, equity-minded school quality review systems in their own settings.

Learning Outcomes:

» Develop early plans for a culturally sustaining school quality review system using CCE's systems and tools as resources.

» Learn about and engage with new tools to support inclusive and culturally-responsive school self-assessments for quality.

» Learn the hallmarks of school quality review systems that are culturally-sustaining, holistic, and aligned with the pursuit of equitable outcomes.
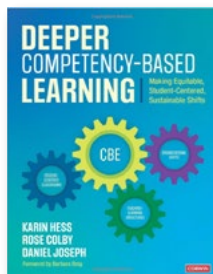
Diana Lebeaux, Peter Piazza, Center for Collaborative Education
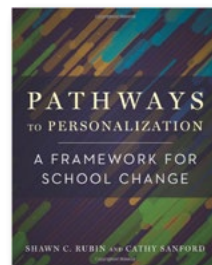
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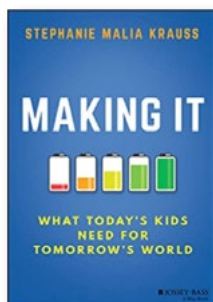# Book Clubs: Meet the Experts with Authors
Monday, October 26, 2:15-3:30 PM ET

Deeper Competency-Based Learning: Making Equitable, Student-Centered, Sustainable Shifts
Rose Colby, Karin Hess, Dan Joseph

CLICK TO JOIN

Pathways to Personalization: A Framework for School Change
Shawn C. Rubin, Cathy Sanford

CLICK TO JOIN

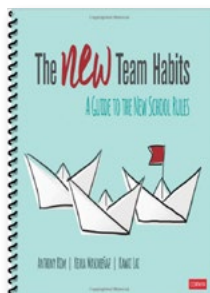*Making It: What Today's Kids Need for Tomorrow's World*
Stephanie Malia Krauss

CLICK TO JOIN

The Power of Student Agency: Looking Beyond Grit to Close the Opportunity Gap
Anindya Kundu
Moderator: Chris Liang-Vergara

CLICK TO JOIN

The NEW Team Habits: A Guide to the New School Rules
Anthony Kim, Keara Mascareñaz, Kawai Lai

CLICK TO JOIN

Putting Students First: A Game Plan for Personalizing Learning
Marsha Jones, Laureen Avery, Joseph DiMartino
Joined by Shelly Poage, Principal, John Tyson Elementary, Springdale Public Schools

CLICK TO JOIN

Scheduling for Personalized Competency-Based Education (A Guide to Class Scheduling Based on Personalized Learning and Promoting Student Proficiency)
Michelle Finn, Douglas Finn III

CLICK TO JOIN

Keynote Plenary
Tuesday, October 27, 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM ET

Lifting Up Best Practices for Quality and Equity — Even During COVID-19

CLICK TO JOIN

Join this keynote to explore how quality practices can promote educational equity for all students. Speakers will share the importance of deep and caring relationships, timely research on student engagement, and global best practices to promote rigorous and relevant learning. We will explore lessons learned and future directions for student-centered education to ensure equity and access. The discussions will highlight current research and quality frameworks in new learning models that have used competency-based, blended, and online education as a strategy to realize educational equity. This conversation will demonstrate how implementation of personalized, competency-based learning models must be aligned with a commitment to equity in order to realize our common intention of deep learning for every student.

Opening and Facilitation

Susan Patrick
President and Chief Executive Officer
Aurora Institute

Delivering on the Promise of Competency: Ensuring Equity, Student Agency, and Collaborations with Families

David Ruff
Executive Director
Great Schools Partnership

Showing the Way: A Provocation for Competency-Based Systems

Javier Guzman
Regional Director - AZ, CA, NM, NV, UT
Big Picture Learning

Keynote Plenary
Tuesday, October 27, 12:15-1:15 PM ET

Bright Spots from Personalized, Competency-Based Districts and Schools Across the USA

🔗 CLICK TO JOIN

District and school leaders across the United States developed inspiring solutions to shift to anytime, anywhere learning on a moment's notice during COVID-19. These educators are leading the way, stepping up, collaborating, and engaging students in new ways. Join this Bright Spots keynote to hear from educators who are sharing best practices, supporting and inspiring one another across networks, learning as their journeys continue, and reflecting with each other to expand their student-centered learning designs in new and creative ways.

Gratitude and Fortitude: Listening to Lead

Renee Hill
Chief Academic Officer
Riverside Unified School District

Relationships, Relationships, Relationships

Dr. Steve Kossakoski
Chief Executive Officer
Virtual Learning Academy Charter School

SBC² — Accelerated Attainment through Competency-Based Education

John Clemente
Co-Founder and Executive Director
South Bronx Community Charter School

Building Community When You Have No Community

Cory Steiner
Superintendent
Northern Cass School District 97

Designing Peak Moments that Build Trust

Kristen Watkins
Director, Personalized Learning
Dallas Independent School District

Accelerating Educational Evolution by Prioritizing People, Passions, and Purpose

Brenda Diaz
Principal
Nashville Big Picture High School

Moderator: Chris Liang-Vergara
Founder and Partner
World Class Education

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Advancing Equitable Community Engagement in Virtual Spaces

CLICK TO JOIN

In this highly engaging session, Beloved Community will unpack how to maintain authentic and inclusive community engagement strategies in virtual spaces. Beloved will review the Community Engagement Spectrum tool and unpack how to adapt the strategies to virtual spaces. Attendees will discuss their vision for community engagement internally and externally (students, families, and community members) and how that will impact the implementation and sustainability of their equity goals.

Learning Outcomes:

» Learn how to utilize Beloved Community's framing questions for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to interrogate your community engagement practices.

» Utilize the Community Engagement Spectrum to define effective community engagement strategies.

» Discuss best practices in inclusive community engagement practices in virtual spaces.

