NEW JERSEY CONSORTIA FOR EXCELLENCE THROUGH EQUITY-SOUTH

2019-20 SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

In 2017 the Penn Center for Educational Leadership in 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 consortium of school districts in Central 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, Central and North 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.

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Updated July 29, 2019
THREE SESSION SERIES: LEADERSHIP FOR CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE SCHOOLS WORKSHOP

“Educational Leaders Building Equity Through Cultural Proficiency”

Thursday, October 10
Thursday, November 14
Thursday December 12
8:30-2:30

Rowan University South Jersey Technology Park
107 Gilbreth Parkway, Suite 200
Mullica Hill, NJ

Dr. Erick Witherspoon, National Director of Equity
Generation Ready
New York, NY

This highly engaging three-day workshop series will provide identified district equity teams, that are interested in building more inclusive, affirming and culturally responsive schools and classrooms, the opportunity to explore a practical framework and develop strategies to more effectively address their diversity challenges. Note that this is a three session workshop series for consistent district equity leadership teams that is designed to help build system capacities for increasing all students’ academic engagement and achievement in learning environments that effectively address culture and diversity. Building upon the foundational work of Dr. Randall Lindsey and his associates, these sessions introduce the Tools of Cultural Proficiency as a shared commitment to excellence and equity for all students. Participants will use strategies and tools needed for districts to embed Cultural Proficiency into their schools’ academic cultures. Upon completion of the three sessions, the district teams will better understand and know how to apply the Tools: The Guiding Principles, Essential Elements, Continuum, and Barriers related to Cultural Proficiency, and will explore the best ways to weave these tools into the fabric of their schools.

Session One (October 10) consists of an introduction to the four tools of Cultural Proficiency through an exploration of culture at the individual and organization level. The Intended Outcomes include:

- Participants view Cultural Proficiency as a shared priority
- Participants experience Cultural Proficiency as personal and professional work
- Participants ensure a common language and common understanding of this work
- Participants use Culturally Proficient Schools: An Implementation Guide, as a guide for addressing access and achievement gap issues

Session Two (November 13) builds upon the culture at the individual and organization level to expand understanding of viewing the Tools of Cultural Proficiency as a guide for addressing access and achievement gap issues. The Intended Outcomes include:

- Participants gain a sense of diverse perspectives regarding the history of education in America
- Participants engage in the exploration of the achievement gap and the cultural correlation
- Participants explore federal mandates and the cultural effects on students
- Participants view the Tools of Cultural Proficiency as a guide for addressing their complex achievement gap issues
- Participants begin to design a plan for implementation at the school level

Session Three (December 12) consists of the continued exploration of achievement gaps and strengthening the understanding of Cultural Proficiency as a shared priority to overcome identified barriers. The Intended Outcomes include:

- Participants review the culture of the school culture and served cultures

Updated July 29, 2019
• Participants identify barriers that may prevent a person, school, and district from becoming culturally proficient
• Participants deepen the understanding of Cultural Proficiency as a shared priority to overcome barriers
• Participants explore the characteristics/traits of a culturally responsive classroom and to understand how the organization capacity relates to the ability to leverage equity and inclusion

**Dr. Erick E. Witherspoon is a nationally recognized educational leader, professor, and motivational speaker, who originally hails from the sprawling Midwest air-capital city of Wichita, Kansas. Dr. Witherspoon holds a B.S. in Elementary Education from Kansas Newman University, a M.S. in Educational Administration from Wichita State University, and Ed.D. in Leadership for Educational Justice from the University of Redlands, Redlands, CA.**

His career in education includes experience as a classroom teacher, assistant principal, principal, district leader, and adjunct professor in Southern California. Additionally, he has held many local, state, and national offices in the National Alliance of Black School Educators and serves on the California Staff Development Council. Throughout his career, Dr. Witherspoon has received numerous awards, including the San Bernardino County, ACSA Region Elementary Principal of the Year, the Golden Bell Award from the California School Boards Association, the California Association of African American Superintendents and Administrators (CAASA) Emerging Superintendent Award, and the National Alliance of Black School Educators (NABSE) 2015 Hall of Fame Award inductee among many others.

