

7th Annual Women's Leadership Conference

March 18-19, 2024; 8 am - 5 pm

at The Palace at Somerset Park
333 Davidson Ave., Somerset, NJ 08873



An event designed for women in or aspiring to positions in educational leadership

Sponsored by NJASA/ERF and NJPSA/FEA



Schedule

Monday, March 18

Music provided by West Morris Regional
Select Strings - Ms. Jennifer Meckler, Director of
Orchestras and Symphony

- 8:00 am – 9:15 am Registration/Breakfast
(Sponsored by Proximity)
- 9:15 am – 9:30 am Welcome - NJDOE Acting
Commissioner Kevin Dehmer
- 9:30 am – 10:45 am Keynote Presentation -
Dr. Katie Peters
- 10:45 am – 11:00 am Break
- 11:00 am – Noon Session 1
- Noon – 1:30 pm Lunch/AI Panel Discussion
(Sponsored by ClassLink & edWeb)
- 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm Session 2
- 2:45 pm – 3:45 pm Session 3
- 4:00 pm – 5:00 pm Networking/Reception
(Sponsored by Edmentum)

Tuesday, March 19

Music provided by the New Brunswick High
School Percussionists - Dr. Jessie Mersinger,
Music Director

- 8:00 am – 9:15 am Registration/
Breakfast (Sponsored by Effective School
Solutions)
- 9:15 am – 9:30 am Welcome
- 9:30 am – 10:45 am Keynote Presentation -
Laine Whitaker
- 10:45 am – 11:00 am Break
- 11:00 am – Noon Session 4
- Noon – 1:30 pm Lunch/Keynote
Presentation - Dr. Gladys I. Cruz/Special
Recognition (Sponsored by PCG & NoRedInk)
- 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm Session 5
- 2:45 pm – 3:45 pm Session 6

Welcome

Monday, March 18



Kevin Dehmer
NJDOE Acting Commissioner

Special Recognition

Monday, March 18



Assemblywoman (Ret.) Mila Jasey

Keynote Presenters

Monday, March 18



Dr. Katie Peters

2023 Ohio District 2
Teacher of the Year,

Author, Adjunct Instructor at
the University of Findlay, and
Director of Communications at
Washington Local Schools in
Toledo, Ohio

*Sticks & Stones: Building
Empathic Connections*

Tuesday, March 19



Laine Whitaker, MSL

Vice President of
Professional Learning at
Effective School Solutions
(ESS) and the Co-Host of the
ESS Mindbeat Podcast

*Recognizing and
Overcoming Impostor
Syndrome*



Dr. Gladys I. Cruz

District

Superintendent for Questar
III Board of Cooperative
Educational Services
(BOCES), President of AASA

*Leading in a New Era: New
Challenges, New Approaches*

AI Panel

Monday, March 18



Dr. Carol Kelley

Superintendent,
Princeton Public Schools



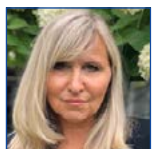
Felicia Lott

Supervisor of
Elementary
Education,
Secaucus



Donna Reichmann

Assistant
Superintendent, Wayne
Township Schools



Jamie Saponaro

Director
of Community and
Professional Learning,
ClassLink



Amanda Wargocki

Assistant
Principal, Secaucus High
School, Secaucus Public
Schools



Moderator: Lisa Schmucki

Founder and
CEO, edWeb.net

Agenda

Monday, March 18

Music provided by West Morris

Regional Select Strings

Ms. Jennifer Meckler Director of Orchestras and Symphony

9:15 am - 9:30 am

Welcome

Ballroom

9:30 am - 10:45 am

Keynote - Sticks & Stones: Building Empathic Connections

In a world that reminds us that evil is everywhere, it is easy to blanketly accept the message. However, evil isn't winning and an intentional refusal to accept that branding is the very thing that will combat the poison, make us all healthier, and create a laser-focus of our purpose.

Audience members will receive data to support the need for empathic connections, tangible tools for universal implementation moving forward in their own lives and anecdotes guaranteed to make you laugh, cry and (yes) even dance.

The best personal investment you can make... is investing in other people.

Dr. Katie Peters, 2023 Ohio District 2 Teacher of the Year, Author, Adjunct Instructor at the University of Findlay, and Director of Communications at Washington Local Schools in Toledo, Ohio

Session 1 - 11 am - Noon

Fostering a Culture of Security

Ballroom

Education is the most vulnerable industry when it comes to cybersecurity threats. This session emphasizes that cybersecurity safety is a shared responsibility among all stakeholders within educational districts to ward against these threats. Explore essential cybersecurity fundamentals and best practices aimed at fostering a culture of collective security. To aid in cybersecurity protection, discover a free tool designed to assess cybersecurity maturity levels, empowering leaders to develop tailored strategic plans with input from all stakeholders. Join this session to shape a safer digital environment for all.