Lesley Brown Rawlings, Beloved Community

An Introduction to K-12 Competency-Based Education

CLICK TO JOIN

Competency-based education is a system designed to ensure equity for all students to develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed for college and career success. This session will introduce the rationale for transforming to competency-based systems and discuss key strategies such as cultural responsiveness, building student agency, advancing based on mastery, varied pacing and pathways, and meaningful assessment. We will also discuss resources and policies that support effective implementation.

Learning Outcomes:

» Understand the rationale for and elements of competency-based education.

» Build awareness of resources and policies that enable implementation of competency-based education.

» Identify strategies to deepen your setting's competency-based transformation.

Eliot Levine, Alexis Chambers, Aurora Institute; Travis Lape, Harrisburg School District; Althea Brutus-Garraway, Rosmery Milczewski, Flushing International High School

Continuity of Learning in Texas: What We Learned from Blended, Personalized Learning Schools

CLICK TO JOIN

This panel targets the specific implementation challenge of continuity of learning, within the state of Texas, as schools moved to online-only teaching during the COVID pandemic. The panel invites members from urban and rural school districts, the state agency (TEA), and state-sponsored support groups to discuss both the specific challenges and successes of moving to online-only education as a group of schools that were already committed to and practicing blended and personalized learning methods.

Learning Outcomes:

» Engage in a broad discussion and debate around both the challenges and opportunities of leveraging blended and personalized learning habits of teaching and learning during the move to online-only instruction.

» Perform a diagnostic for your own context for technology-rich versus blended, personalized learning.

» Engage in a Challenge-Solution focus as they plan for future-oriented practices in their districts.

Andrew Hodge, Texas Education Agency; Kristen Watkins, Dallas Independent School District; Kathy Horner, Winters Independent School District; Kellie Wilks, Lauren Tavarez, Ector County Independent School District; Dr. Heather Greenhalgh-Spencer, Texas Tech University

Distance Learning for All: Strategic Implementation of Remote Learning for 40,000 Students and 3,000 Staff

CLICK TO JOIN

In uncertain times, learn how we created a multi-level approach to supporting 40,000 students and 3,000 staff members to shift to distance learning. We will highlight the multiple strategic plans used to provide professional development for all, community resources, as well as access to devices and hotspots for all students in our district. Learn how to leverage every member within your organization and teams to lift, support, and strengthen distance learning for all.

Learning Outcomes:

» Understand the strategic process for rapidly shifting to a distance learning model.

» Understand best practices for leveraging the strengths of teams in the organization to support distance learning.

» Walk away with strategies to support teachers, students, and their community to maximize the strengths of distance learning models.

Steve Kong, Steven Dunlap, Christalle Hart, Riverside Unified School District

Empowering Online and Blended Programs to Customize Legally Sound Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities

CLICK TO JOIN

By providing a quick overview of laws and requirements and then moving into a more in-depth analysis on empowering online and blended learning programs to customize legally sound opportunities for individuals with disabilities, this session would be appropriate for teachers and administrators with more advanced knowledge and experience. More challenging questions and analysis would be posed for more sophisticated participants thus offering a comprehensive and collaborative experience for all attendees.

Learning Outcomes:

» Understand applicable laws and regulations pertaining to students with disabilities and how to practically intersect law with personalized planning.

» Be equipped to address potential issues before they lead to complaints, with strategies for avoiding potential liability.

» Be empowered to customize personalized learning for students with disabilities and to advocate for positive outcomes.

Kevin McKenna, Nicole Snyder, McKenna Snyder LLC

Grading and Reporting for Educational Equity

CLICK TO JOIN

The abrupt shift to remote learning this year revealed many inequities. A spotlight was shone on grading and reporting – an already contentious and emotionally fraught topic. In this session, we will review the eight central tenets that should guide schools' efforts to examine their grading and reporting systems. We will explore sample policies and grading guidelines from schools that have used these tenets to successfully re-design their systems for equitable, competency-based learning.

Learning Outcomes:

» Reflect on current practices and experiences.

» Deepen understanding of the tenets that move a school toward more equitable grading practices.

» Create a plan for implementing more equitable grading and reporting practices in our own classroom or school.

Mark Kostin, Kate Gardoqui, Katie Thompson, Great Schools Partnership

Inviting in Experts: How to Leverage Authentic Audiences in the Virtual Classroom

CLICK TO JOIN

Involving authentic audiences in the learning process can imbue projects with purpose and raise the stakes for the quality of student work. While there is value with experts simply sharing knowledge, the impact is magnified when students present to and get feedback from authentic audiences. Two alternative schools from Providence, RI and Holyoke, MA will share how they have created performance tasks that include presentation to authentic audiences in both physical and virtual classrooms.

Learning Outcomes:

» Participants will learn about how projects can be designed to include authentic audience participation, through public exhibitions and expert feedback.

» Participants will brainstorm how they can design learning experiences and performance tasks that include authentic audiences.

» Participants will build a plan to invite authentic audiences into their school or classroom as a way to engage students and strengthen student work.

Christy Kingham, Springpoint; Geoffrey Schmidt, Holyoke Public Schools; Jessica Waters, Nowell Leadership Academy

Meeting Students Where They Are: Competency-Based Pedagogy that Works for Remote and In-Person Learning

CLICK TO JOIN

This moment is bringing into sharp focus the need to meet learners where they are, engage them, support them in increasing their core competencies, and create strongly inclusive learning communities that center learners' lived experiences and prioritize a feeling of connectedness. This session introduces a model for learner-centered communities, and digs into a framework for personalized, competency-based pedagogical practice. Explore the research and two high-leverage pedagogical practices: learner-to-learner discussion and feedback and conferencing. Consider how the core practices can be implemented in your learning settings across diverse roles, whether teacher, instructional coach, or educational leader.

Learning Outcomes:

» Understand key learning sciences research regarding the key ingredients for meeting students where they are.

» Explore a framework of key competency-based learning pedagogical practices that can be integrated into the daily classroom.

» Investigate two core pedagogical practices that will support and sustain learners in both remote and in-person learning communities.

