

Professional Development Opportunities



Lenox Public Schools

Presenters and Offerings – November 25 & 26, 2024

Lenox Memorial Middle and High School

8:00 AM – 3:00 PM

PARTICIPANTS SHOULD CHOOSE OFFERINGS BASED ON THEIR CODED COLOR:
TWO DAY PARTICIPANTS WILL CHOOSE A MINIMUM OF 4 BLUE OFFERINGS AND ONE
DAY PARTICIPANTS WILL CHOOSE A MINIMUM OF 2 BLUE OFFERINGS.
THE REMAINING TIME CAN BE BLUE OR GREEN OFFERINGS.

Dr. Tracey Benson

PRESENTER BIOGRAPHY:



Dr. Tracey A. Benson is the CEO and the founder of The Anti-Racism Leadership Institute. He received his doctorate in Education Leadership from the Harvard Graduate School of Education and Masters of School Administration from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. A notable accomplishment is his TED Talk entitled: The Binary Code of Racism. He has served as a university professor, principal coach, high school principal, middle school vice-principal, district trainer, and elementary school teacher. His book, *Unconscious Bias in Schools: A Developmental Approach to Exploring Race and Racism*, was released with Harvard Education Press in August 2019. Dr. Benson and his co-author Sarah Fiarman wrote this book as a roadmap for school and district leaders who seek to eliminate racial achievement gaps through rooting out and addressing racial bias in schools.

PEDAGOGY OF EDUCATIONAL EQUITY: STRATEGIES TO INTERRUPT UNCONSCIOUS BIAS IN THE CLASSROOM

It's essential that educators understand the phenomenon of unconscious racial bias and how it negatively affects educators and students. Using examples from my published book, *Unconscious Bias in Schools: A Developmental Approach to Exploring Race & Racism*, we'll explore the conditions necessary for educators to address racial bias directly in themselves and their schools.

Phil Folgelman

PRESENTER BIOGRAPHY:

Phil began his professional journey as a teacher to promote a supportive learning environment that fosters a sense of belonging and that he himself had not experienced growing up. While Phil was able to create such an environment in the classroom, he recognized the far-reaching impact of systemic inequities in education on students' sense of belonging. With that in mind, Phil subsequently accepted an opportunity from the late Boston civil rights leader, Lenny Zakim, to oversee A World of Difference Institute's anti-bias education program for PreK-12 schools throughout New England. For the next 25 years, Phil supported hundreds of schools with bias incident intervention and prevention guidance; professional development programs for school committees, administrators and teachers; a peer-to-peer training program for students; and presentations for families. Phil also developed partnerships with non-profit organizations and federal, state and local agencies to facilitate additional support for schools. In 2024, Phil founded Changemakers for Good TM LLC to continue his life-long journey to support educators and students in building a culture of belonging and fostering learning communities where everyone is represented, respected and valued.



1. BUILDING A CULTURE OF BELONGING IN SCHOOL - OFFERED 11/25

Research-based studies show that students' sense of belonging at school is strongly connected to academic learning and achievement and social-emotional well-being. Studies also show that students who feel like they belong are less likely to engage in harmful behaviors such as bullying. At the same time, nationally 45% of surveyed students say they don't feel connected to their school. This workshop will explore contributing factors to belonging uncertainty and identify strategies to foster a greater sense of belonging for PreK-12 students.

2. WISE INTERVENTIONS: A NEW GENERATION OF TEACHING STRATEGIES - OFFERED 11/26

Imagine if voter turnout could be increased simply by using a specific grammatical structure to motivate people to vote. As it turns out, that’s exactly what happened in a randomized experiment using a wise intervention. Now imagine how this and other wise interventions can be used to increase students’ motivation and academic achievement. This workshop will explore wise interventions, identify their underlying psychological processes, and provide participants with the opportunity to develop teaching tools that employ wise interventions.