Jamie Saponaro, Director of Community and Professional Learning, ClassLink

Executive Coaching Skills Are Your Leadership Superpowers

Lecture Suite

In this session, you will learn some of the most effective executive coaching skills that can help you transform your school. Learn how to ask better questions, listen on a deeper level, find alignment among your team, and bring focus to what matters most. School leaders who incorporate executive coaching skills have teams who love what they do, and schools that thrive.

Brooke Arthur, Executive Coach, NJASA

Panel of NJASA Executive Coaches: Peg Dolan, Piera Gravenor, Elizabeth Jewett, Vanessa Pereira, and Judy Rattner.

Let's Get Emotional and Grow as a Fierce Leader

Salon 1

Did you know Emotional Intelligence (EI) plays a significant role in your leadership journey? EI is linked to influencing decision-making, interpersonal relationships, reduction of stress, and higher self-esteem. Whether you're a novice or veteran EI disrupts negative thinking. Research states, the 21st century leader's EI offer new perspectives for leadership by envisioning a fresh tomorrow instead of a previous era that eliminates emotional management. EI addresses emotional awareness, counters skepticism and promotes self-reflection. Let's get emotional using research on EI that offers a roadmap for nurturing the intricate relationship between emotion, cognition, and behavior and embrace challenges as opportunities for growth.

Atiya Perkins, Superintendent of Schools, Linden Public Schools

The Superintendent as Instructional Leader: Living This Role in Daily Interactions with Your Board of Education

Salon 2

There is tremendous consensus around the belief that the Superintendent of Schools should be a strong instructional leader. The challenge is how to accomplish this when the days are often filled with budget matters, facilities issues, HIB, and personnel. Join experienced Superintendents Dr. Kari McGann and Dr. Barbara Sargent as they share successful and practical strategies to keep your focus and your Board's focus on teaching and learning.

Dr. Barbara Sargent, Superintendent, West Morris Regional HS District; Dr. Kari McGann, Superintendent, Flemington-Raritan Township School District

The Compassionate Leader: The Continuous Journey in Transforming Your Vision into Systematic Practices

Salon 3

Now more than ever, it's imperative for leaders to demonstrate compassion. In this session, we will share our compassionate leadership continuous journey which led to the discovery of our "why", to then understand our motivations to have the ability to do hard things in a human way. We will provide participants with systematic approaches, with a trauma informed lens, to ensure your change initia-

tives stand every chance of success by transforming compliance to engagement - to build autonomy and efficacy among stakeholders.

Eliza Cadorette-Rawley, Director of Curriculum & Instruction, Woodstown-Piles Grove Regional School District; Andrea Dougherty, Gloucester Middle School Assistant Principal, Gloucester City Public Schools

“I’m So Busy!” and Other Lies We Tell Ourselves

Salon 4

In this interactive workshop, we will examine the rhetoric of stress surrounding work and life. Drawing on current research about stress and success, we will explore how women internalize stress and how it can be harnessed to work for us rather than against us. Participants will leave with an understanding of how changing both our inner and outer dialogues can transform stress into a driving force rather than an impediment, enabling us to maximize not only our potential but also that of those we lead.

Dr. Tamar Spitzer, Supervisor of World Languages and ESL, Montville Township Public Schools; Dr. Sandra Schwartz, Supervisor of Math, Science, and Business, Montville Township Public Schools

Transforming Equity Through Teacher Champions

Salon 6

After the pandemic, the vast disparities that exist in K-12 school systems across the United States have continued to widen. It is vital to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of school systems and methods to have a substantial impact on the students and the schools we serve. This professional learning workshop will provide learners with toolkits and systems necessary to foster culturally responsive teaching practices, cultivate teacher leadership (“champions”), and implement school wide programs/initiatives that ensure equity and sense belonging for all members of the school community. Participants will leave with a personalized action plan that will inspire equity drivers within: systems/policies, professional development/teaching practices, and/or community outreach.

Toni DiFazio, Assistant Principal, Edison Public Schools; Hitisha Patel, Officer of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Edison Public Schools

“Reducing your RBF and entering your Soft Era”

Salon 7

Let’s unwrap strategies that uplift networks, conversations and responsibilities- empowering women while cranking up their voices. And hey, while we’re at it, let’s revamp those admin teams with trust vibes and tighter bonds. This session isn’t just about rebuilding, it’s about shaking up the game! Get ready for immersive talks, empowering female leaders, and reshaping how we make decisions. In this session we will explore the mantra behind why women lead with an RBF and why we should shift into our “soft era.” “You have to be a boss, but you can’t be mean. You have to lead, but you can’t squash other people’s ideas,” America Ferrera is onto something, let’s unpack together.