Antonia Rudenstine, Laurie Gagnon, reDesign LLC; Jessica Salcedo, Deborah Park, Circulos High School

#Aurora2020

Research on Coaching, Leadership and Inter-School Professional Development for Quality in Personalized, Alternative High Schools

CLICK TO JOIN

For just over three years, a growing network of alternative schools across Washington and California have partnered to redefine how their communities experience school. Through a focus on personalized instructional approaches such as student learning plans, interest-driven projects, authentic assessments, and community-based internships, the network has grown from 11 to 40 schools and has witnessed positive shifts in student outcomes across a variety of indicators. Learn how this network, called the Upstream Collaborative, has changed professional practice through innovative instructional coaching and collaborative professional development.

Learning Outcomes:

» Develop understanding of coaching methods and moves used to redesign schools in service of personalized learning.

» Learn about and engage with innovative professional development strategies such as multi-school micro-convenings, virtual communities of practice, and inter-school collaboration.

» Connect with coaches and practitioners from the collaborative in small groups to discuss ways in which participants could apply the learning and resources to their context.

Loren Demeroutis, Ann Curtis, Big Picture Learning

Scheduling for Personalized Competency-Based Education

CLICK TO JOIN

Scheduling students based on their needs is one of the most unrated components to personalized, competency-based education (PCBE). This session will focus on what is needed to effectively schedule students and go through examples of how to create a PCBE schedule. Participants will analyze examples and discuss the possible approaches to organizing students based on their needs. Be prepared to be actively involved in the conversation and discuss real situations and realistic solutions.

Learning Outcomes:

» Identify key components to what is needed to effectively create a PCBE schedule.

» Analyze different approaches to organizing students through horizontal and vertical scheduling.

» Develop strategies to overcome individual and/or organizational barriers to develop an effective PCBE schedule.

Doug Finn, Marzano Resources

Join Upcoming AURORA INSTITUTE Webinars

November 5, 2020 — 2:00 PM ET
Competency-Based Education Systems: Performance Assessment Using Proficiency Scales

Bob Marzano, Bill Zima, Marzano Academies

REGISTER

November 12, 2020 — 2:00 PM ET
Designing Engaging, Purposeful, Rigorous Tasks for Remote and In-Person Learning

Antonia Rudenstine, Laurie Gagnon, reDesign LLC; Deborah Park, Jessica Salcedo, Círculos High School, Santa Ana Unified School District

REGISTER

November 10, 2020 — 2:00 PM ET
Deeper Competency-Based Learning: Making Equitable, Student-Centered, Sustainable Shifts

Dr. Karin Hess, Educational Research in Action; Rose Colby, Competency Education Specialist; Dan Joseph, Competency Based Education Solutions LLC

REGISTER

November 17, 2020 — 2:00 PM ET
Supporting the Learner Throughout Their Competency-Based Journey: Examining Tech Standards

Brandt Redd, Michael Jay, MatchMaker Education Labs; Jeanne Kitchen, Credential Engine

REGISTER

For More Information, visit aurora-institute.org/events-webinars/

#Aurora2020

Student Panel Plenary — Students Are Catalysts for Change: Youth Perspectives on Education

CLICK TO JOIN

Students are the drivers for the future of education. Youth voice must remain unequivocally central to education redesign efforts in order to drive positive, authentic change. Join this student panel to understand how students are experiencing this unprecedented time. Students will provide insights and testimony on what's working in the design of student-centered, personalized, competency-based learning. Students will share their ideas on how we might do a better job rethinking the use of time, space, and place in designing new learning models and schools as we set a path for the future. Youth will offer feedback on how they experience this unprecedented time and guide us to create positive changes in climate and culture while modernizing systems and school structures.

Nia Innis
Walter Payton College Preparatory High School

Eloisa Trujillo-Carrillo
Westminster Public Schools (Former)
Denver Public Schools (Current)

Ashley Lin
Union High School

Julius Pedro
Native American Community Academy

Dayvon Woodard
Nashville Big Picture High School

Moderator: Chris Liang-Vergara
Founder and Partner
World Class Education

#Aurora2020

Can Measuring What Matters + Equitable Evaluation = Diverse, Equitable, and Inclusive Learning?

CLICK TO JOIN

Would it surprise you to hear that "measuring what matters" may actually oppose "diversity, equity, and inclusion"? We're guessing yes. That's why we want you at this open fishbowl session. Hear from three presenters working to ensure measurement, rigor, and accountability lead to equity, inclusion, and diversity; rather than replicate current systems of uneven opportunity. Even better, you can reflect on and share your own perspectives at this sure-to-be lively, meaningful, interactive discussion.

Learning Outcomes:

» Describe the potential pitfalls and blindspots between "measuring what matters" and "diversity, equity, and inclusion" efforts.

» Understand and be able to define equitable evaluation and its potential relevance to your own work.

» Identify these potential pitfalls and blindspots in your own past, current, and future perspectives on and experiences.

Xiomara Padamsee, Promise54; Sarojani Mohammed, Ed Research Works; Ulcca Hansen, Educating Potential

Equity-Driven Design Thinking: Enhancing Traditional Human-Centered Design with an Equity Lens

CLICK TO JOIN

Recently, there's been increased interest in the use of design-thinking within K-12 education. But too often, this theory fails to acknowledge the role of institutional bias and individual blind spots. During this session, DC Public Schools' Design Lab and Equity Strategy & Programming Team will share hands-on strategies, practices, and lessons learned with other equity-minded practitioners interested in making their human-centered design work more inclusive and equitable.

Learning Outcomes:

» Understand how EquityxDesign enhances traditional design by acknowledging the importance of designer and user identities – including race, class, and gender identities.

» Use an equity lens to reflect on current strengths and growth areas within your classroom, school, or organization to identify areas to apply EquityxDesign practices.

» Practice various equity-focused empathy tools to build a deeper understanding of yourself and your user.

