

Expanding Opportunities:

Your Guide to High Quality Teaching, Learning & Leadership in Early Childhood

Event Catalog
March 24, 2021
10:00 A.M.





State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

PO Box 500

TRENTON, NJ 08625-0500

PHILIP D. MURPHY
Governor

SHEILA Y. OLIVER
Lt. Governor

ANGELICA ALLEN-McMILLAN, Ed.D.
Acting Commissioner

March 24, 2021

Welcome, and thank you for joining us for the New Jersey Department of Education's Third Annual Early Learning Virtual Conference: Charting the Road to High-Quality Early Childhood Education. I appreciate your commitment to this work and the time you are investing to help shape outcomes for New Jersey's youngest learners.

Our conference this year focuses not only on preschool education, but on the early elementary grades to ensure that critical grade-to-grade transitions are more seamless and accessible to all students. As with our previous early learning conferences, there will be professional development sessions designed to equip educational leaders in preschool programs with tools to keep young minds engaged in learning. This year, we have expanded our conference offerings to include topics on leadership, fiscal management, supporting English Learners, and other areas of importance. Continuing the theme of access to high quality programs for all of our students remains at the forefront of this year's conference.

Three years ago, when we held our first virtual early learning conference in partnership with the Long Branch School District, we were excited to facilitate professional engagement for educators. Fast forward to today and we continue to highlight the Long Branch School District for its leadership in providing families with high-quality early childhood education.

It is critically important to ensure that our youngest learners continue to receive the top-tier education that is expected from New Jersey's public schools. We've learned that the best way to achieve this is to promote conversation and collaboration among and within our school communities. Your presence today, exemplifies your commitment to this work and to our common goals. Enjoy the conference.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Angelica Allen-McMillan, Ed.D.".

Angelica Allen-McMillan, Ed.D.
Acting Commissioner of Education

Schedule of Events

10:00 A.M.

Commissioner Address

Acting Commissioner Angelica Allen-McMillan, Ed.D.

10:05 A.M.

Introduction

Assistant Commissioner Cary Booker

10:10 A.M.

Keynote Address

Dr. Steven Barnett

10:40 A.M. - 10:50 A.M.

Break

10:50 A.M. - 11:30 A.M.

Concurrent Sessions

11:30 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.

Break

12:00 P.M. - 12:40 P.M.

Repeat of Concurrent Sessions

12:40 - 1:00 P.M.

Closing: Conference Reflection

Assistant Commissioner Cary Booker



Introduction

[Attend Introduction](#)



Keynote

W. Steven Barnett is a Board of Governors Professor of Education and Founding Co-Director of the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) at Rutgers University.

Dr. Barnett is an economist who conducted groundbreaking benefit-cost analyses of the Perry Preschool and Abecedarian programs. His research has covered many other aspects of early childhood education policy for children from birth to age five including: curriculum, intensity and duration, class size, age of start, and dual-language immersion. He has led multiple large-scale evaluations of public early childhood education initiatives and their long-term effects including a study of New Jersey's court-mandated program.

Dr. Barnett also developed the State of Preschool survey that has provided detailed data on every state's preschool policies continuously since 2002. Dr. Barnett's research has been published in more than 300 publications. Most recently he has conducted national surveys of parents regarding the pandemic's impacts on the learning and development of young children.



Attend
Keynote



Social-Emotional Learning

Irvington Public Schools

Participants will identify and examine how to infuse the foundational social-emotional skills to support best practices in the early childhood virtual classroom. Participants will explore developmentally appropriate strategies to teach social skills in remote instruction, such as virtual classroom rules, facilitating peer interactions, parent involvement, and establishing a community of learners in the virtual classroom.

Attend Session 1

Attend Session 2

“Enhancing Social-Emotional Learning During Remote Instruction”
by:



Aja Smith



Tawanna Singleton



Dan Bender



Joshua Wrinn



Kindlyne West



Maribel Adamo

Concepts Covered

- Feelings
- Virtual Rules
- Peer Interactions
- Daily Schedule
- Parental Involvement
- Brain Breaks
- Building Classroom Community

Social Emotional Learning Standards Addressed

- Standard 0.3
- Standard 0.4
- Standard 0.5



English Language Learning

East Orange Public Schools

As educators, it is vital to provide a safe, positive, and welcoming school environment for our students and families. This workshop is geared towards helping staff understand and address barriers that may exist for many of our families. We will also be looking at a variety of strategies and resources to help support ELL students and their families.

