

# NEW JERSEY CONSORTIA FOR EXCELLENCE THROUGH EQUITY-NORTHEAST



## 2021-22 SCHEDULE OF WORKSHOPS AND ACTIVITIES

*In 2017 the Graduate School of Education at the University of Pennsylvania collaborated with the New Jersey Association of School Administrators, NJASA, to continue to develop an evolving regional consortia of school districts in New Jersey that are committed to work together to support and nurture the school and life success of ALL of their students. The New Jersey Consortia for Excellence Through Equity in the South, Cape May County, Central, Northwest and Northeast are driven by a mission to positively transform the lives of each and every one of their students by preparing them for success in post-secondary education and in life - especially the diverse children and youth who may have traditionally struggled academically in their systems, or who might likely be the first in their family to attend and graduate from college.*

*We are partners and a strong collective voice who can help gather the resources, thought and energy needed to create and sustain meaningful educational change to the benefit each and every of the children we serve locally and state-wide. The Consortia serve as valuable resources where the best of what we know of research and informed practice percolate- ideas and strategies that help district leaders effectively address their critical local challenges of securing and sustaining high level student achievement and ultimately equity in attainment and life success for all students.*

Dr. Aaron Graham, Co-Director  
201.638.6742  
[agraham@njasa.net](mailto:agraham@njasa.net)

Dr. Robert L. Jarvis  
Director of the Penn Coalition for Educational Equity and NJCEI  
Catalyst @Penn GSE  
University of Pennsylvania  
3440 Market Street Room 560-30  
Philadelphia, PA 19104-3325  
215.746.7375 or 215.990.5788  
[rjarvis@upenn.edu](mailto:rjarvis@upenn.edu)

Dr. Mark Stanwood and Judy Rattner  
New Jersey Association of School Administrators  
Trenton, NJ  
(609) 599-2900  
[mstanwood@njasa.net](mailto:mstanwood@njasa.net) and [jrattner@najasa.net](mailto:jrattner@najasa.net)



Updated July 23, 2021

# *“Achieving Equity Through Family Engagement”*

## TWO-SESSION WORKSHOP SERIES

**Monday, October 18 via Zoom**

**Thursday, October 28 via Zoom**

**9:00-11:30**



**Dr. Steve Constantino**  
**The Constantino Group**  
**Wilton Manors, FL**

<https://drsteveconstantino.com/>

To achieve equity, students must have the resources they need, exactly when they need them, to achieve success in school. Students spend over 2/3 of their lives away from school. Achieving equity in student learning outcomes will require that educators create conditions such that student learning needs can be met whenever students need the support. Creating and implementing authentic family engagement practices leverages the efficacy of families and in turn, can support students when not in school. This two-part workshop will focus on the critical components necessary to develop authentic family engagement using the Five Simple Principles™ Model of family engagement.

### **Session 1: Cultivating a Culture that Engages Every Family**

- Be introduced to the “Five Simple Principles to Engage Every Family” process and accompanying logic model. Participants will be able to demonstrate an understanding of how each of the principles builds upon each other creating a hierarchical process.
- Develop an awareness of the important role of family engagement in the academic lives of children.
- Explore the components of organizational culture and its effect on making positive organizational change with an emphasis on family engagement as a conduit to improved student achievement. Through an interactive model of professional learning, the notion of organizational culture will be shared as it relates to improving the engagement of families in the academic lives of children. The session will include information for participants to measure and understand their present culture, examine the cultural proficiency of the organization as it relates to engaging families and what changes must occur to create a culture that is conducive to engaging every family in their own schools and classrooms.
- Learn the process of disengagement and why families become and remain disengaged or disenfranchised with their children’s school experiences. Participants will explore the concept of implicit bias and its role in family disengagement.

### **Session 2: Communication, Relationships and Family Efficacy**

- Explore Principle #2: Communicate Effectively and Develop Relationships. When an accepting culture is established and fosters the engagement of every family, it seems logical that the necessary relationships with families be built. Within the framework of relationships and the trust that ensues lies the important notion of communication. Research supports the notion of clear and consistent two-way communication as an important pillar in family engagement.
- Examine procedures and practices within the school or district to provide examples of those processes which could be contributing to the disengagement of families with schools.
- Explore Principle #3, Building Family Efficacy and will learn the research underpinnings of family efficacy and its relationship to student learning and desired outcomes.
- Learn how to structure opportunities for family interaction using the “Efficacy Design Model.”
- Learn how to promote family efficacy and leverage it to promote better learning outcomes for all students.