Dr. James Levine Ph.D., LICSW

PRESENTER BIOGRAPHY:

James Levine, Ph.D., LICSW has been working with individuals with trauma since 1985. Prior to that time, he was a 7th grade teacher in Eugene, Oregon. He’s worked in various clinical settings, including a hospital emergency department, outpatient clinic, and in private practice. For almost 25 years, he was the founding director of James Levine & Associates, a comprehensive behavioral health organization in South Hadley, MA that continues to offer outpatient therapy, psychological evaluations, and consultation/professional development for schools and public agencies. His first two books were published in hardcover, paperback, and international editions. The third (forthcoming), called Hurting in Plain Sight, is a parent guide to helping children with trauma. Jim has taught in two graduate programs and given workshops across the country on the subject of trauma and its intersection with behavior, learning, and mental health.

IMPACT OF CHILDHOOD TRAUMA

This workshop explores the impact of childhood trauma. Because the term itself has become so commonplace, we may miss the nuance of what it means on the ground for a child to have experienced trauma. As a single example, there is a great deal of misunderstanding about what happens to trust as a result of such lived experience. Rarely does a child completely lose the capacity for this, but how it reveals itself can be surprising. Given all this, we’ll look not only at what trauma is and how it manifests, but we’ll also discuss concrete strategies for helping these children in the classroom and elsewhere at school. A short presentation will be followed by questions and discussion.

Jessica Bazinet

PRESENTER BIOGRAPHY:

Jessica Bazinet is an accomplished educator with 18 years of diverse teaching experiences in Berkshire County. She is currently an Educator Preparation Literacy Specialist, with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. She was a finalist for the 2022 MA Teacher of the Year award and is known for her uplifting and empowering teaching style fostering holistic well-being alongside academic growth.

EMPOWERING EDUCATORS WITH INSTRUCTIONAL TOOLS: ENGAGE, ELEVATE, DIG DEEPER, AND PLAY

Join Jessica for an interactive session where she’ll share strategies to ignite student engagement, amplify student voices, weave in formative assessment opportunities, and seamlessly integrate play into your teaching. You will also have an opportunity to explore the latest DESE instructional tools to elevate your lesson planning, and have time to brainstorm/collaborate with peers while you plan ahead using your newly learned strategies.



Amy O'Brien

PRESENTER BIOGRAPHY:



Amy graduated in 1998 with her bachelor's in music and earned her national board certification in music therapy in 1999. In 2000, she received her first master's in special education. She earned her second master's in special education with a concentration in vision rehabilitation in 2011. In addition, she has completed graduate course work in the Wilson Reading System, vision, CVI, and deafblindness. Amy has practiced as a TVI since 2005 and currently works as an independent contractor with different agencies that provide services to students in New York, Massachusetts, Vermont, and New Hampshire. Her caseload consists of students who primarily have diagnoses of CVI, complex communication needs, and multiple disabilities. Since 2013, Amy has been an adjunct professor at Dominican University where she teaches a graduate methods course on students with multiple disabilities in addition to a visual impairment. She runs a state-wide professional development group under NYAER for vision service providers and has been a presenter at NYAER conferences.

CORTICAL/CEREBRAL VISUAL IMPAIRMENT TRAINING

This training will provide an overview of the visual behaviors that can impact students with cortical/cerebral visual impairment (CVI). The team will review accommodations, general recommendations, and discuss ongoing considerations for students with CVI on their caseloads.

Dr. Darcy Fernandes

PRESENTER BIOGRAPHY



Darcy Fernandes, an educator for over 32 years, started her career as a social studies teacher in her hometown. Interested in becoming a leader, she engaged in multiple program director roles. They included the Twenty-First Century After School Program Director, Facilitator of Social Studies, Community Service-Learning Lead, and Parent Liaison. Ms. Fernandes left her hometown to a principal in Brockton and then New Bedford. In 2013, Ms. Fernandes was appointed Assistant Superintendent for Randolph Public Schools and then Superintendent at Athol Public Schools. In both these districts, she concentrated her time on ensuring that learning for all students was the center of the work. Ms. Fernandes has now been appointed Senior Associate Commissioner for the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, where she spearheads both internal and external work on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

CELEBRATING OUR SUCCESS AND BUILDING UPON IT THROUGH CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY RESPONSIVE INSTRUCTION

During this session, the facilitator will work with teachers to celebrate the wins in the aggregate and sub-group data on MCAS. In addition, the participants will take part in a journey of understanding culturally and linguistically responsive instruction and how to use it to accelerate learning for all students further. Teachers will see how culturally and linguistically responsive instruction parallels SEL and research-based instructional practices in schools.