Currently, Dr. Witherspoon serves as the National Director of Equity for Generation Ready – one of the nation’s premiere educational professional development companies based in New York, NY. Generation Ready partners with parents, school communities, and districts throughout the country to ensure success for all students. [https://www.generationready.com/what-we-offer/cultural-proficiency/](https://www.generationready.com/what-we-offer/cultural-proficiency/)

**NJCEE-SOUTH SUPERINTENDENTS’ LEARNING COMMUNITY**

**“Addressing and Overcoming Our Organizational Barriers for Increasing Inclusion, Opportunity and Access”**

**Wednesday, October 16**
**8:30-11:00**

Rowan University South Jersey Technology Park
107 Gilbreth Parkway, Suite 200
Mullica Hill, NJ

This will be a highly interactive forum for Superintendents’ and/or Assistant Superintendent/Curriculum Directors continued sharing of district successes, promising initiatives, challenges and key equity and excellence lessons learned.

**NJCEE-S PROMISING PRACTICES ROUNDTABLE**

**Friday, November 22**
**9:00-Noon**

Rowan University South Jersey Technology Park
107 Gilbreth Parkway, Suite 200
Mullica Hill, NJ
District and school leadership teams will come together to highlight and share promising district/school-level programs and practices, staff professional learning and/or organizational change initiatives that are increasing access, inclusion and/or new learning opportunities for their historically underachieving students.

**NJCEE-SOUTH MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT LEADERSHIP INSTITUTES**

**Friday, January 3**  
9:00-1:30

Camden County College  
Otto R. Mauke Community Center  
200 College Drive  
Blackwood, NJ

**TWO SESSION SERIES: YOUTH LEADERSHIP AND SCHOOL CLIMATE WORKSHOP**

“Schools Where All Students Thrive: How Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) Fosters Educational Equity and Improves School Climate and Learning”

**Monday, January 13**  
Wednesday, February 26  
8:30-2:30

Rowan University South Jersey Technology Park  
107 Gilbreth Parkway, Suite 200  
Mullica Hill, NJ

Dr. William Preble, Professor of Education at New England College and Executive Director of the Center for School Climate and Learning  
Manchester, NH

Updated July 29, 2019
Until we get equality in education, we won’t have an equal society (Sotomayo). School climate is like the air we breathe, it tends to go unnoticed until something is seriously wrong (Freiburg). A school’s culture is a key factor in determining whether improvement in a school is possible (Fullan & Hargreaves, 2011).

These quotes capture the issues we will discuss and work together to address in this two-session series. We will explore the issues of school climate, culture and learning and how to work with students as action research partners. Educators will learn how they can call upon and invite diverse teams of students to serve as school climate experts, researchers and advocates and work with them to identify and solve complex problems and overcome barriers to providing a quality education to all students.

Note that this is a two session workshop series for consistent district equity leadership teams that is designed to help build system capacities for engaging active student voice and participation in your school improvement efforts. We will examine how schools across the U.S. are using YPAR to transform school climate, learning environments and achieve educational equity, while simultaneously improving adult culture, work environments and teacher morale. In each session, we will explore how to improve schools for everyone by working collaboratively with students using a set of activity-based, action-oriented exercises and protocols, and sharing model action projects that have been used successfully in other schools. Everyone will leave with a personal plan of action and YPAR Tool Kit they can use for leading and sustaining school climate improvement to ensure that all students thrive.

Goals for Session One (January 13):

- To introduce the power of YPAR to amplify the voices of students and teachers and to identify and solve complex school problems that prevent schools from meeting the needs of all students.
- To synthesize research on quality education as a civil right (QECR), personalized learning, democratic school leadership and improving school climate, culture and learning as a call to taking effective action.
- To explore and apply a simple, yet powerful Youth Participatory Action Research Model that each participant can apply in their schools to address issues of educational equity and improve school climate and culture.
- To review, design and share simple action steps, activities and projects and that will help all students and teachers thrive in Consortium Schools.

Goals for Session Two (February 26):

- To explore and assess the power of YPAR to amplify the voices of ALL students and teachers and to identify and solve complex school problems that prevent schools from meeting the needs of all students.
- To share the ways that students, teachers and school leaders applied the YPAR Action Model in their schools, classrooms and organizations.
- To investigate how this process can be applied more broadly in Consortium schools and sustained in the future to help all students and teachers thrive.

TWO SESSION SERIES: LEADERSHIP FOR SOCIALLY AND EMOTIONALLY RESPONSIVE SCHOOLS WORKSHOP
“Nurturing Resilience: Understanding and Effectively Responding to Our Students’ Stress and Trauma”

Wednesday, March 4
Thursday, May 14
8:30-2:30

Rowan University South Jersey Technology Park
107 Gilbreth Parkway, Suite 200
Mullica Hill, NJ

Updated July 29, 2019
Session One (March 4): “Student Resilience Realized: Building Extraordinary Brains”

The trauma-informed movement is sweeping through education. Now almost every educator knows something about childhood trauma and its devastating impact on student learning, behavior and quality of life. We also know that building student resilience is the antidote to traumatic experience. But now that we are trauma-informed, how do we respond? And what about students who do not experience trauma yet suffer the significant challenges of severe anxiety and chronic stress?