*Leader, teacher, speaker, and best-selling author Dr. Steve Constantino has a long and distinguished career working at the school, district, and state levels, and is considered one of the nation’s leading authorities in the area of family and community engagement. Steve’s work quickly gained national prominence and soon he began traveling the United States speaking and working with educators to promote sound*

UPDATED  
July 23, 2021

practices in the leadership of organizations and Steve is a much sought-after speaker and leadership consultant on the leveraging of family engagement as an essential element in increased academic achievement for all students. He has authored four books on the subject: [Making Your School Family Friendly](#), [Engaging Every Family: Creating a Positive School Culture by Putting Research Into Practice](#), [101 Ways to Create Real Family Engagement](#), and [Engage Every Family: Five Simple Principles](#).

Steve began his career as a music teacher and moved through the ranks from award-winning principal to district superintendent in Williamsburg, VA. At the state level, he held positions as Chief Academic Officer and Acting State Superintendent for the Commonwealth of Virginia. Today, he is an Executive Professor in the Educational Policy, Planning, and Leadership Department at the William & Mary School of Education and continues to accept numerous invitations to speak and consult with schools, districts and business organizations in the United States and around the world.

---

## ***“Shaping and Maintaining A Culture Of Dignity”***

### **TWO-SESSION WORKSHOP SERIES**

**Monday, November 1 via Zoom**

**Tuesday, November 16 via Zoom**

**9:00-11:30**



**John Krownapple**  
Dignity Consulting  
Woodstock, MD



**Dr. Floyd Cobb**  
Dignity Consulting  
Aurora, CO

Building off of their workshops with us last year, John and Floyd will highlight critical learnings from their best-selling book, *Belonging Through a Culture of Dignity: The Keys to Successful Equity Implementation*, and help us more effectively address the challenges of sustainable change in our schools and systems. If we are to break the cycle of dysfunctional equity work in schools, we must ensure a climate where every person feels like they belong. How? By shaping a culture of dignity that honors each person’s value and worth. While this sounds simple, it’s extraordinarily hard, transformative work. Furthermore, attempts to change the status quo will likely trigger a backlash. We must prepare ourselves with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to bring about the changes that we seek. These sessions will help us to do just that. Critical take-aways from this workshop series include:

- Increasing our knowledge of belonging, dignity, and inclusion.
- Acquiring techniques to manage the predictable backlash to efforts to address social inequality.
- Learning how to center acknowledgement and accountability to nurture healing and transformation.

*John specializes in professional and organizational learning and development in the areas of belonging, inclusion, and equity. He is an adjunct professor at Johns Hopkins University where his coursework focuses on organizational and pedagogical responses to the issues that emerge from diversity, and he has served as the coordinator of diversity, equity and inclusion in a school district of over 50,000 students. John is also the author of [Belonging Through a Culture of Dignity: The Keys to Successful Equity Implementation](#) (2019) and [Guiding Teams to Excellence with Equity: Culturally Proficient Facilitation](#) (2017).*

*Floyd has almost 20 years of experience spanning the P-20 educational continuum, holding roles as a teacher, school leader, district curriculum leader, and a statewide policy implementer. He is an adjunct faculty member at Morgridge College of Education at the University of Denver and teaches courses on social inequality through the lenses of race, class, and gender. He is also the author of [Belonging Through a Culture of Dignity: The Keys to Successful Equity Implementation](#) (2019) and [Leading While Black](#) (2017).*

# ***“Constructing the Innocent Classroom: Dismantling Racial Bias for Our Children of Color”***

## **FOUR-SESSION WORKSHOP SERIES**

**Tuesday, December 14 via Zoom**

**Wednesday, January 12 via Zoom**

**Thursday, January 20 via Zoom**

**Thursday, February 3 via Zoom**

**9:00-11:30**



**Alexs Pate and the Innocent Classroom Team  
Innocent Technologies  
Minneapolis, MN**

<https://innocentclassroom.com/>

*Every child should know what it is like to feel innocent – to believe that this world is open to them. Our society's stereotypes stand in the way. We partner with administrators, principals, and classroom teachers to help them build relationships that liberate children of color from the power of racial stereotypes in their schools and classrooms.*

Constructing the Innocent Classroom is a child-specific response to diverse classrooms that is teacher-driven and child-centered. It is a relationship building process that dismantles racism and racial bias by preparing educators to identify and positively engage each child's essential motivation and their essential good. It undermines the negative impact that stereotype threat and implicit racial bias have on teacher-child relationships in the classroom. Authentic relationships between child and teacher, based on each child's good, become the foundation for increased classroom engagement and academic performance, decreased disciplinary incidents as well as improved job satisfaction for educators.

### **Session 1: Immersion**

This session defines the problem confronted by the Innocent Classroom – a relationship-gap, rooted on racial bias, that exists between educators and students – and introduces key program concepts: guilt, innocence, good, and epistemology. This session also examines modern research on stereotype threat and the power of our subconscious. Intended outcomes for educators following this session:

- Be able to define and apply key program concepts.
- Understand how the cumulative weight of negative narratives influences behavior.
- Understand how undesired behaviors are inauthentic representations of who each child is.