Brianna Rucci, Delsea Regional School District

Session 2 -1:30-2:30

Financial Empowerment for Women

Lecture Suite

In this session, we will address the importance of understanding attitudes about money, financial literacy and being empowered to make informed decisions. By taking control of finances women can achieve greater security and independence. It’s never too late to start learning about personal finance and take steps to improve your financial situation.

Lynn A. Beal, Financial Consultant, Private Wealth Strategies Group in Alliance with Equitable Advisors

Navigating Leadership Traits for Success and Building Stakeholder Relationships

Salon 1

This presentation will examine key leadership traits that are significant for professional success and promote stakeholder relationships. Supported by research, participants will closely take a look at specific character traits—including adaptability, intelligence, honesty, communication, and compassion. The session will also address myths surrounding gender-related traits and how those traits can empower or hinder women in leadership roles. Embracing many diverse traits will lead to a more inclusive leadership environment. Through research and hands-on examples, participants will strengthen their leadership skills and build stronger connections with stakeholders.

Jessica Sargent, Health and Physical Education Supervisor PreK-12, Long Branch Public Schools; Nicole Esposito, Asst. Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, Long Branch Public Schools

Revolutionizing Leadership: Empowering Administrators to Drive Inclusive System Change

Salon 2

New Jersey continues to rank last in its ability to provide meaningful education to students with disabilities in the local public schools and general education classrooms. During this session, presenters will discuss the key role that school and district leaders play in driving systemic change as it relates to inclusion. Vision and action planning will be a key focus, while also strategizing through the process of collaboration and relationship development. Presenters will share lessons learned in the field in public schools throughout the state of New Jersey and will share effective resources used for districts and schools that are engaged in systemic change.

Michele Gardner, Executive Director, New Jersey Coalition for Inclusive Education; Brittany Seeley, Program Director, New Jersey Coalition for Inclusive Education

From 13% to 92% NJGPA Passing

Salon 3

Join Warren County Technical Schools in celebrating and exploring three key initiatives that put data into action and boosted our students' NJGPA passing rates from 13% to 92% in ELA and 29% to 67% in Math.

- 1 - Create a central warehouse for stakeholders to access all data, plans, and resources in a single location so nothing slips through the cracks.
- 2 - Develop comprehensive academic and behavioral tiered intervention supports and wrap-around services.
- 3 - Analyze outcomes by comparing MTSS plans with multiple measures of academic performance data to ensure the effectiveness of interventions.

Noreen Matias, Director of Curriculum, Warren County Technical School; Diana Mai, Principal, Warren County Technical School

Foster Your Huddle: Women Leaders PLC

Salon 4

This session will dive into the creation of Parsippany's first Women Leaders PLC and will highlight ways other districts can support and retain their female leaders through deliberate and encouraging "huddling." This group was guided by a book study of Huddle by Brooke Baldwin and has become an informal mentoring group, especially for the district's newest women leaders.

Sarah Townsend, Coordinating Supervisor of ELA and Media, Parsippany Troy-Hills School District; Alison Caravano, Coordinating Supervisor of Visual and Performing Arts, Parsippany-Troy Hills School District; Kristen Brynildsen, Coordinating Supervisor of Social Studies, Parsippany-Troy Hills School District

Trauma-Informed Leadership for Women: Nurturing Resilience and Empowerment

Salon 6

The session will commence with a comprehensive definition of trauma and an exploration of its potential impact on individuals, emphasizing the relevance and diversity of traumatic experiences in both personal and professional spheres. This session is poised to be a dynamic and insightful exploration into the future of leadership development. Attendees will gain a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by individuals who have experienced trauma and will be equipped with practical tools to navigate their professional journeys with resilience, empathy, and a commitment to fostering inclusive and supportive work environments.

This session is set to be a catalyst for positive change, propelling women leaders towards success and fulfillment in their careers. Practical strategies for creating a trauma-informed workplace culture will be a focal point of the session. Attendees will learn the importance of fostering open communication, practicing active listening, and establishing safe spaces where team members feel heard and validated. The goal is to empower leaders to integrate these principles seamlessly into their professional development journey, promoting environments that prioritize emotional well-being and inclusivity.

The session will also explore the crucial role of self-care for leaders, recognizing that personal well-being is fundamental to sustaining effective leadership. Participants will identify their own sources of resilience and learn how to weave these practices into their ongoing professional development.