**Note that this is a two session workshop series for consistent district equity leadership teams** that is focused on providing you with the knowledge, skills, and structures to build resilience in all students. Resilience empowers every student to achieve success and prepares them for future challenges. Educational leaders can drastically increase student resilience by designing and implementing a resilience-building culture so that each student can heal, grow, learn and thrive. Equally important, you’ll be exposed to practices that erode student resilience and lead to poor outcomes. You’ll learn how to apply practical tools to strengthen your students’ readiness for instruction and ability to learn. You’ll also get strategies to meet students’ needs for behavioral support including motivational tools and effective behavioral health structures. In addition, you’ll learn how to create powerful, transformational school cultures that prioritize inclusion, equity, optimism and hope.

**Session Two (May 14): “Building Resilience in Our Students Who Are Experiencing Poverty”**

Research reveals that experiences of chronic poverty significantly impact how a student thinks, feels and behaves. Because this emerging pattern of thinking, feeling and behavior is often starkly different from those of people not experiencing poverty, helping relationships between the impoverished student and non-impoverished educator can struggle to form, stall midway, or fail altogether. This workshop provides educational leaders with information and insights on the impact of poverty on the brain and equips them with concrete tools for helping staff build effective relationships with impoverished students. Leaders will experience a powerful Poverty Simulation and be furnished with specific, research-backed strategies for influencing students’ thinking, feeling and behavior to produce positive and enduring academic, social and behavioral change for economically-stressed students.

Frank Kros is a career child advocate, who has served as a childcare worker, child abuse investigator, children’s home administrator, consultant, college professor, attorney, writer and speaker. Frank currently serves as president of Transformation Education Institute, Director of the National-At-Risk Education Network (NAREN) and executive vice president of The Children’s Guild, a multi-service children’s organization headquartered in Maryland. He joined The Children’s Guild as vice president of programs in 2000 and became executive vice president in 2002. Prior to arriving at The Guild, Mr. Kros practiced law with Luce, Forward, Hamilton & Scripps in San Diego, California, where his practice focused on children’s issues. He also has served as vice president for curriculum and training at Children’s Square U.S.A. in Council Bluffs, Iowa; as a child abuse service officer for the Douglas County Juvenile Court in Omaha, Nebraska; and as a family teacher at Father Flanagan’s Boys’ Home (Boy’s Town).

Frank is a worldwide speaker and presents seminars to parents, educators, child-serving professionals and their leaders on various topics including brain-based learning, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), neuroscience of the teenage brain and brain-compatible organizational leadership. He also speaks on the effects of stress, child abuse and poverty in relation to brain function and development. He has presented his workshops at national education, social work and human services conferences, and Frank was awarded a Maryland Governor’s Citation for his speaking efforts. In addition to lecturing nationwide, he co-authored the books **Creating the Upside Down Organization: Transforming Staff to Save Troubled Children (2005)** and **The Upside Down Organization: Reinventing Group Care (2008)**.

Frank received his law degree magna cum laude in 1993 from Notre Dame Law School, where he served on the Notre Dame Law Review. He also holds a master’s degree in social work from the University of Nebraska at Omaha and a bachelor’s degree in psychology from Creighton University.
## ANTICIPATED 2019-20 NJCEE-S MEMBER DISTRICTS

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<tr>
<th>School District</th>
<th>Superintendent</th>
<th>County</th>
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<tr>
<td>Berlin Township School District</td>
<td>Edythe Austermuhl</td>
<td>Camden County, NJ</td>
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<td>Burlington County Institute of Tech</td>
<td>Christopher Nagy</td>
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<td>Patricia T. Dologhuty</td>
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<td>Joe Meloche</td>
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<td>Gloucester County NJ</td>
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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.

**Updated July 29, 2019**
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 practices.

Special thanks to our friends and colleagues in the Rowan University College of Education for their generosity and support in hosting the New Jersey Consortia for Excellence Through Equity-South. The Center for Access, Success & Equity (CASE) was created to support faculty, students and community members in developing initiatives to address local and regional issues of access, success & equity for students in P-20 institutions. Our focus is to “turn research into practice” and thus have a direct impact on the educational outcomes of students by: conducting extensive research, offering professional services, and engaging in policy creation and reform, impacting the most persistent educational challenges - those which obstruct access, success and equity in traditionally underserved communities.