

Welcome Fellow Educators to Western Carolina University's 2024 Equity in Education Summit!

We are thrilled that you chose to join us to grow our collective capacity to build schools where all kids and families feel safe, included, cared for, valued, and empowered to learn.

North Carolina's public schools are facing an unprecedented storm fueled by the simultaneous impact of the COVID-19 pandemic; inflation; legislative underfunding; political "culture wars" around students' gender and sexual identity; and resistance to teaching our country's true history. Just as actual storms cause destruction, these forces are taking a significant toll on the educators, staff members, students, and families within our public-school communities. Challenges include severe teacher and staff shortages; safety and school climate concerns; persistent learning and opportunity gaps; difficulty meeting students' basic needs (e.g., nutrition, mental and physical health, transportation, technology) let alone the needs of the whole child. In true public-school form, North Carolina's educators are facing these trials with heads held high - selflessly dedicating themselves so that children will thrive; but is this level of dedication sustainable under present conditions? Maybe . . . if we lock arms and confront these challenges together.

In this confrontation, we choose to take what is perhaps an unexpected approach—finding our way back to JOY. Our summit theme this year is "Reclaiming Joy in Our Schools." Joy in classrooms, schools, and communities. Joy among teachers, students, leaders, counselors, support staff, specialists, and school board members. Joy as—happiness, deep satisfaction, spiritually-oriented, a human right, radiating peace, shared, contagious, beautiful, wonder, wellness embodied, and as collective resistance. In the words of our keynote speaker, Dr. Gholdy Muhammad, joy as "the ultimate goal of teaching and learning." (Gholdy Muhammad, 2023, p. 17).

To understand the power of joy, we turn to great thinkers of our time:

"We need joy as we need air."

-Maya Angelou

"Discovering more joy does not save us from the inevitability of hardship and heartbreak. In fact, we may cry more easily, but we will laugh more easily too. Perhaps we are just more alive. Yet as we discover more joy, we can face suffering in a way that ennobles rather than embitters."

-Desmond Tutu

"The sharing of joy, whether physical, emotional, psychic, or intellectual, forms a bridge between the sharers which can be the basis for understanding much of what is not shared between them, and lessens the threat of their difference."

- Audre Lorde

In this gathering, we will share examples of the ways in which regional educators and beyond are reclaiming and cultivating joy through equitable, engaging, and caring practices. Centering equity and diversity in schools is no longer an aspiration; it is a necessity – even (and especially) in the face of resistance.

We will strengthen relationships among our region's diverse community of educators, policymakers, researchers, and advocates so that we can weather the storm together and solidify our collective and persistent commitment to schools our children deserve.

Thank you for all that you do for students and families!

Joyously,

The Executive Planning Committee

Dr. Jess Weiler, Dr. Dustin Evatt, Dr. Joy Howard, Dr. Melissa Mecadon-Mann, Dr. Loidaly Rosario-Singer

Group Agreements

We anticipate knowledge sharing, knowledge construction, new learning, fruitful discussions, and commitments to new and ongoing collaboration. We encourage participants to not only share your expertise with others but also to engage in open and respectful dialogues where all voices are welcome and heard.



Click the link below to jump to session

BREAKOUT SESSIONS ROUND 1 MONDAY | 11:00 am -12:00 pm

Honoring Through Countering: Racialized and Gendered Experiences of Black Male Teachers' in the South

Presenter: Dr. Marquis Mason, UNC Charlotte
Cherokee Room-2nd Floor

Despite awareness and intentional efforts to diversify the teaching workforce, Black male teachers continue to represent only 2% of the teaching workforce, nationally. Research suggests a deeper examination of the nuanced experiences of Black male teachers that contextualize how their racialized and gendered experiences informed their teaching practices. Further, the findings of this study provide recommendations for teacher preparation programs and school districts working to increase the diversity of the teaching workforce.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS ROUND 1