Attend Session 1

Attend Session 2

“Supporting ELL Students and Families in the School Environment and Beyond” by:



Elisa Castillo

Concepts Covered:

- Highlighting the importance of a welcoming school environment for families
- Understanding and addressing needs of families to the best of our ability
- Working with families to support student learning
- Supporting and maintaining home language



Parenting Partnerships

City of Burlington Public Schools Early Childhood Center

Today, more than ever, schools have to build partnerships with parents to successfully educate the whole child. Building parent-capacity and fostering positive relationships between home and school results in greater academic and social success. NAEYC refers to this as the “power of parental involvement” (Kirkwood, 2016). Parents are their children’s first teachers and building bridges between educators and parents is essential to meeting the needs of preschool children. This session will present evidence-based, practical practices for increasing parent engagement and forming lasting relationships.

Attend Session 1

Attend Session 2

“Fostering Parent Partnerships in Preschool Programs” by



Karen Breisacher, PIRT



Regina Genovesi, CPIS/SW



Kristy Sugg, MT

Concepts Covered:

- Working with parents in all settings, including virtually.
- Obtaining the complete picture of a child’s development by including parent feedback (ASQ & ESI).
- Facilitating parent workshops and family events garner more participation.
- Using the parent communication component of Teaching Strategies.
- Real takeaways for educators to use or tweak for use.



Parenting Partnerships

Asbury Park School District Early Childhood Department

Asbury Park has worked to transform more traditional parent involvement processes to family-driven and learner-centered engagement and community support for our youngest learners. In this session, members of the district's Early Childhood Department will share how new initiatives and changes to pre-existing programs were implemented, based on utilizing the services that are in and around the district and local community to specifically and intentionally target needs and requests from families, for families.

Attend Session 1

Attend Session 2

"Using Outreach Services and Data-Driven Decisions to Support Families and Foster Student Success" by



Dr. Lauren Jackson,
Supervisor



Sonia Irizarry,
CPIS



Shannon Antonelli,
Master Teacher



Tiffany Sorto,
Master Teacher



Tatum Stein,
K to 3 Counselor

Family Engagement across the Early Childhood continuum, including:

- Virtual parent meetings (Spring 2020 to Present)
- Digital Family Needs Assessment Survey
- Team supports for "at-home learning"
- Family services for "in-school needs"
- Preschool Equity Program (P.E.P.)
- Transforming home visits
- Registration supports



Mathematics

Long Branch Public Schools

Guided Math groups, students engage in standards-based, rigorous, learning opportunities where the teacher focuses on a particular concept, strategy or skill. Teachers facilitate this learning through hands-on, scaffolded conversations and intensive questioning. Guided math provides a structure for teachers to differentiate instruction so they can reach and teach every student. Learn more about what guided math is and how it can be implemented in your early learning math classroom.

Attend Session 1

Attend Session 2

“Guided Mathematics in the Early Childhood Classroom” by



Kevin Gilbert
1st Grade Teacher



Melanie Harding
District Mathematics Supervisor

Concepts Covered:

- What are Guided Math Groups?
- Using a Guided Math Framework
- Using Assessment to Guide Instruction



Mathematics

Long Branch Public Schools

Math Workshop is about a group of children learning and working together in a structured instructional format that has multiple spaces for individual, partner, and small group work. In math workstations, students collaborate and learn about math through invigorating and stimulating projects, games, and activities. Math workstations are differentiated, standards based, engaging activities that foster mathematical thinking. The goal of math workstations is to encourage students to make sense of math by engaging in sustained practice over time that allows them to build conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, and problem solving skills. Through a variety of experiences that start at the concrete level and then scaffold through the pictorial level and then the abstract level, children get to feel the math, see the math and do the math! Math workstations allow children the opportunity to revisit, review, practice, and be enriched so they can become flexible confident proficient mathematicians. Children like to laugh and learn by doing something that challenges them just enough but that is still fun and engaging....Math Workstations do just that!

Attend Session 1

Attend Session 2

“Math Workshop and Math Workstations” by



Joy Daniels
Director of Early Childhood



Michelle Morey
2nd Grade Teacher



Sean Kelly
Kindergarten Teacher

Concepts Covered:

- Math Workshop
- Math Workstations
- Managing the Math Workshop



Mathematics

Long Branch Public Schools

Early childhood math ambassadors have served as the expert in their building in the guided math framework and the math workshop approach as well as the Learning Trajectories. These teacher leaders with expertise in mathematics education provide school-based professional development needed to support and maintain the teacher change process. They lead their building wide math PLCs and offer professional learning to the teachers during district wide professional learning sessions. They model instruction, participate in virtual rounds and have continued their professional learning through intensive sessions with our consultants and experts, always staying one step ahead of their peers as the lead learner in math instruction.