Claudia M. Heisterman, Director of Bilingual Education, ESL, and World Languages, Bound Brook School District

Understanding the New Sick Leave Law

On July 3, 2023, a new Sick Leave Law was enacted in New Jersey, which vastly expanded the reasons for which public school employees could utilize their sick days. However, there have been many debates as to how to interpret and apply the newly granted reasons to take a sick day. This session will provide an understanding of both the provisions of the new law, and a discussion of the limitations a district may impose regarding the use of sick days.

Sandra L. Jacques, Esq., LL.M., Assistant Director of Legal Education, NJPSA/FEA

Session 3 - 2:45 pm - 3:45 pm

AI Innovation in Educational Leadership: A New Era of Transformation

Ballroom

In today's swiftly changing educational environment, the power of Artificial Intelligence (AI) stands out as a pivotal factor in shaping the future of Educational Leadership. Our presentation offers a deep dive into the multifaceted applications of AI in leadership tasks such as student data analysis, personalized learning, schedule optimization, resource allocation, communication enhancements, and more. Attendees will gain a holistic understanding of AI's capabilities, benefits, real-world examples, implications, and best practices. This session promises actionable insights to effectively harness AI, fostering improved administrative efficiency and enhanced student outcomes. Join us to envision and embrace the AI-driven future of education.

Felicia Lott, Supervisor of Elementary Education, Secaucus Public Schools; Amanda Wargocki, Assistant Principal, Secaucus High School, Secaucus Public Schools

Considering Doctoral Studies? What's Stopping You?

Lecture Suite

This session is geared for women who are working full time in K-12 education and considering the pursuance of doctoral studies. Participants will learn about national and state trends related to gender, pay, and levels of education as they pertain to positions in K-12 educational leadership. This session will also explore conventional and nonconventional methods to empower full time working women throughout their journey in higher education.

Tiffany Jacobson, Principal, Westfield Public Schools

Safeguarding Your Career (or Protecting Your Professional Reputation)

Salon 1

With the average statewide tenure for K-12 Superintendents at 2.7 years, it is critical that educational leaders hoping for a long and successful career go into this role with their eyes wide open. How should you conduct yourself? What should you monitor as you engage with various district stakeholders? How can you protect your professional reputation? Hear from successful, experienced Superintendents who have navigated challenging circumstances and are still thriving!

Barbara Sargent, Superintendent, West Morris Regional High School District; Dr. Nancy Gartenberg, Executive County Superintendent, Morris County Department of Education

Who Am I? Let's Take a Selfie

Salon 2

SEL development is not just for students. Self-reflection and self-awareness are the hallmarks of successful leaders. Participants will have the opportunity to take a "selfie" through the use of presentation of information, group interaction and personal reflection. No cell phones necessary ;)

Tracie Morrison, Vice Principal, South Orange Maplewood School District

North Star Leadership: Staying the Course in Times of Trial and Triumph

Salon 3

Leadership is challenging but essential to the success of our educational system. Navigating the complexities of leadership within an increasingly polarized educational landscape complicated by constructs of budgetary resources, human capital gaps, and conflicting values in our communities can lead even a seasoned school leader off course. With an integration of lived experiences and tangible action plans for cherishing the moments of joy and weathering the times of challenge, participants in this session will identify their foundational beliefs essential for staying the course in times trial and triumph as a school leader. You can do this... if only you have the right map!

Dr. Jennifer Cenatiempo, Superintendent, Green Township School District

No More Excuses: Women on the Frontline Making Room for More I.M.P.A.C.T.

Salon 4

Establishing strong relationships with families and communities are the foundation of creating a positive and thriving culture for successful students. When promoting IMPACT, families begin to understand the importance of the roles and functions they play in the development of their student's success. In this workshop, attendees will discover the importance of creating IMPACT when engaging families and communities for success. Attendees will leave out of this workshop with valuable keys on how to empower and equip families and create a thriving community that engages all families for student success.

Natasha Rouse, Instructional Specialist, Newark, NJ

Deepening Our Understanding of Superintendent Attrition & Why It Matters for Navigating Politics and Policy Spaces

Salon 6

This session will begin with the sharing of research and evidence related to barriers superintendents face when engaging in political and policy spaces, and the ways in which gender comes into this process. This work will then be situated within the context of increasingly concerning superintendent attrition trends. Dr. White will share visualizations and analyses using her National Longitudinal Superintendent Database to discuss how increasingly contentious superintendent attrition and gender-based differences in attrition and mobility may exacerbate superintendents' challenges related to policy and political engagement. Participants will then engage in collaborative dialogue focused on their experiences with navigating contentious political and policy issues and ways of approaching and managing these issues, and identify avenues through which administrators can manage unhealthy political contention that takes away from the educational goals of schools, and how administrators across the state may work together to reduce the toll that political contention has on education leaders and reduce undesirable administrative turnover.