MONDAY | 11:00 am -12:00 pm

Culturally Responsive Instruction and the “Why” of Equity

Presenter: Dr. Sheldon Lanier, Durham Public Schools

Alexander Room - 2nd floor

Racial inequities and biases have become ordinary and unconscious occurrences in American institutions. Given the hierarchies endemic in our societal structures, a deficit perspective is often taken when discussing ability, actions, and issues related to students of color or individuals who are not a part of a particular dominant culture in K-12 settings. Implicit bias is defined as the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner (Staats, et al., 2016). Our implicit biases are the result of mental associations that have formed by the direct and indirect messaging we receive about different groups of people (Staats, et al., 2016). Dismantling systemic inequities in K-12 classrooms must be the primary goal of all schools and institutions and can only be accomplished in a culture and climate that ensures that all decisions affecting every student are made in an equitable manner with regard to the social and historical context of marginalized individuals. This includes, but is not limited to, those individuals who may be marginalized due to the following: race, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, class, socioeconomics, ethnicity, sexual orientation, cognitive/physical ability, diverse language fluency, religion, and/or status as an English Language Learner and/or other characteristics protected by federal law. Schools must be intentional in their efforts of replacing racism, discrimination, and racial prejudice with educators whose attitudes and behaviors reflect acceptance, compassion, integrity, understanding, fairness, cooperation, and respect.

Continue...

BREAKOUT SESSIONS ROUND 1

MONDAY | 11:00 am -12:00 pm

[Student-Centered Session]

Co-Creating Equitable Spaces: Students and Educators Exploring the AVL6

Presenters: Copland Arnold Rudolph, Asheville City Schools

Foundation: Principal Nicole Cush, School of Inquiry and

Life Sciences at Asheville; Asheville High School Students:

Lia Hayes, Antonio Stinson, Samarra Jefferson, Fernanda

Glagau Do Espirito Santo

Swannanoa Room - 2nd floor

In this session, educators will learn about the Racial Equity Ambassador Program at Asheville High School and SILSA. Students will share their journey establishing the AVL6 - six strategies for culturally responsive teaching and they will share student data collected over the past two years on successes and areas of growth. Participants will have an opportunity to hear directly from students and work in small groups around the two strategies that continually present challenges for current teachers.

Participants will:

- Recognize the capacity, wisdom, and energy that youth leaders can contribute towards actualizing an equitable education system

- Identify tangible, concrete actions for integrating culturally responsive teaching strategies into their classroom/school/district/organization

- Identify common barriers and threats to youth leadership and leave with ideas for mitigating these challenges and fully supporting burgeoning young leaders

Continue...

BREAKOUT SESSIONS ROUND 1

MONDAY | 11:00 am -12:00 pm

Two presentations in same room

Healing the Harm Done: Restorative Practices

Presenters: Michelle Harris Jefferson & Ashlee Sherrod, WhyWeLEAP Consulting, LLC

Berkeley Room - 2nd floor

Engaging in discourse around rethinking traditional disciplinary practices through an equity lens, with a focus on relationship building, healing harm and giving voice to the voiceless is powerful work. In this session, we will grapple with the idea that instead of focusing on judgment, blame, guilt, breaking rules and consequences, we join together to make things right for all parties by addressing the underlying needs of those involved, that went unmet! This session will share practical tools which address our ability to "heal the Harm Done"!

The Joy of Supporting Diverse Learners

Presenters: Dr. Tisha Greene, Dr. Cornelia Okraski, Niki Sashington, Kate Gilbert, UNC Charlotte

Berkeley Room - 2nd floor

This session will provide an overview for a professional development series for teachers and other educators on supporting diverse learners in classroom settings. This series of 4 professional development sessions provided by university faculty focused on supporting students with diverse learning needs (multilingual learners, students with disabilities, culturally sustaining pedagogies, and coaching for equity). Each session is approximately 80 minutes and focused on high leverage strategies for supporting students in the classroom and school. This program was made possible by an Inclusive Excellence Grant.