Ryan Evangelisto & Maureen Kennedy

PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES:

Ryan Evangelisto - I grew up in Pittsfield and currently reside in Lee. I began working in Lenox as a paraprofessional in 2010. After a couple of years I was encouraged to return to school by some colleagues. Now, I find myself as a special education teacher at Morris Elementary School.

Maureen Kennedy - I have been teaching physical education at Morris Elementary for 25 years now. I've lived in the Berkshires all my life, having grown up in Lee and now living in Pittsfield with my family. I've been a Trainer with Safety Care for 5 years now and enjoy the opportunity to work with my colleagues in a new setting.



SAFETY CARE TRAINING - *FULL DAY TRAINING

Safety-Care is a training program for staff working with children, adolescents, or adults who may exhibit challenging or dangerous behavior. The focus in Safety-Care is on prevention, safety, and humane, supportive, evidence-based interventions. We'll learn to prevent many behavioral crises and how to respond if a crisis does happen.

Landon Callahan & Reece Dahlberg

PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES



Landon Callahan (he/him) works for the Massachusetts Commission on LGBTQ Youth. He is an Education Consultant, a public speaker, and an advocate for transgender rights. He conducts professional development on gender identity and DEI for public and private school administrators, teachers, counselors, nurses, parents, and students. He graduated Fitchburg State University with a degree in communications and political science. His speaking engagements include guest lecturing at Harvard Law School and the Harvard Graduate School of Education. He has been involved in creating policy at the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as it relates to transgender student rights. His work has been featured in Rolling Stone Magazine, the Boston Globe, and the New York Times.



Reece Dahlberg is the parent of three children in the Marblehead Public Schools. Reece is a volunteer participant and advisor in professional development programs for administrators and staff in schools and businesses throughout New England for the DESE Safe Schools Program. Reece was raised in Swampscott and Waterville Valley NH. In 2000, she graduated from Wheaton College in Norton MA. While in college, Reece participated in Boston University's Sydney Internship Program where she worked on a local Australian election. During her time in college, she also participated in the White House Internship Program in Washington DC where she was assigned to White House Counsel. After college, she worked as a paralegal for a residential and commercial real estate law firm in Boston. With the birth of her first child, she became a stay-at-home mom. Reece shares her experience as the mom of a transgender student and the collaboration with her son's school.

PROMOTING RESILIENCE AND HEALTHY OUTCOMES FOR LGBTQ STUDENTS

How can we help LGBTQ youth to envision a positive future for themselves? In this interactive session, participants will learn about LGBTQ terminology, the experiences of LGBTQ students and families, research and guidance as it relates to transgender students, and resources and best practices for promoting resilience and healthy outcomes. We will explore case studies designed to challenge gender-based stereotypes, to increase family engagement, and to develop skills for supporting LGBTQ students and creating a welcoming school climate.

Andre Lynch

PRESENTER BIOGRAPHY

André Lynch is a dynamic and dedicated Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) consultant and coach, known for his work in fostering inclusive environments and driving positive organizational change. Mr. Lynch is a Doctoral Researcher at St. John Fisher University, within their Executive Leadership Program. He holds a Master of Education in Educational Leadership, emphasizing higher education, from St. Lawrence University.

Mr. Lynch has established the first DEIB professional organization in Berkshire County, "The Berkshire Equity Association" (BEA). For several years Mr. Lynch has planned and hosted Northern Berkshire's first, and only, international festival. A native of Brooklyn, NY, Mr. Lynch arrived to the Berkshires 3 years ago by way of administrative roles in higher education throughout northern NY and the mid-western United States. He has previously served in posts such as Associate Dean for Equity and Inclusion, and currently serves as a University Institutional Equity Executive.

Mr. Lynch has presented at numerous workshops and conferences, most recently at Massachusetts Association of Business Officers; United Against Hate; and Western Massachusetts premier conference highlighting equity, entitled "Equity in the 413". Mr. Lynch served as keynote for "Cultural Appreciation Week" at the North Adams Probation court; a 2024 "40 Under Forty" Award recipient; and is involved with many community-based organizations both regionally and nationally, including the Berkshire Black Economic Council, NAACP Berkshires, and the Blackshires Community Empowerment Organization.