Dr. Rachel S. White, Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Leadership & Policy Studies, University of Tennessee-Knoxville, Founder/PI, The Superintendent Lab

Leading with Honesty, Humor, and Heart: Building Connections and Empowering Others

Salon 7

The session will focus on strategies to support empowering staff and building capacity through transparent communication, leading with humor while demonstrating humbleness, and strategies focusing on building connections while leading with the heart. When we are aware of and are honest about our true leadership style and we share that with those around us, we improve the culture and build capacity of the staff we work with thus positively impacting the students we serve. The presenter will share learning from the field, real-world examples, and lessons learned from thought-leaders in the areas of personal and professional development.

Holly Niemiec, Principal, Lacey Township School District

4:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Networking/Reception (Sponsored by Edmentum)

Tuesday, March 19

Music provided by the New Brunswick High School Percussionists

Dr. Jessie Mersinger, Music Director

9:15 am - 9:30 am

Welcome

Ballroom

9:30 am - 10:45 am

Keynote - Recognizing and Overcoming Impostor Syndrome

Ballroom

Are you a high achieving, educated woman yet you still doubt your worth? Do you often attribute your success to luck rather than hard work and talent? If so, you are not alone. You might be surprised to find out how many exceptional and accomplished professional women suffer from impostor syndrome. In fact, research shows that 70% of women will experience imposter syndrome at some point in their career. In this presentation we will define what it is and how we can identify this all-too-common false feeling in ourselves. We will discuss ways to ameliorate its effects in our careers so you can own your greatness, and stop doubting the value you bring to your organization.

Laine Whitaker, MSL, Vice President of Professional Learning at Effective School Solutions (ESS) and the Co-Host of the ESS Mindbeat podcast

Session 4 - 11 am - Noon

Advancing Women of Color in K-12 Education Leadership

Lecture Suite

Join us for a dynamic panel discussion, 'Advancing Women of Color in K-12 Education Leadership,' where seasoned educators, administrators, and thought leaders converge to explore the challenges and triumphs of women of color in leadership roles within the realm of K-12 education. Delve into insightful conversations as our distinguished panelists share personal journeys, strategies for overcoming systemic barriers, and innovative solutions to foster inclusivity and equity. Gain valuable perspectives on mentorship, professional development, and the pivotal role of representation in shaping educational leadership. This empowering discussion promises to inspire change and catalyze initiatives for a more diverse and equitable future in education.

Ms. Jada Cole, Director of Student Services, Irvington Public Schools; Ms. Fidelia Sturdivant, Retired NJ School Administrator and Coordinator of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association; Dr. Darlyne DeHann, Director of C & I, Pleasantville Public Schools; Ms. Crystal Carson, Director of Student Services, Uncommon Schools; Ms. Gladasia Trotman, Manager of Special Education, Northstar Academy Charter School; Moderator: Megan McCormick, Business Implementation Specialist, Public Consulting Group

Middle School Passion Periods and Increasing MTSS

Salon 1

Come and see how one district increased course offerings for middle school students based on their interests while also increasing middle school students' access to MTSS without spending money or affecting the teachers' CBA.

Kathleen "Kate" Walsh, Superintendent, Netcong School District; Jennie Rider, Supervisor of Curriculum, Instruction, and Intervention, Netcong School District

Building Capacity through Teacher Leadership

Salon 2

Building capacity through teacher leadership not only enhances professional growth and collaboration but also directly impacts student success, school culture, teacher effectiveness, and stronger relationships, leading to a more robust and effective educational environment. Cultivating teacher leaders can establish the leadership pipeline within the educational institution to lead as mentors to ensure a sustainable cycle of leadership and expertise. Furthermore, utilizing the expertise of teacher leaders supports the schools in optimizing resources and helping to identify areas for improvement which contributes to the climate and culture of the district. Enhancing teacher leadership can also increase community engagement through strengthening the connection between schools and stakeholders that will ultimately benefit the students.

Meagan Drapkin, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Dunellen Public Schools; Felicia Moody, Assistant Principal, Faber Elementary/Dunellen Public Schools

Positive Classroom Culture: Choosing the Right Words

Salon 3

Nothing can negatively impact classroom culture more than allowing harmful speech to pass without comment, but responding to inequitable or harmful ideas is a challenging task. This session will present several scenarios involving students or adults making harmful comments and discuss how to best address it in the moment. Working within a question framework designed to build trust and community, participants will learn how best to "call in" those who make harmful comments rather than "call out." Participants will leave having a new sense of how to respond to inequitable comments to create a more equitable classroom and school culture.