Constance Parham, Lizz Rene, DC Public Schools Design Lab

How Intentional Equity Serves All Students

CLICK TO JOIN

Equity in a school building doesn't just happen, it is purposefully cultivated. Hear from school leaders on their methods to curate opportunities for all their students. In the wake of COVID they will share how the shift to remote learning not only highlighted inequitable truths but also provided a chance

to even the playing field. Learn about family engagement tactics, diverse recruiting strategies that mirror local communities, and how students' needs are met where they are.

Learning Outcomes:

» Gain a sense of how XQ schools successfully shifted learning to a virtual space during the COVID crisis.

» Learn tactics that allow their school professionals to create more equitable learning environments, both virtually and in-person.

» Leave with a clear understanding of more inclusive visions of students' success.

Bennison Ntsakey, Brooklyn Laboratory High School; Lillian Hsu, Latitude High School; Eric Collazo, Washington Leadership Academy; Andy MacMannis, Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts

Increasing the Racial, Ethnic, and Linguistic Diversity of the Educator Workforce

CLICK TO JOIN

A racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse educator workforce is vital to closing the inequitable gaps that persist between students of color and their white peers. The New England Secondary School Consortium recently released a report with recommendations and critical approaches to address the systemic issues that prevent us from achieving this important goal. Join some of the authors of the report to learn more and engage in a discussion about what each of us can do.

Learning Outcomes:

» Explore the report's framework and recommendations.

» Engage in a discussion with members of the task force.

» Identify promising next steps to consider to increase the diversity of the educator workforce in your own setting.

Mark Kostin, Great Schools Partnership; Ventura Rodriguez, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education; Jess DeCarolis, Vermont Agency of Education; Sam Galloway, Bristol Board of Education; Dr. Terrell M. Hill, Windsor Public Schools

Partnering with Families to Shape the Post-COVID World

CLICK TO JOIN

Families have learned a lot about school and educators have had to make countless pivots to how we engage learners and families and deliver instruction. Do you have ways to authentically co-create post-COVID school with families? In this session, we will hear real and messy examples from communities that took on this process explicitly as a means of expanding who they hear from and who has influence. Participants will reflect on these stories to begin to create equity seeking plans of their own.

Learning Outcomes:

» Learn how to engage families as co-creators of post-COVID schooling.

» Examine the role power dynamics and history play in making authentic co-creation challenging.

» Understand more about why and how to keep families in ongoing learning networks.

Gretchen Morgan, Doannie Tran, Paul Leather, Center for Innovation in Education

Positioning Competency-Based Education as an Equity Strategy: Theory, Practice, and Evidence to Push the Field

CLICK TO JOIN

Competency-based education (CBE) can ensure high levels of success among traditionally under-served students. This session will explore CBE as an equity strategy that may be used to dismantle tracking regimes and enhance culturally-sustaining pedagogies; how to avoid using CBE in ways that exacerbate inequities; and a research agenda for capturing implementations that produce disproportionately positive impacts among under-served populations.

Learning Outcomes:

» Be able to describe how CBE can be a de-tracking/equity strategy, based on research, theory, and implementation stories from KnowledgeWorks partnerships.

» Leave with a greater understanding of the indicators that may be used to capture whether and how much a CBE intervention promoted equity in specific populations.

» Be able to apply targeted "look-fors" when assessing how well a school or system is implementing CBE as an equity strategy.

Eric Toshalis, Virgel Hammonds, KnowledgeWorks

Practical Tools to Encourage Self-Direction Among Students for In-Person and Remote Learning

CLICK TO JOIN

Educators and researchers will share their experiences developing and integrating self-direction instruction and assessment into New Hampshire's statewide performance assessment for competency-based education (PACE) system and how self-direction was a key learning support for students during COVID-19 school closures. Presenters will share their work translating the research-informed skill of self-direction into practical tools and processes for teachers and students across all grades.

Learning Outcomes:

» Summarize both the research supporting and the applied use of BEST's self-direction rubric and evidence collection tools.

» Examine the self-direction rubric and tools and articulate how this might inform changes in the design and delivery of instruction in participants' classrooms.

» Discuss the opportunities and challenges of instruction and assessment of self-direction for teachers, schools, and districts in both "in-person" and remote learning.

Karin Hess, Educational Research in Action; Wendy Surr, Surr Consulting; Elizabeth Gouzoules-Walton, Rochester Middle School; Jessica Tremblay, Tony Doucet, Souhegan High School; Kathleen White, New Hampshire Learning Initiative; Nicole Woulfe, Sanborn Regional Middle School; Cathy Baylus, Laconia Middle School; Donna Moseley-Harvey, Sanborn Regional School District

AURORA INSTITUTE | Symposium

SAVE THE DATE

October 25-28, 2021   Palm Springs, CA

Advancing Equity through Social Emotional Learning and Competency-Based Education

CLICK TO JOIN

By design, social emotional learning (SEL) and competency-based education (CBE) support cultures of equity. The pandemic caused a disruption of learning across the country and illuminated the inequities among marginalized students. The response of educators will be critical to ensuring every student's success. Come and engage in small group discussions to consider how employing SEL/CBE practices can advance equity, and develop actionable steps in supporting students academically and socially.

Learning Outcomes:

» Acquire an understanding of how SEL and CBE can promote equity.

» Make connections between the implementation of SEL and CBE and positive student outcomes.

» Identify at least three implications of work in respective schools and districts to advance equitable practices.

De McKenzie, Laura Knapp, Regional Education Lab Southeast

Bridging the Relationship Gap to Support Holistic Development: The Role of Student Success Coaches in Supporting Integrated Social-Emotional and Academic Development

CLICK TO JOIN

The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the importance of having in place a web of relationships in schools to support students' well-being and holistic development. City Year has a model of "student success coaching" that has shown promise in addressing the "relationship gap" in systemically under-resourced schools. Participants will engage in dialogue about adapting the model in the wake of COVID-19, the pros and cons of expansion of this model, and the conditions that would make this possible.

Learning Outcomes:

» Discuss how the unique needs of systemically under-resourced schools may create need for additional human capacity to support students.