Having accumulated over a decade of experience, Mr. Lynch's unique approach combines data with practical strategies. Mr. Lynch's coaching style is characterized by empathy, authenticity, and deep listening. His ability to blend a strong theoretical foundation, with real-world applicability, makes him a sought-after advisor in the field.

1. BECOMING AN ACTIVE BYSTANDER: TOOLS FOR COMBATING MICROAGGRESSIONS

This workshop will equip participants with practical strategies to identify, address, and intervene in everyday instances of microaggressions. Through interactive discussions and role-playing, attendees will gain confidence in fostering inclusive environments while supporting those impacted by microaggressions.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to;

- 1. Recognize various types of microaggressions in different settings.*
- 2. Apply bystander intervention techniques to respond effectively.*
- 3. Build skills to create supportive spaces for all individuals.*

2. THE POWER OF WORDS: UNRAVELING MICROAGGRESSIONS WORKSHOP

Join us for an engaging and enlightening workshop, where we delve into the impact of language on our daily interactions. Explore the subtle realm of microaggressions, while gaining a deeper understanding of their impact on individuals and the broader community. Together, let's harness "The Power of Words" to build a more inclusive and compassionate community!

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to;

- 1. Define microaggressions*
- 2. Explain the psychological, academic, and social impact of microaggressions.*
- 3. Learn community standards that aid in facilitating difficult conversations.*

3. EXPLORING EQUITY VS. EQUALITY

This workshop offering examines the relationship between equity and equality. Throughout our exploration, we will discover the importance of these concepts, and apply them to our own personal and professional lives. Participants will engage in dialogue and activities aimed at better understanding our duty in providing brave and accessible learning environments.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to;

- 1. Differentiate between equity and equality in practical contexts.*
- 2. Understand the role of equity in addressing systemic disparities.*
- 3. Identify principles of equity to utilize within a professional context.*



Cherilyn Zaretsky & Amy Higgins



PRESENTER'S BIOGRAPHIES:

Cherilyn Zaretsky - A school adjustment counselor and licensed mental health counselor, Cherilyn Zaretsky has worked in a variety of therapeutic settings throughout New York, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts. She has practiced yoga for 25 years, becoming a registered yoga instructor after studying under world renowned yogi, Sri Dharma Mittra. Cherilyn frequently incorporates elements of yoga into the work she does at Morris Elementary School and is grateful to share more with the LPS community.



Amy Higgins - Amy Higgins has been a school adjustment counselor for over 20 years at the elementary, middle, and high school levels in FL, NJ, and MA. She has been part of the LMMHS community for the past 4 school years and enjoys using the concepts of mindfulness and meditation with the students she serves. Amy was fortunate enough to spend nine days this past summer living and learning at Kripalu as a student in the Kripalu Yoga in Schools Teacher Training learning an evidenced-based curriculum endorsed by the Collaborative for Academic, Social & Emotional Learning (CASEL). A long time yogi, she is excited to find more opportunities to bring the ancient wisdom of yoga and meditation to the school community to help students and teachers enjoy the emotional, mental, social, community, and physical benefits they afford.

YOGA & MEDITATION: REFILLING THE WELL

As educators there is tremendous demand on our time and attention focused outward on serving others. Yoga is a vehicle for turning inward to cultivate greater compassion for ourselves. We will begin this workshop with an introduction to the concept of Refilling the Well for daily recovery and long term resilience. We will then gently move and breathe together to promote greater self-awareness, regulate our physical and emotional states, and experience rest and relaxation. The class is open to all bodies, ages, and levels of experience from none to many.

Kate Olender

PRESENTER BIOGRAPHY:

I have been working with technology in an educational setting for over 20 years, as a college, middle school, elementary and district librarian then as a technology teacher in our elementary school. I am an ISTE certified instructor, and continually expand my knowledge of physical computing and digital literacy through continued education and various state and national organizations. Lately, I have presented nationally at ISTE in Denver, and locally at MassCue and CSTA-NE on my curriculum.