Gaelan Johnson, Teacher and International Baccalaureate Program Coordinator, West Morris Central High School

Keep Showing Up!

Salon 4

In this session, presenters share their journey of identifying and addressing issues that negatively impact student achievement and the importance of creating systems with protocols for lasting success. The session delves into the process of eliminating informal tracking, promoting the value of academic achievement, and aligning technology with the curriculum. Participants will have the chance to identify areas for improvement in their schools and collaborate on ideas to enhance the learning culture for the entire school community. Presenters tell their story of trials, tribulations, and how they would not take no for an

answer. They kept showing up and it paid off!

Theresa M. Brennen, Vice Principal, Lyndhurst Public Schools;
Lisa Bauer Klein, Supervisor of English, Social Studies, World Language and Art, Lyndhurst Public Schools

Cultivating Well-Being: Applying Behavior Analysis to Enhance Self-Care in School Leaders for Organizational Impact

Salon 6

In today's fast-paced educational landscape, school leaders play a pivotal role in shaping the well-being of both educators and students. School administrators, like any other professionals, face a range of health and wellness concerns, directly affecting their ability to perform, and secondarily affecting their employees. This proposal advocates for a conference presentation that explores the application of the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) to foster self-care practices among school leaders.

This presentation promises to deliver actionable insights and strategies for school leaders seeking to enhance their well-being and create a positive, sustainable impact on their school communities. The fusion of ABA principles with leadership development is a novel approach that has the potential to revolutionize how we perceive and cultivate self-care within educational leadership. In summary, increased self-care in leaders serves as a catalyst for a positive organizational culture that prioritizes well-being. This cultural shift, in turn, contributes to improved morale, reduced burnout, increased productivity, and a more supportive and sustainable work environment for all stakeholders. Attendees will leave this presentation with a self-tracking tool to promote evidenced based self-care behavior change.

Stacey Kodack-Ritchie, Supervisor of Behavior Services, BCBA, Union County Educational Services Commission;
Marianny Amezcuita, BCBA, Union County Education Services

Self-Care and Highly Effective Leadership

Salon 7

Establishing a healthy balance between work and life are essential in leadership. Emphasizing a symbiotic relationship between leadership and self-care, this session explores strategies for maintaining a healthy work-life balance, stress management, and fostering resilience. By understanding the interconnectedness of leadership and self-care, individuals can enhance their ability to lead with empathy, make informed decisions, and sustain long-term success. This session encourages a proactive approach to self-care as a foundation for highly effective leadership, acknowledging that a leader's effectiveness is closely linked to their mental and emotional well-being.

Dr. Shakirah Miller, Assistant Superintendent, Newark Board of Education

Noon – 1:30 pm

Keynote - Leading in a New Era: New Challenges, New Approaches

Leadership in education has become increasingly challenging, politicized, and scrutinized. Yet, it's more crucial than ever. The President of AASA, the School Superintendents Association, will provide luncheon remarks on the state of the superintendency nationally along with advice for those who aspire for larger roles and responsibilities in education.

Dr. Gladys I. Cruz, President, AASA, The School Superintendents Association, District Superintendent/CEO, Questar III BOCES

Session 5 - 1:30 pm - 2:30 pm

Leadership and Effective Collaboration

Lecture Suite

In this seminar, you will discover your preferred pattern of behavior and how to create a collaborative and positive school culture. Leaders will engage in a self actualizing process by appreciating their own uniqueness and understanding style differences in others. It will foster collaboration and create a power of connection amongst your staff members. A research based and proven survey tool will be used to allow the staff to reflect on and energize their own attributes while respecting the differences in others.

Denise Hecht-Berger, MBA, Assistant Executive Director, New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association, Chief Financial Officer, The Foundation for Educational Administration

Caring for Others, Caring for Ourselves: A Woman's Leadership Practice of Grace

Salon 1

The shifting dynamics since the COVID-19 pandemic have illuminated the need for more care-centered leadership. Care is often dismissed as something intrinsic to women and therefore not valued as a strength among us. This session will provide a forum for participants to discuss their gendered experiences in educational leadership positions and examine how these experiences impact our work. We will take an intersectional approach, challenging paradoxical expectations of women leaders and reframing our strengths to explore ways in which our field can move forward in more caring ways - both with our learning communities and with ourselves.