### **Session 2: Recognizing Good and Innocence**

This session introduces the process of discovering the good of a child and provides a new framework to understand behavior. Educators are challenged to develop strategies and use tools like “The Good Questions” to learn enough about the three children they selected to make an initial determination of each child's good. This directly undermines racial bias by replacing stereotypes about a child with actual and authentic knowledge about who that child is. Intended outcomes for educators following this session:

- Understand the connection between a child's behavior, guilt, good, and innocence.
- Employ new tools (e.g. The Good Questions) to learn information about the internal life of the three students they selected.
- Anticipate that knowing a child's good will create an essential empathy that demands action on behalf of the child.

### **Session 3: Engaging Good and Innocence**

This session centers on practice and strategy development. In small and large groups, educators develop and refine strategies to engage the goods of each of their three students. Educators will also participate in exercises in which they: 1) reflect on their own good, 2) reflect on

UPDATED  
July 23, 2021

their personal experience of innocence, and 3) envision an innocent reality for children where they are free to act directly out of their good. Intended outcomes for educators following this session:

- Utilize the “Good Wheel” and other tools to understand and authentically engage the motivation behind a child’s behavior.
- Be able to quickly and accurately identify the good of a child.
- Collaborate with colleagues to develop and refine strategies to engage the good of their students.
- Discern changes in attitude, behavior, academic performance, and strength of relationship with their three students.

**Session 4: Nurturing, Protecting & Advocating** Educators begin the session by sharing successes and solving for challenges they’ve experienced with specific students. In small groups, participants collaborate on strategy development for individual students. This session closes with a large group discussion about sustaining Innocent Classroom anti-racist practices. Intended outcomes for educators following this session:

- Be prepared to help protect and reclaim the innocence of their students.
- Use their new relationship-building skills to undermine negative narratives in the lives of the children they teach, replacing them with empowering narratives that include academic success.
- Advocate for systemic and procedural changes to make the entire school an environment of innocence.
- Plan for sustaining Innocent Classroom practice in their classroom and in their wider school community.

*Alexs is President and CEO of Innocent Technologies and creator of the Innocent Classroom. A native of Philadelphia, he is a New York Times bestselling author who has written five novels, a children’s book, a book of nonfiction, and has curated numerous literary anthologies. His best-known work is the New York Times Bestseller Amistad, which was commissioned by Steven Spielberg’s DreamWorks/SKG and was based on David Franzoni’s screenplay. His latest book The Innocent Classroom: Dismantling Racial Bias for Children of Color was published by ASCD and serves as the foundation for this workshop series.*

*Throughout his career Alexs has attacked racial stereotypes that limit the realities of people of color. He has worked to create worlds in which the humanity of everyone is recognized, known and finally assumed. In 2012 he launched the Innocent Classroom Project in 2012 to eliminate the power of racial stereotypes in our schools through authentic relationships between teachers and their diverse students. Alexs leads his company through his vision for a world in which our children are free to achieve their unlimited potential, our people are free to live healthily and fully, and our individual humanity is prioritized and valued in the structures of society.*

## **“Creating Democratic Classrooms, Engaging Student Voice and Taking Informed Action”**

### **FOUR-SESSION WORKSHOP SERIES**

**Tuesday, February 22 via Zoom**

**Tuesday, March 15 via Zoom**

**Tuesday, March 22 via Zoom**

**Tuesday, April 5 via Zoom**

**9:00-11:30**



**Jill Bass, Chief Academic Officer and Mikva Team  
Mikva Challenge  
Chicago, IL**

<https://mikvachallenge.org/>

For the past 23 years Mikva Challenge has worked to create classrooms where students learn to be active and engaged citizens. Mikva Challenge began as a small pilot program with an all-volunteer staff in four Chicago Schools and has grown to serve over 20 states, 46 school districts, and over 100k students annually. Over nearly two decades, Mikva has developed an education model based on the principles that: 1) youth voice matters, and 2) youth are experts on the issues that affect them; and 3) our communities and schools are stronger when youth leaders are involved in all aspects of civic life.

#### **Session 1: Creating Democratic Schools and Classrooms: Empathy and Community**

Educators learn how to create a positive and inclusive learning environment where students feel empowered, safe, and challenged, and where leadership and community are practiced regularly. In this session, educators become familiar with social-emotional learning strategies informed by Mikva's youth voice centered Action Civics pedagogy, where students take ownership of their learning and engage fully as participants of a community.