CREATIVELY GATHERING DATA AND HANDS-ON DIGITAL PLAYGROUND FOR GRADES 4-8

Teachers will learn how their students can use a Micro:Bit to gather data in two ways for analysis. After using the Micro:Bits, teachers will be able to play around with several other devices that can be used in their classrooms for their students to demonstrate knowledge on many topics. Such as, living books reports, simulations, talking posters - while the students use a computer to create the outcomes are physical. Many of the things they can do with the tools can be toned down for lower grades and ramped up for upper grades. I can provide further PD or support for teachers interested in learning more about any of the devices once they are introduced to them.

Brian Tolan

PRESENTER BIOGRAPHY:

I've been teaching chemistry and computer science (and a few other subjects from time to time) for 25 years at LMMHS. I'm a near lifelong programmer and I've been working with various forms of AI since the 1980s.

AI IN EDUCATION

Artificial intelligence (AI) has been advancing at a breathtaking rate in recent years. A fairly new genre of AI known as large language models (LLMs) lies at the heart of this technological explosion. As intelligence becomes commoditized, we may see striking societal changes in the near future. Educators face many challenges as we struggle to adapt to this new AI landscape. At the same time, AI can be a powerful tool for teachers and students alike. We'll first explore what sets today's models apart from earlier AIs and then demonstrate use cases for educators and students. We'll focus our attention on OpenAI's ChatGPT, but we'll also look at some other tools if time permits. You are highly encouraged to bring a laptop if you wish to follow along with the examples. Laptops will also be provided as needed.

Eileen Mahoney

PRESENTER BIOGRAPHY:

The Rev. Eileen Mahoney is an Interfaith minister, an Expressive Arts Therapist and a Mindfulness Teacher who combines expressive arts with her knowledge of a wide variety of religions and spiritual practice to help people lead more fulfilling, productive, happier lives. She is also a member of the Order of Engaged Buddhism in the Plum Village tradition of the Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh. Rev. Eileen has created Viriditas, the greening, the refreshing of the soul: a process that combines meditation and the arts with interfaith spiritual exploration to help refresh and enliven our souls in the face of today's challenges. She believes that we are meant to live from this "Green" dimension of our being, living fully in our True Selves. Rev. Eileen offers individual counselling to individuals and groups on line and in person as well as regional and international workshops. Her practice is infused with a deep knowledge and experience of several religious traditions, the arts and the lived wisdom with which she accompanies those who have a need to deepen or reconnect with their spirituality and/or religion.

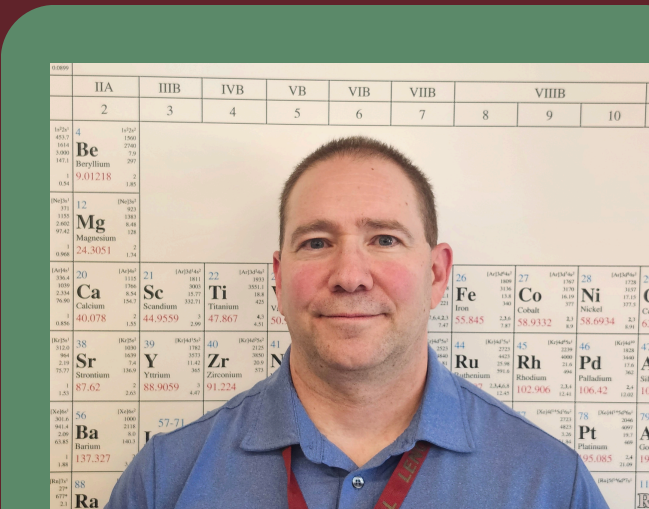
www.greeningofthesoul.com

1. CALM, CLEAR AND COLLECTED IN THE MIDST OF CHAOS: OFFERED 11/25

A workshop to explore how to remain calm, clear and kind even in the midst of challenging situations. Learn simple, kind, effective mindfulness tools to help when confronted with chaos so that you can calm the situation, respond, not react; and make clearer choices about next steps.

2. GREENING OF THE SOUL: OFFERED 11/26

Join Rev. Eileen Mahoney in an exploration of how to refresh your spirit. In the business of life our spirits often get forgotten, left behind or ignored. Explore and learn simple ways to reconnect with your heart so that you can live a more enlivened, compassionate, purposeful life.