Necole Jadick, Ph.D, Principal, Theunis Day Elementary School, Wayne Township Public Schools

It's Okay That the Principal's Not Okay

Salon 2

Increased administrative demands, intense accountability pressures, crisis management, complex student needs, and work-life balance all add to the stress and challenges of the principalship. Enhancing the social and emotional competencies of students and faculty has created positive outcomes in recent years, but what about SEL for school leaders? Recognizing the importance of prioritiz-

ing the mental fitness of principals, this workshop aims to raise awareness and provide them with a framework for emotional resilience and sustainability. Participants will engage in valuable self-reflection and gain practical tools to enhance their social and emotional well-being so they can effectively support their school communities.

Michelle Papa, Principal, Richard Butler Middle School; Erin Tashian, SEL Coach, The Mindful Educators

Achieving a Balanced, Sustainable Professional Life: Strategies for Women of Color District Leaders

Salon 3

This workshop is for women of color leaders (principals through central office) seeking to achieve a more balanced, sustainable professional life. Research shows that women of color, particularly Black women, experience more workplace stress caused by systemic barriers and discrimination. The cumulative effects of chronic stress put women of color at higher risk for health problems. Participants will engage with members of the Women of Color Education Collaborative (WOCEC) to learn research-based and practical strategies for prioritizing self-care, fostering resilience, and empowering career growth.

Dr. Danita Ishibashi, WOCEC Cohort 1 participant, retired Assistant Superintendent; Dr. Denise Lowe, Superintendent in Residence and WOCEC Executive Coach Executive; Dr. Lorna Lewis, Superintendent and WOCEC Executive Coach

Be Happy! Be Resilient! Be Mentally Healthy and Balanced! - How Women Leaders Juggle the Demands of Personal, Work-Place Expectations, and Society Gender Norms

Salon 4

Women in leadership positions juggle the demands of personal, work-place expectations, and society gender norms. The presentation will focus on the topic of balancing the overall demands of life and the impact on one's mental health, and how resilience is at the core of managing a balanced, healthy, and fulfilling life. This session will incorporate research on resilience, happiness, mental health, related to maintaining a personal satisfying work and life balance. Participants will engage in reflection and productive conversations and gain additional tools to balance the expectations of being a woman and a leader of today and in the future.

Ileana Garcia, Principal, Madison Public Schools; Kathleen Koop, Principal, Madison Public Schools

Embracing Diversity in Education: Culturally Responsive Teaching Unveiled

Salon 6

Culturally responsive teaching embraces and integrates students' diverse cultural backgrounds into the learning process, fostering an inclusive educational environment that validates and supports every student. This session aims to empower educators who recognize the importance

of culturally responsive teaching but might be uncertain about how to start. It will highlight the significance of historical awareness in cultivating a culture that values diversity. Through this session, we'll explore practical ways to implement culturally responsive methodologies in classrooms, ensuring that all students benefit from inclusive learning experiences. We'll also focus on strategies to prioritize family engagement and establish collaborative partnerships with families. Educators will leave with a culturally responsive toolkit to support implementation in their buildings. Let's unite in this transformative journey towards creating a more inclusive and equitable learning environment.

Twana Richardson, Principal, Long Branch Public Schools

Every Day Counts!

Salon 7

Promoting equity in education, our community is committed to making each day meaningful for all students, ensuring a welcoming and inclusive environment. Through a tiered system of support, we actively foster healthy attendance habits, embracing a holistic approach that nurtures the child's overall well-being and establishes trustful relationships. In my presentation, I will discuss the strategies and initiatives employed at Kuser Elementary School and my previous district, which have resulted in enhanced attendance and strengthened collaborative partnerships. These efforts aim to support families, guarantee improved attendance, and emphasize the significance of every school day. Participants will receive a plan of action ready to implement.

Nydia Peake, Principal, Hamilton Township School District

Session 6 - 2:45 pm - 3:45 pm

Post-Pandemic SEL Culture Shift

Ballroom

Join the conversation led by Laine Whitaker, VP of Professional Learning at Effective School Solutions, as we explore Ventnor City School District's transformative journey toward an SEL-focused culture. Accompanied by Jordan A. Katz, Project Manager, and the district's Trainer and Coach, this session features insights from Dr. Carmela Somershoe, Superintendent and Elementary School Principal, and Jenna DiMauro, Elementary School Counselor. Discover how this dynamic team prioritized emotional well-being as the cornerstone for academic success. The collaboration with Effective School Solutions introduced the Trauma Attuned Model and Nurtured Heart Approach, sparking a profound culture shift. Learn about the strategies, the pivotal role of the Champions Committee, and the positive outcomes observed, from reduced incidents to improved academic performance.