» Explore how Student Success Coaches provide integrated social-emotional and academic supports and implications for practice in the wake of COVID-19.

» Understand local exemplars of increased demand for expansion of Student Success Coaches and lessons for the broader education field.

Dr. Robert Balfanz, Everyone Graduates Center, Johns Hopkins University; Tasha Fowler, Mary Jane Stevenson, Bobby Kessling, City Year

Designing an SEL-Focused Advisory as the Foundation for School Transformation (Including in Remote/Hybrid Models)

CLICK TO JOIN

Many secondary schools have implemented or are considering implementing Advisory; but too often, this space is used for administrative tasks or homework. In this design workshop, experienced practitioners will share best practices (and mistakes!) in Advisory design and coach participants in building the foundation for whole-school transformation. The proven practices and co-created designs will focus on unlocking student ownership, accountability, social-emotional skills, and metacognition.

Learning Outcomes:

» Learn the power of a well-designed Advisory period, proven and effective models, and connections to whole school redesign and transformation.

» Co-create rubrics that define the depth of student ownership and quality academic and social-emotional reflective practice.

» Design protocols for their classroom, school, or district to empower students in their learning, including goal-setting, self-tracking, and reflection.

Rupa Gupta, Sown to Grow; James Bailey, Leading Learners Institute; Kimberly Collins, Ann Richards School for Young Women Leaders

How Do You Teach, Assess, and Report the Transferable Social Emotional Skills on Your Portrait of a Graduate?

CLICK TO JOIN

A lot of time and energy is spent establishing a portrait of a graduate, inspiring us to develop students with these skills. How does this energy and vision translate into daily teaching and assessment? How do you report student progress on these transferable skills so students seek feedback towards mastering them? Join educators from Iron County School District where they have integrated their "Iron Essential 8" into their practice, culture, and even their student report cards and transcripts.

Learning Outcomes:

» Learn how a vision for a portrait of a graduate can be translated into school and classroom design and practices that work in context for all students.

» Learn how to teach, assess, and report transferable skills and dispositions in a way that encourages students to seek feedback towards mastering them.

» Examine strategies used to ensure the vision for developing transferable social-emotional skills lives in the fabric of the school culture and student experience.

Cory Henwood, Iron County School District; Heather Lambert, Cody Christenson, Launch High School

Ola Ka Honua: Education as Ecosystem

CLICK TO JOIN

The metaphor - EDUCATION::ECOSYSTEM - provides us with a powerful, inspiring, and unnerving frame. Cheryl Lupenui (Hawai'i's Na Hopena A'o (HA) initiative) joins Gary Chapin to lead participants in a provocative conversation that not only illuminates the power of the ecosystem, but demonstrates it. This conversation, arising from Hawaii's work honoring the qualities and values of indigenous culture, will change what you see as possible in education.

Learning Outcomes:

» Explore our work through the frame of the ecosystem, drawing out its powerful and unnerving implications.

» Interrogate the assumptions that tie us to our old frame and traditional practices in education – and challenge them.

» Witness how the original culture, language, and values of indigenous Hawaiian cultures are changing the education conversation there – and around the country.

Gary Chapin, Educating for Good; Cheryl Ka'uhane Lupenui, The Kohala Center

Social Emotional Learning: Tension and Complement to Blended and Personalized Learning

CLICK TO JOIN

While the framework of social emotional learning (SEL) is often used in concert with blended and personalized learning (BL/PL) strategies, there exists some tensions between these practices, as well as strong complementarities. This session targets the specific implementation challenge of fostering SEL while also supporting BL/PL. This session brings together research as well as on-the-ground experience from a school district that is currently implementing both SEL and BL/PL.

Learning Outcomes:

» Gain knowledge on the research-based competencies to effectively combine SEL and BL/PL.

» Gain hands-on design experience for developing your own competencies around SEL + BL/PL.

» Engage in a Challenge-Solution focus for group analysis of the tensions and opportunities of combining a focus on SEL with a focus and practice on BL/PL.

Dr. Heather Greenhalgh-Spencer, Dr. Jeasik Cho, Texas Tech University; Claudia Meza, Spring Branch Independent School District

The Power of Two: Strategies to Strengthen Instruction through Effective Home/School Communication

CLICK TO JOIN

When a portion of a child's instruction is home-based, it is critical to maximize the adult in the home. For a child with a disability or their struggling peers, it is vital. This presentation will examine the Power of Two by exploring specific ways to empower the parent or adult family member to serve as a learning coach. Through effective collaboration, educators can further plan, develop, and support all students to further empower learning coaches and thus, address varied learning needs.

Learning Outcomes:

» Explore interactive ways to further empower parents and adult family members to support the education of their child.

» Be able to identify specific strategies to employ to effectively enhance collaborative solutions between educators and adults in the home environment.

» Understand and begin to apply strategies and digital tools to effectively engage the adult family member in the home learning environment.

Dr. Sean Smith, University of Kansas; Dr. Kavita Rao, University of Hawaii

The Skills They Need: Tools and Resources to Accelerate the Development of Skills and Dispositions in Learners

CLICK TO JOIN

Schools are recognizing the need to build opportunities to meaningfully integrate opportunities for students to practice and develop skills and dispositions, these sometimes overlooked "competencies," that are critical to success. In this session, three New Hampshire educators, who over the past four years have helped to develop an evolved model of integration, will help participants determine their current reality and next steps through self-evaluation, utilizing unique session experiences, tools, and resources.

Learning Outcomes:

» Learn how New Hampshire's approach to integrating work study practices has evolved over the past five years.

» Be introduced to multiple resources that have been developed to better understand how these can be applied in their own settings.

» Develop a plan, with support from the presenters, to bring back to their schools/classrooms to deepen their own integration of skills and dispositions.