Attend Session 1

Attend Session 2

“Teacher Leadership in Early Childhood Math: Math Ambassadors” by



Tracey Cummings
1st Grade Teacher



Beth McCarthy
Principal

Concepts Covered:

- While the goal of mathematics education reform is to improve the mathematics achievement of all students (NCTM, 2000), at the core of these efforts is the teacher (Garet, Porter, Desimore, Birman, & Yoon, 2001).
- PLCs and modeling which is needed to support and maintain the teacher change process.



Inclusion

Sayreville Public Schools

Together we learn better! The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 mandates that people with disabilities have freedom, equality, and opportunity to participate fully in public life. This can begin as early as the preschool years. We know that all students learn differently, and inclusive classrooms give students with disabilities the chance to learn alongside their peers. Teachers provide support as well as specially designed instruction geared towards helping these young students succeed. Join us on a virtual tour of an inclusive classroom as we discuss the importance and necessity of inclusion, the difference between school supports and services, and provide ideas on how to successfully differentiate instruction.

Attend Session 1

Attend Session 2

“The Power of Inclusion” by



Audrey Burns
Director of
Early Childhood



Judy Perone
Master Teacher



Jacqueline McGrade
Master Teacher

Let's Discuss Inclusion:

- Differentiation
- Professional Development
- Support for Students and Staff
- Visionary Leadership in the Preschool
- Effective Co-Teaching
- Parent/Community Partnerships
- Highlights (Unified)



English Language Arts

Maple Shade School District

Join us as we highlight best practices in Reading in several Kindergarten classrooms that engage students, differentiate instruction and support our Kindergartners along their journey to becoming successful and motivated readers.

Attend Session 1

Attend Session 2

“Engaging Kindergarten Students in Various Types of Reading Instruction” by



Susan Morrissey



Yvonne Reitz

Standards Addressed:

- Reading Literature: Key Details - RL.K.1-3
- Reading Literature: Craft and Structure - RL.K.4-6
- Reading Literature: Range of Reading - RL.K.10
- Fluency - RF.K.4



Administration

The Leaguers, Inc

More than 320,000 Head Start children in the United States enter kindergarten each year. Research shows this transition is an important event in the lives of children and families that can make a difference in their immediate and ongoing school success. One of the key practices that fosters successful transitions is COLLABORATION! When there are strong relationships among Head Start programs, families, and receiving elementary schools, all these parts can work together to offer children and families continuity, security, and resources for smooth transitions.

Attend Session 1

Attend Session 2

“How Head Start Programs and District Partnerships Effectively Work” by



Veronica E. Ray
Executive Director/CEO



Tracy Crosby

Throughout this session we will explore the impact of intentional collaboration between Head Start and the Elizabeth School District.

- Head Start Standards
- 1302.12, 1302.13, 1302.14, 1302.15, 1302.16, 1202.71
- Promoting School Readiness
- Collaboration Strategies between Head Start & Districts
- MOU Requirements



Administration

New Jersey Department of Education

Given the vital role high-quality early education plays in learning and development, early education leaders need a broad, cutting-edge knowledge base, relevant strategies, and leadership competencies to generate sustained quality improvement. This session will provide core leadership competencies, which will provide leaders with the core knowledge, management skills, and tools necessary to build and advance high-quality early education across learning environments.

[Attend Session](#)

“Leaders of Early Learning” by:



Cary Booker

Concepts Covered:

- Leadership and management in early education
- Improve and sustain high-quality early education
- Leading effective early education teams



Administration

New Jersey Department of Education

Fiscal management practices should support the provision of high-quality early childhood learning environments, opportunities, and experiences that recognize the needs of individual students and work toward the attainment of high levels of achievement for all students. This session will provide a high-level overview of core knowledge and skills regarding budget and early childhood school finance.

[Attend Session](#)

“Early Childhood Financing” by:



Selina Foreman

The Process of Highly Qualified Preschool Program Funding:

- Program Financing
- Qualifying
- Per Pupil Amount
- Provide Contracts



Reflection

Attend
Conference Reflection