Laine Whitaker, VP of Professional Learning at Effective School Solutions; Jordan A. Katz, Project Manager, and the district's Trainer and Coach; Dr. Carmela Somershoe, Superintendent and Elementary School Principal, Ventnor City School District; Jenna DiMauro, Elementary School Counselor, Ventnor City School District

Let's Laugh! Using Humor to Bring the Joy Back to Schools

Lecture Suite

When was the last time you laughed at work? When you walk around your school, how many smiles do you see? If we really want to reach and teach post-pandemic students, and keep teachers and leaders in the profession, we need to bring back the joy of teaching, learning and leading. The question is, how do we incorporate laughter into today's climate and use it to enhance mental health and improve student outcomes? This session is about simple ways to turn up the fun, elevate the mood, raise morale, smile more and stress less.

Tracey Severns, Retired Educator, Mt. Olive Township School District

Building Relationships Using a Trauma Informed Approach

Salon 1

The ability to build and foster relationships with students allows them to succeed mentally, emotionally, and academically in our schools. It also allows them the opportunity to heal from previous trauma. Using a trauma informed approach, administrators and teachers will learn strategies that will support all our students in an appropriate and positive manner. Attendees will take away strategies to implement in their districts specific to their teams.

Andrea Dougherty, Assistant Principal, Gloucester City Public Schools; Eliza Cadorette-Rawley, Director of Curriculum, Woodstown-Pilesgrove Regional Schools

Transformative Leadership: The Role of Instructional Coaching in Education

Salon 2

Instructional coaching plays a pivotal role in enhancing teaching practices, fostering a positive school culture, and facilitating meaningful change within educational institutions. This workshop aims to equip educational leaders and administrators with the necessary tools and strategies to effectively leverage instructional coaching for collective leadership, cultural development, capacity building, collaboration, and successful organizational change.

Maria Martinez, Instructional Coach, Chesterfield Township; Kristen McIntyre, Instructional Coach, Chesterfield Township

Women Leading Women: Focusing on Growth Leadership and Networking for Women

Salon 3

It is said that one can always tell who the strong women are in the room; the women who naturally lift and inspire others. In this interactive session, we will engage you in an overview of how YOU can not only center yourself as a leader but how YOU can establish yourself as a "Growth Leader" for other women. We will share tangible examples of how regardless of your role in education, you can help grow the talent around you with the idea that there is enough room at the table for everyone.

Dr. Jeanene S. Dutt, Superintendent, North Warren Regional School District; Dr. Melissa Stager, Superintendent, Clinton Township School District; Ms. Corrina Parsio, STEM Supervisor, South Orange Maplewood School District

Operationalizing Supports for Multilingual Learners: A Collaborative Approach

Salon 4

Join us for an insightful session where we delve into the practical aspects of supporting multilingual learners in a school district. Co-presented by Dr. Crystal Marr from Summit Public Schools and Susana Matos-Kruck from Up the Bar, this session will showcase our successful initiatives in teacher training for sheltered instructional practices and culturally responsive teaching for administrators. Attendees can expect a deep dive into the strategies and tools we've used to enhance access for multilingual learners, including our innovative partnership with a university to increase ESL certified staff. Learn how to implement these strategies in your own district and make a meaningful impact on the educational journey of multilingual students.

Dr. Crystal Marr, Director of Student Personnel Services, Summit Public Schools; Susana Matos-Kruck, Founder and Owner, Up the Bar; Lucy Lakata, Coach, Up the Bar

Adventures in Wanderland: Coaching Self-Discovery and Goal Setting Through Wandering

Salon 6

This session is aimed at administrators and coaches who want to create a supportive culture for staff wandering into unknown territory. Learn how to guide teachers toward setting and accomplishing professional goals through themes of vulnerability and bravery. Create a judgment-free zone and foster collaboration to increase morale and connection. Wanderland is great for teachers new to a school, new to a grade level, and those working towards their tenure. Participants in this session will leave with a framework to structure their own Adventures in Wanderland groups in their schools.

Jessica Bivans, Literacy Teacher Coach, Cherry Hill Public Schools; Maria Rebstock, Literacy Teacher Coach, Cherry Hill Public Schools

Empowering Voices: Strategies for Women to Leverage Their Networks and Forge Strong Partnerships

Salon 7

In an industry where collaboration and innovation are keys to success, women in education and edTech have untapped potential to leverage their voices and networks to advance their careers and initiatives. This session will provide women with practical, actionable strategies to find mutually beneficial connections, build impactful relationships, and create meaningful partnerships.

Rita Ferrandino, Innovation Consultant at PennGSE and Founder of Arc Capital Development; Jaclyn Gochoco, Head of Partnerships and Events at NoRedInk



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