Jonathan Vander Els, Ellen Hume-Howard, New Hampshire Learning Initiative; Paul Leather, Center for Innovation in Education

Use the Learning Sciences to Empower the Learner to Become an Agent and Advocate of their Own Learning

CLICK TO JOIN

How can we use the learning sciences to empower every learner to become agents and advocates of their own learning? In this session, you will participate in a practical process in how to develop a Learner Profile that can empower learners to share who they are, how they learn, and what they aspire to be, their identity. Learn from a special education case manager who implements Learner Profiles with her high school learners how they advocate for their learning and lead their own IEP meetings.

Learning Outcomes:

» Develop a Learner Profile of a learner they know so that the learner can identify and discuss strengths, challenges, preferences, and needs in their learning.

» Understand how to build a Personal Learning Backpack of tools, skills, and practices needed to enhance a strength of support challenge with a learner they know.

» Understand how they can have learners lead their IEP meetings by advocating for goals to support their learning.

Kathleen McClaskey, Make Learning Personal, Empower the Learner, LLC; Andelee Espinosa, Brookfield Center High School

#Aurora2020

Closing Keynote Plenary
Wednesday, October 28, 2:15-3:00 PM ET

Top Trends for the Future of K-12 Education: A Path Forward & Equitable Futures

CLICK TO JOIN

The future is not predetermined; we are charged with creating it. Global and national trends are inspiring new ways of thinking about redesigning education so all youth can achieve success, contribute to their communities, and advance society. As education leaders, we are tasked with disrupting the structural inequities driving the education systems we've inherited and ensuring each child has what they need to develop their full academic, social, and personal capacity. Join this inspirational closing keynote on the top trends for advancing future-focused, equity-driven, student-centered education systems.

Nicholas C. Donohue
President and Chief Executive Officer
Nellie Mae Education Foundation

Virgel Hammonds
Chief Learning Officer
KnowledgeWorks

Felicia Cumings Smith
Senior Director, US Regions
National Geographic

Moderator: Susan Patrick
President and Chief Executive Officer
Aurora Institute

Resource Hub: Aurora Institute Publications
Accelerating Breakthrough Policies and Practices to Ensure High-Quality Learning for All

A Promise for Equitable Futures: Enabling Systems Change to Scale Educational and Economic Mobility Pathways

Strengthening Local Assessment Systems for Personalized, Proficiency-Based Education: Strategies and Tools for Professional Learning

Education Policy Issues for the COVID-19 Era: Policy Actions and Responses to Leverage the Moment for Future Readiness

Future Focused State Policy Actions to Transform K-12 Education

Federal Policy Priorities to Accelerate Education Innovation

Rethinking State Accountability to Support Personalized, Competency-Based Learning in K-12 Education

Current to Future State: Issues and Action Steps for State Policy to Support Personalized, Competency-Based Learning

Aligning Education Policy with the Science of Learning and Development

How Systems of Assessments Aligned with Competency-Based Education Can Support Equity

What Is Competency-Based Education? An Updated Definition

Designing for Equity: Leveraging Competency-Based Education to Ensure All Students Succeed

Moving Toward Mastery: Growing, Developing and Sustaining Educators for Competency-Based Education

Quality Principles for Competency-Based Education

Fit for Purpose: Taking the Long View on Systems Change and Policy to Support Competency Education

#Aurora2020

Assessing Field-Level Change: Lessons from the Evaluation of the Assessment for Learning Project

WATCH RECORDING

How can we know if and how a field is growing? This webinar explored the methods used in the evaluation of the Assessment for Learning Project (ALP), a field-building initiative to rethink the role of assessment in teaching and learning. We shared the evaluation's approaches to measuring the growth of the assessment for learning field, such as Social Network Analysis, field-building frameworks, and field-facing stories of exemplars in assessment for learning.

Heather Lewis-Charp, Daniela Berman, Social Policy Research Associates; Dr. Ann Jaquith, Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education (SCOPE)

Elevating Student Experience to Build Equitable Learning Environments and Outcomes

WATCH RECORDING

Research shows that certain academic experiences foster students' motivation, engagement, and success, while other experiences hinder them. Ensuring that all students are afforded these powerful developmental experiences necessitates an evidence-based, student-centered approach. Participants learned about free, evidence-based tools, measures, and recommendations educators can leverage to systematically build an equitable, student-centered culture that inspires and supports student success.

Dr. Dave Paunesku, Project for Education Research that Scales (PERTS), Stanford University; Dr. Erica Bauer, Chicago Bulls (formerly Walter Payton College Preparatory High School); Alex Fralin, Leading Partnerships; Nia Innis, Walter Payton College Preparatory High School

Impact of Personalized Learning Through Interest-Based Internships

WATCH RECORDING

Interest driven internships at Big Picture Learning Schools contribute to progress in personal, academic, and vocational development. Through a university-school network collaboration, we explored the impact of such internships on secondary students. Case studies of seniors discussed how internships help build hope, social capital, and other important assets to support positive outcomes. Attendees discussed the potential of student internships and as well as the power of collaborative research.

Pamela Gordon, Big Picture Learning; Dr. Maureen Kenny, Boston College Lynch School of Education and Human Development

Implementing Student-Centered Learning: Lessons Learned from Leaders in the Arena

WATCH RECORDING

Many states have enacted laws, policies, or regulations to encourage school systems to innovate and/or move to more student-centered instructional systems. Personalized, competency-based, mastery-based, and performance-based are all different terms used across the globe to describe and explain educational changes happening in classrooms, schools, and districts striving to improve the traditional educational system. Student-centered learning (SCL) initiatives are exploring ways to improve equity and achievement for all students.

We must be able to uncover the interaction between state policy design, implementation, and local context for improved learner outcomes. Often, school leaders feel like pioneers taking on a new adventure and blazing new trails when they implement new policies. As a first step, empirical evidence is needed to better understand the SCL policy implementation context. This session shared findings from a study of K-12 leaders (n=51), both building level and district level, who are responsible for leading the change to SCL in their school system. Findings provided a glimpse into challenges, needed supports, and which resources administrators identified as the most relevant to their implementation of SCL.