#### **Session 2: Creating Democratic Classrooms: Engaging in Courageous Conversations**

Controversial topics are great opportunities for learning when teachers feel comfortable navigating difficult conversations with students. Educators will be provided with facilitation tools and curricula to guide their work in navigating challenging issues and to build students' empathy, listening skills, and shared dignity in the classroom. In addition, we will discuss how to handle students revealing personal trauma as they discuss issues and give speeches on topics of interest or concern.

#### **Session 3: Amplify Student Voice and Develop Social and Emotional Learning Skills**

Using Mikva's Project Soapbox curriculum, educators learn how to encourage students to be active and engaged citizens by speaking out on an issue that they care about. Project Soapbox provides an avenue for students to identify a passion and learn effective public speaking, listening, and empathy skills. Independent evaluations of Soapbox have demonstrated strong, positive impacts on students' civic attitudes and on social emotional skills. This workshop walks participants through the Project Soapbox process and explores options for hosting both virtual and in person Soapbox events.

#### **Session 4: Taking Informed Action**

This workshop introduces participants to our Issues to Action process where students:

- examine their personal identities and their communities from an asset based lens,
- identify issues of importance to them,
- conduct intensive primary research and analyze power structures,
- develop strategies and take action to bring change,
- showcase and celebrate their work.

Participants will explore ways to incorporate all or segments of this process in a variety of contexts and investigate examples of student work.

---

## **NJCEE-Northeast District Administrators' Annual Planning Meeting** ***"Sharing Our Successes and Addressing Barriers to Equity"***

**Thursday, April 7 via Zoom**

**1:00-3:30**



**Dr. Robert L. Jarvis, Director of the Coalition for Educational Equity and NJCEE  
Catalyst@ Penn GSE  
University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education  
Philadelphia, PA**

This will be a highly interactive culminating forum for District Leaders' continued sharing of successes, promising initiatives, challenges and key equity and excellence lessons learned. Participants will reflect on 2021-22 Consortium activities and affirm continued commitment and provide input for program planning in the 2022-23 school year.

---

## ***“Wonder Words: Using the Power of Language to Help Students Learn and Thrive”***

**Thursday, May 5 via Zoom**

**9:00-2:30**



**Frank Kros, President and Founder  
Kros Learning Group  
Fallston, MD**

The spoken word is the primary tool teachers use to educate, motivate and positively influence the social and emotional health of students. In the dynamic learning environments emerging from our pandemic experience, the use of language that provides teachers with the highest potential impact on student learning, behavior and emotional state has never been more important. In this workshop, educators will learn the three pillars of "Wonder Words" to elevate the critical tool of verbally engaging with students: 1) Word choice; 2) Delivery style and; 3) Context. Strategies for building emotionally safe classrooms, boosting motivation, shaping behavior, developing effective academic habits and promoting resilience will be shared and practiced.

Participants will walk away from this learning experience with practices they can apply immediately to respond to all the needs and opportunities students will bring to our everchanging school context. By the end of the workshop participants will be able to:

- Identify the reasons why the specific words used with students has such significant impact on student motivation, mindset, behavior, and performance.
- Utilize research-based, concrete strategies to create emotional safety in the classroom, boost student motivation, positively shape student behavior, help students develop effective academic habits, and promote student resilience.
- Reflect on the actual use of these strategies with students and recommend modification of the strategies to fit individual needs and contexts.

*Frank is a career child advocate, who has served as a childcare worker, child abuse investigator, children's home administrator, consultant, professor, attorney, writer and speaker. Prior to starting Kros Learning Group in April of 2019, Frank served for 18 years as an officer and executive of the Children's Guild Alliance, a multi-service children's organization headquartered in Maryland. He also served the Guild as president of the Transformation Education Institute and Director of the National At-Risk Education Network (NAREN).*

*Frank is an award-winning speaker and has presented at numerous national education, social work and human services conferences. Frank has also delivered his workshops to clients in 44 US states and 6 foreign countries. His engaging presentations focus on "Helping you Help Others." This is accomplished through an understanding of neuroscience and its practical applications to everyday practices involving children, youth, and the adults who parent, counsel, and educate them.*



The mission of the New Jersey Association of School Administrators, the unifying professional association of school leaders, is to ensure a superior statewide system of education by influencing and effecting educational policy, regulations and legislation; and by maximizing the capacity and effectiveness of school leaders through professional development programs and support services.



Catalyst @ Penn GSE connects people and ideas across diverse constituencies to develop innovative ways to address persistent and emerging problems in education. Building upon Penn GSE's history of leadership in education, Catalyst is both a collection of unique programs and a facilitator within and beyond the University. Throughout its work, Catalyst combines education, business, and technology to embrace an ongoing process of generating, testing, adapting, and disseminating best practice.