Tom Chang, M.Ed

Joy & Justice in Schools Program, Co-Director

Mariah Lapiroff, MAT, Ed.S.

Joy, Justice & Equity Specialist

PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES:

Tom Chang is a dedicated leadership coach, teacher educator, and community organizer. He is the board chair of the Sojourner Truth School for Social Change Leadership and co-director of the Joy and Justice in Schools program at the Collaborative for Educational Services. With a deep commitment to co-facilitation, Tom and his colleagues have worked closely with over 20 schools districts and organizations to center the needs and brilliance of young people. He draws on 3 years of experience as a social justice and equity specialist and 15 years as an elementary school teacher working to cultivate environments where all community members feel a genuine sense of belonging. In an increasingly divided world, Tom emphasizes the power of bridging and recognizing our shared humanity as a path to collectively taking better care of ourselves and each other.



Mariah is from Berkeley, CA, and grew up in a Chinese and Jewish family with teachers for parents. She continually feels deeply influenced by and connected to her home, cultures, and community. Mariah is a social justice facilitator committed to culturally sustaining, equitable, and transformational practices. She has experience working as a high school teacher, as well as an educator at elementary and university levels. She holds an M.A.T. in Latin & Classical Humanities and an Ed.S. in Social Justice Education from UMass Amherst. She facilitates sessions on the topics of social identities, self-awareness, oppression and liberation, intergroup dialogue, and relational education approaches that foster student agency and belonging in joyful caring school communities. Mariah firmly believes that social justice work in schools must happen through intergenerational partnerships that center the voices, experiences and dreams of young people at the margins.



1. CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PEDAGOGY & BEING A WARM DEMANDER WORKSHOP

Lisa Delpit (2013) defines warm demanders as educators who “expect a great deal of their students, convince them of their own brilliance, and help them to reach their potential in a disciplined and structured environment.” Educators who act as warm demanders foster spaces of authentic student agency. Engaging in self-reflection, social-awareness, and inquiry practices serves as a foundation for what Zaretta Hammond (2015) terms as the “inside-out work” required for culturally responsive teaching practices of warm demanders. This professional development and supportive coaching would provide educators with opportunities to self- and peer-assess where they fit into the warm demander framework, explore the four practice areas of the Ready for Rigor Framework for Culturally Responsive Teaching in depth, and build greater capacity to embody the pedagogies and practices of a warm demander. This workshop emphasizes engaging in individual reflection on personal assets and growth areas and strengths-based collaborative peer support, as well as an array of specific teaching tools to support the brilliance of all learners. The PD will be structured to meet individual needs, as well as foster increased supportive and collaborative networks between educators.

2. FACILITATING BRAVE & GENERATIVE CONVERSATIONS

In this session, participants will experience and explore facilitation techniques for holding brave conversations and dialogue in our classrooms, practice skills, and leave with tools to support classrooms where students learn to exchange ideas and listen with care to different viewpoints, identities, and experiences. This supports students and educators together to deepen understanding, authentically share experiences, and build affirming communities.

3. STUDENT AGENCY WORKSHOP

In this session, participants will explore the meaning of student agency and its critical role in shaping schools as places of joyful belonging and care. Based on the frameworks of Safir and Dugan’s Street Data, participants will engage in conversations to deepen understanding of student agency and practices to both measure and increase it. This session will focus on ways to build classroom cultures that honor student identity and experience through critical dialogue and relational engagement. The session will include specific strategies for engaging student voice, choice and belonging in classroom and school communities.

Canyon Ranch

Kenly Brozman and Dan Marko

PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES



Kenly Brozman
NBC, HMC, IFC, PCC, MSW, Health and Performance Coach

Kenly has a deep commitment to improving people’s health and well-being by sparking their curiosity about the possibilities of their potential. She is an open and caring coaching partner that engages alongside guests as they begin or continue their wellness journey.

Dan Karko
MA Senior Spiritual Wellness Provider

Dan helps guests explore how developing or deepening a spiritual practice can enhance personal or professional relationships. He provides individual consultations, group lectures and conferences.