Dr. Heather Williams, Boise State University; Donell McNeal, West Ada School District; Jen Wright, Notus School District

Improving the Equity in Personalized Learning through a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) Approach

WATCH RECORDING

Personalized learning (PL) holds great promise for equity in K12 education, yet, there is little evidence that it has delivered on that promise at scale. In this session, we presented data from 300K students showing that there are large inequities in the implementation of PL, however, when delivered within a data-driven, Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) framework, PL can be delivered equitably and significantly reduce the racial achievement gap.

Eva Dundas, Branching Minds

Generously Sponsored by The Leon Lowenstein Foundation

Measuring Personalized Professional Learning: A Three Year Study of What Works Best, For Whom, Under What Conditions, and Why

WATCH RECORDING

Over the past three years, Lindsay Unified School District has collaborated with The Learning Accelerator to measure the effectiveness of their personalized professional learning program. Ultimately, the district sought to understand "the black box" of which combinations of professional learning would lead to the greatest student growth. This seminar shared lessons learned and helped participants consider ways to design professional learning programs to support personalized learning.

Amalia Lopez, Lindsay Unified School District; Dr. Beth Holland, The Learning Accelerator

Putting Data to Work: Formative Evaluation and Continuous Improvement in Transformative Education Efforts

WATCH RECORDING

In this webinar with WestEd and KnowledgeWorks, participants engaged with researchers, practitioners, and district leaders to explore how to use continuous improvement as a critical component in the formative evaluation of ongoing work with the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction. Two years into a five-year implementation of personalized, competency-based learning in districts across North Dakota, the presenters discussed and shared tools, continuous improvement processes, and lessons learned.

Robin Ahigian, Natalie Lacireno-Paquet, WestEd; Drake Bryan, Geoff Zimmerman, KnowledgeWorks; Dr. Kraig Steinhoff, Oakes Public Schools

Strengthening the Learning Relationships Between Teachers, Families, and Students: Our Framework, Interventions, and Evaluation Efforts

WATCH RECORDING

Research has long shown that families play a critical role in student academic outcomes, specifically when their involvement is linked to curriculum. The role of families in learning has grown more critical as we transition into an uncertain year of distance and hybrid learning, with an urgent need to create equitable learning experiences and lessen COVID-19 learning gaps. By strengthening the triangle of learning relationships between teachers, families, and students, schools can activate the full potential of all families as academic team members to better personalize learning.

In this session, participants learned about the types of support we've provided to teachers and families both prior to and during COVID-19 school closures, and the results we've seen. We explored a new framework for deepening teacher practice and a research-based innovation designed to support teacher practice — mobile-friendly, multilingual assignments where students "teach their parents." We also shared learnings from our Strategic Evidence Plan (SEP) and research partnerships.

Participants engaged in questions around the conditions needed to create equitable learning experiences and evaluate impact in an uncertain time.

Maryell Hernández, Elisabeth Stock, Emily Amick, PowerMyLearning

Taking an Equity-Based Approach to Advancing a Research and Learning Agenda

WATCH RECORDING

City Year is on a learning journey focused on taking an equity-based approach to research and evaluation while gleaning information on effectively personalizing learning for students. Participants learned how City Year is managing its portfolio of research projects, designed to highlight effective approaches to personalizing learning environments, while ensuring practices are equity-based. Participants were invited to provide feedback, ask questions, and determine how we might move forward.

Jessica Proett, Jade Eckels, City Year

Using Research & Development to Redesign: Immediately Implementable Methods and Practices to Accelerate Learning and Results for ALL Kids

WATCH RECORDING

We believe that when you don't know the solution to a challenge, you go through a process of trying things out to learn so that you discover a way forward. This is the spirit of research and development (R&D) and is a core component of innovation journeys. In this session, we shared immediately implementable R&D methods and practices successfully being used in schools across the country, while ensuring participants left with an R&D plan for a challenge or idea they brought to the session.

Anirban Bhattacharyya, Nikolaus Namba, Transcend

#Aurora2020

Resource Hub: Webinar Recordings
All Fall Sessions on Critical Issues Facing the Field

Building Educator Capacity for Equity: Competency-Based Approaches to Professional Learning for Teachers and Administrators

[WATCH RECORDING]

A growing number of educational leaders are turning to competency-based micro-credentials as a mechanism for nurturing and promoting equity, inclusion, and cultural responsiveness across school systems. While approaches vary, the goal of this work is that individual educators change how they think and act. The impact will be more equitable outcomes for students.

Jason Lange, BloomBoard; Amalia Lopez, Lindsay Unified School District

Choice in Learning: Examination of Students' Use of Flex Time in High School

[WATCH RECORDING]

Legacy High School (LHS) in Bismarck, North Dakota, implements a schedule called flex-time that allows students choice in how they spend a portion of the school day outside of their regularly scheduled classes. Regional Educational Laboratories Central (REL Central) partnered with LHS to study how students use their flex-time. During this session, presenters will describe the LHS flex-time schedule, share findings from the REL Central study, and share how study data are being used to inform program improvements.

Marc Broderson, Jeanette Joyce, Marzano Research; Tom Schmidt, Ben Johnson, Bismarck Public Schools

Developing Equity, Efficacy, and Effectiveness in a Competency-Based System

[WATCH RECORDING]

An interactive conversation that ignited transformational ideas based on experiences and adaptations for our competency-based system. Participants reviewed a continuum of attributes: starting with equity, developing efficacy, and measuring effectiveness. Personalized learner-centered experiences that were adapted for remote learning were included. The goal was to generate practical ways to support and prepare learners to conquer real-world experiences using developed critical skills.

Claudette Trujillo, Cindy Davis, Roger Vadeen, Janelle Stastny, Amber Swieckowski, Westminster Public Schools

High School Internships in the Time of COVID-19: Mentorship, Connections, and More in Virtual Work-Based Learning

[WATCH RECORDING]

Our X3 Intern students kept their internships through the school closures from COVID-19. Learn how we maximized the role of mentorship, connection and meaningful work to keep our young people and their employers engaged after schools had been closed. This rapid (re)design experience has shed new light on the work world of the future and given us the opportunity to think again about the skills students need to be healthy and prosperous in our community. See how we are using our learning to create over 100 on-site, hybrid, virtual, and consultancy-style work-based learning placements in fall 2020.