1. DESIGN YOUR WELLNESS PLAN WITH KENLY

2. DESIGN YOUR WELLNESS PLAN WITH KENLY

A wellness plan is an individualized life navigation system that integrates physical, mental, and emotional well-being strategies. Begin Planning your personalized Wellness plan with Kenly.

3. RITUALS AND RESTORATION WITH DAN

4. RITUALS AND RESTORATION WITH DAN

Rituals have been used since ancient times to set intention and open transformation. Dan Marko shares ideas for creating personal rituals which enhance the restoration of body, mind and spirit.

Coaching and Co-Teaching Panel

Coaching – Amanda Hanlin-Hochler and Emily Wood

PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES



Amanda Hanlin-Hochler is a mom of 4 and stepmom to two more. She has worked as a reading specialist for 17 years. She has worked for the Lenox public schools for the last twelve years in a hybrid coaching and intervention role. She also serves as the K-5 data coach in the district.

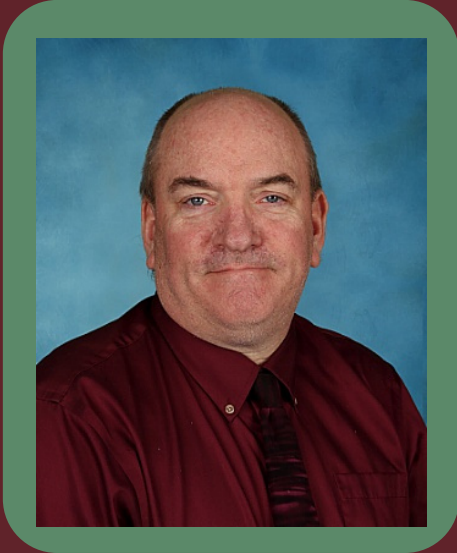
Emily Wood is a third grade teacher at Morris. She has also taught second grade at Morris, as well as Pre-K and kindergarten in neighboring districts. Emily is the proud mom of Hadley, 9, and Tanner, 7, who are both students at Morris.



Co Teaching Panel: Megan Porter, Tom Fielding & Lisa Wespiser



A native of Vermont, Megan Porter has taught 11th grade social studies at LMMHS since 2014.



Tom Fielding teaches 7th grade English at LMMHS. Prior to joining the district in 2019 Tom taught at Nessacus Middle School in Dalton.



Lisa Wespiser teaches 11th grade English at LMMHS. She’s been with the district since 2011.

COACHING AND CO TEACHING PANEL

Amanda and Emily work together as coach and classroom teacher in the area of tier 1 writing. Our work together utilizes a gradual release model whereby Amanda co-planned with Emily and modeled most lessons in year one, and Emily and Amanda alternate most of the whole group teaching this year. We designate time for students to confer with us about their writing so that we may help them take the next step forward in their journey as writers.

Lisa and Megan have been teaching collaboratively for several years now using a proficiency-based grading model.

Financial Advisors: Shawn Hoffman & Natalie Gecewicz

PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES



As a financial professional in our Malta NY office, Shawn Hoffman is ready to work with you to ensure you and your family’s financial future. Shawn has a Financial Information and Analysis B.S. Degree from Clarkson University. He also holds the FINRA 7 & 66 licenses as well as NY, NJ, MA, CT, VT, GA, & OR Insurance licenses. As a financial advisor, Shawn’s supportive and educational approach is to help you make well-informed decisions for your financial future. Shawn is a Certified Retirement Education Specialist (ID 227288881) through NTSA, a credentialed Holistic Financial Coach through Columbia University, and is also a member of the Retirement Benefits Group, a specialized division that works with public school employees and their retirement planning needs.



Natalie Gecewicz has been working with public educators in Berkshire County for over 22 years. She is a financial advisor specializing in assisting school districts and nonprofits. Natalie’s extensive experience and dedication have made her a trusted resource for educators and their families, helping them navigate the complexities of retirement planning.

FUTURE PLANNING FOR EDUCATORS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Join Natalie Gecewicz and Shawn Hoffman for an insightful session on retirement planning tailored for educators and their families. With over two decades of experience working with public school systems and nonprofits, Natalie and Shawn will provide valuable guidance on financial strategies, ensuring a secure and well-prepared future. This session is designed to help attendees understand the financial landscape and make informed decisions about their retirement plans.

Berkshire County Retirement Board

Sheila LaBarbera, Jill Hersey & Brian Shepard

PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES



Sheila LaBarbera, Executive Director : Sheila has been with the BCRB since 1996 and resides in Pittsfield with a golden retriever named Dutch.

Jill Hersey, Retirement Coordinator:
Jill came to the BCRB in August 2021, with a strong financial background, having worked in banking for over 14 years. She is an Elms College Graduate with a Bachelor's Degree in Management & Marketing.



Brian Shepard, Retirement Coordinator:
Brian started with BCRB in December of 2021. He comes from a background in Financial Advising and Investing. He is a Graduate of MCLA with a major in Business Administration.

PLANNING FOR RETIREMENT

Learn how the pension system works for you. We will discuss eligibility for benefits, retirement options, designation of beneficiaries, health insurance, social security, and deferred compensation.

Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement System

Meghan Rosso and Ronda Miller



Meghan Rosso -
Director of Member Services, West
25 years with the MTRS
Meghan enjoys spending time with her family and friends, traveling and hiking with her Bernedoodle, Frank.



Ronda Miller -
Senior Benefits Supervisor, West
23 years with the MTRS
Ronda enjoys time with her grandchildren and playing with her golden, Brady

YOUR MTRS BENEFITS SEMINAR

This is an informational program for MTRS members of all ages and career stages. The program focuses on retirement formulas, creditable service issues, Social Security and other post-retirement issues.

Monday, November 25, 2024

8:00 AM - 3:00 PM

7:30 - 8:00 AM: Optional Breakfast Available to Participants

8:00 - 8:10 AM: Welcome

8:15 - 9:00	Dr. James Levine	Dr. Darcy Fernandes	Dr. Tracey Benson	1. Phil Fogelman	Landon Callahan & Reece Dahlberg	1. André Lynch	Amy O'Brien	1. Eileen Mahoney			
9:05 - 9:50											
9:55 - 10:40	Dr. James Levine	Dr. Darcy Fernandes	Dr. Tracey Benson	1. Phil Fogelman	Landon Callahan & Reece Dahlberg			1. Eileen Mahoney	Cherilyn Zaretsky & Amy Higgins	1. Canyon Ranch	Berkshire County Retirement
10:45 - 11:30										2. Canyon Ranch	Berkshire County Retirement

11:35 - 1:05

Lunch

1:10 - 1:55	Dr. James Levine	Dr. Darcy Fernandes	Dr. Tracey Benson	1. Phil Fogelman	Landon Callahan & Reece Dahlberg	2. André Lynch		1. Eileen Mahoney	Cherilyn Zaretsky & Amy Higgins	3. Canyon Ranch	Berkshire County Retirement
2:00 - 2:45										4. Canyon Ranch	Berkshire County Retirement

Tuesday, November 26, 2024

8:00 AM - 3:00 PM

7:30 - 8:00 AM: Optional Breakfast Available to Participants

8:00 - 8:10 AM: Welcome Back

8:15 - 9:00	2. Phil Fogelman			Jessica Bazinet	2. Eileen Mahoney	Kate Olender		1. Tom Chang & Mariah Lapiroff - Joy Team	Financial Advisors	Co Teaching/ Coaching Panel	
9:05 - 9:50			Ryan Evangelisto & Maureen Kennedy						Financial Advisors	Co Teaching/ Coaching Panel	
9:55 - 10:40	2. Phil Fogelman	3. André Lynch			2. Eileen Mahoney	Kate Olender	Brian Tolan	2. Tom Chang & Mariah Lapiroff - Joy Team			
10:45 - 11:30			* All Day Training								

11:35 - 1:35

Lunch

12:40 - 1:25	2. Phil Fogelman	3. André Lynch	Ryan Evangelisto & Maureen Kennedy Continued		2. Eileen Mahoney	MA Teacher Retirement System (MTRS) Your Benefits	Brian Tolan	3. Tom Chang & Mariah Lapiroff - Joy Team			
1:30 - 2:15											

2:15 - 2:45

Closing Reception

ENJOY THE FOLLOWING LUNCH OPTIONS!

LOCAL FOOD TRUCKS



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YOUR
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PIZZA



SALAD
BAR