Tony Monfiletto, Mike May, Mistie Gallegos, Moneka Stevens, Ali Moore, Future Focused Education

Increasing Capacity for Mastery-Based Learning in Washington State

[WATCH RECORDING]

Washington is identifying barriers to mastery-based learning (MBL) and proposing recommendations to increase capacity for an MBL pathway to a diploma. School closures resulting from COVID-19 present an opportunity to rethink how we deliver education and move toward MBL. Participants will hear from cross-sector members of a workgroup including a student and representatives from the Legislature and State Board of Education and engage with panelists about applicable lessons learned for other states.

Alissa Muller, Washington State Board of Education; Dr. Paul Pitre, Washington State University, Everett; Ashley Lin, Union High School; State Representative Sharon Tomiko Santos, Washington State House of Representatives; State Senator Lisa Wellman, Washington State Senate; Dr. Kory Kalahar, WestSide High School

Integrating Project-Based Learning in Online and Blended Courses in Indiana

[WATCH RECORDING]

Join this collaborative group of experts on taking online and blended learning to new facets where the typical box-checking online format is pushed aside for students to be given opportunities to dive deep into meaningful and relevant work-based learning. Explore ways to give students choice in their online courses and show innovation and deep learning. Middlebury Community Schools is excited to give examples of their personalized project-based learning model used in their blended learning classes.

Lauren Bailey, Middlebury Community Schools; Dr. Byron Ernest, Indiana State Board of Education; Sarah Koontz, Horizon Education Alliance

Learning Models for Difference Making in Communities

[WATCH RECORDING]

Students need learner-centered environments and community-connected projects to grow leadership skills. Difference Making is the superpower of the new economy—spotting opportunities and delivering valuable, real-world impact. When educators are intentional with anytime, anywhere learning in their instructional strategy, students are able to contribute and make a difference. Participants will become familiar with the components and vocabulary of Difference Making from practicing educators.

Tom Vander Ark, Getting Smart; Lillian Hsu, Latitude High School; Teresa Poppen, One Stone; Deion Jordan, Crosstown High

Resource Hub: Webinar Recordings
All Fall Sessions on Critical Issues Facing the Field

Lessons from COVID-19: How Competency-Based Education Provided for Continuity of Learning in Three North Carolina Schools and Is Shaping the Path Forward

WATCH RECORDING

Many schools and districts struggled to shift to online learning during the COVID-19 crisis in early 2020. Key issues included equitable access to technology and overall student engagement. Similar to other competency-based schools across the country, competency-based education helped three North Carolina schools rapidly shift to online learning for all students with a high level of engagement. Join us to hear from K-12 students and school leaders about lessons learned and what's next as they look to the future.

Laura Knapp, Regional Education Lab Southeast; Kelley Johnson, Johnston County Public Schools; Alissa Cheek, Tri-County Early College High School; Deborah Brown, The Exploris School

NCAA Review Process: Why and How... and What's Different During COVID-19?

WATCH RECORDING

You may be asking why a college sports association would be at an education innovation symposium. Did you know NCAA colleges and universities have academic benchmarks for incoming prospective student-athletes, including specific requirements for courses completed through online, blended, or other such means? In this interactive seminar, we'll discuss the requirements via a sample review of an online program using NCAA criteria. We'll also share our temporary policies in response to COVID-19.

Sarah Overpeck, Christa Palmer, Kaylen Overway, NCAA

Science of Motivation: 5 Barriers to Student Motivation and How to Fix Them

WATCH RECORDING

In this hands-on workshop, we'll walk through several barriers to motivation and identify strategies to help students and adults engage, persist, and reach mastery. We'll pay particular attention to how identity, including race and socioeconomic status, impacts motivation, as well as the impact of the COVID crisis. You will leave this session with a better understanding of how to apply the principles of learning science to design learning experiences for school leaders, teachers, and students.

Katrina Stevens, Julio Chow-Gambia, Chan Zuckerberg Initiative

Shifting to Online Bite-Sized Professional Learning

WATCH RECORDING

Watch this session to learn about how the Dallas Independent School District re-established learning in an at-home setting. Participants will explore and then share strategies for rituals, coaching and support, and professional learning to meet the needs in a virtual community. In closing, participants will start an action plan to take new strategies back to their own organizations and districts.

Kristen Watkins, Vanessa Rodriguez, Dallas Independent School District

Transitioning to Remote Learning: Free Online Professional Learning Opportunities for Teachers

WATCH RECORDING

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced schools to turn to remote options to educate students. This shift has created major challenges for many who have spent little to no time teaching in an anytime, anywhere modality. This session will dive into six free, two-hour online courses for teachers to thrive through this transition. Attendees will have an opportunity to share the setbacks and steps forward they have witnessed with remote learning and connect these experiences to the free online training.

Dr. Joe Freidhoff, Dr. Christopher Harrington, Andrea McKay, Emily Sicilia, Michigan Virtual

When Access Isn't Equal: How The Pandemic Amplified Our Nation's Equity Gaps

WATCH RECORDING

COVID-19 transformed our discussions about equity and supporting our nation's most vulnerable students. With the large-scale shift to online learning, educators have had many questions, but one that has frequently risen to the top is equity. This topic has also emerged front and center as one of the challenges districts face to support remote learning programs. Join us to discuss strategies, resources, and lessons learned on how to ensure remote learning programs support educational equity.

Dr. Sean Smith, Kelsey Ortiz, University of Kansas; Raymond Rose, Texas Distance Learning Association; Jean Sharp, Digital Learning Collaborative

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Aurora Institute extends our sincerest thanks and appreciation to the Aurora Institute Symposium Program Committee for all of their efforts in making the Symposium a success. We appreciate your commitment and leadership in helping the field and serving on the Aurora Institute Symposium Program Committee throughout the year.

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