Continue...

BREAKOUT SESSIONS ROUND 1

MONDAY | 11:00 am -12:00 pm

Creating a Equitable and Just Educational System Through Exploring History

Presenters: Dr. Deanna Townsend-Smith & Ashley Kazouh, Dudley Flood Center for Educational Equity & Opportunity

Victoria Room - 2nd floor

North Carolina's commitment to providing an equal public education to all students within the state began in 1776, when it included the right to public education in its original constitution. Following the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling in 1954, many Southern states engaged in immediate backlash, publicly proclaiming that they were not giving up their segregated system of schooling. While North Carolina's approach to desegregation was less violent than other Southern states, it was by no means progressive, at least immediately following the *Brown* decision. However, 20 years after the *Brown* ruling, North Carolina would be recognized nationwide as the blueprint for successful desegregation strategies.

In this session, attendees will explore the policies, court cases, and important historical events that shaped not only school desegregation in North Carolina, but also the impacts in today's education system. Through exploring, the historical aspects leading to and following desegregation participants will gain an understanding of how the impacts of these aspects reverberate through and influence current inequities that plague our education system. This understanding will also provide a foundation to better advocate for equity and justice.

Continue...

BREAKOUT SESSIONS ROUND 1

MONDAY | 11:00 am -12:00 pm

Culturally and Historically Based Instruction in Early Grade Classrooms: One School's Journey

Presenters: Dr. Jennifer Reed, Buncombe County Schools; Principal Angela Trantham, Kathryn Ellis, & Anna Fields, Johnston Elementary School

Grand Ballroom C - 1st floor

Session attendees will explore the deep connection of scholarship to practice in the implementation of systems-focused strategies to embed culturally and historically responsive literacy instruction into the culture of Johnston Elementary School, a K-4 school in Buncombe County Schools. District leadership, the school principal, instructional coach and a teacher will each contribute to the implementation story, sharing experiences and lessons learned. There will be ample opportunities throughout the session for reflection and collaboration so that attendees can make meaningful connections to their own scholarship and practice. This session is applicable to all school levels.

END OF BREAKOUT SESSION ROUND 1

BREAKOUT SESSIONS ROUND 2

Monday | 1:15 - 2:15 pm

Working at the Intersection of Privilege and Oppression - A Mindset for Empathy

Presenter: Jesse Pitt, Asheville Middle School

Victoria Room - 2nd floor

While the COVID pandemic amplified our deep social inequalities, justice issues continue to erupt across the country. Intersectionality is a framework that will increase your understanding of the complex dynamics shaping our schools and communities. Through thoughtful discussion and reflective activities, we will use Intersectionality to gain greater self-awareness and deeper empathy for the experiences of others. Participants will leave with a common language and mindset to analyze the dynamic social layers of privilege and oppression affecting us all.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS ROUND 2

MONDAY | 1:15 - 2:15 pm

Beyond the Binary: Launching an LGBTQIA+ Affinity Network for Future Educators and Preparing P-12 Teachers in the College of Education at Charlotte

Presenter: Kate Gilbert, UNC Charlotte

Alexander Room - 2nd floor

There has been a growing need for safe spaces and supportive communities for LGBTQIA+ individuals within all educational settings. We will discuss the foundation, progress, and future prospects of the LGBTQIA+ Affinity Group at UNC Charlotte's in the College of Education. Comprised faculty and teaching candidates, our Affinity group aims to foster a nurturing environment where open dialogue, acceptance, and understanding thrive. Through monthly meetings and attending events together, participants share experiences, addressing issues specific to LGBTQIA+ teachers in the current political climate. The initiative also focuses on enacting change for intentional placements for clinicals and initiating a "Lunch and Learn" program to educate university faculty about inclusive practices for both their own teaching as well as preservice teachers' pedagogy. Join us as we explore our progress for paving the way for a more inclusive educational landscape at UNC Charlotte where all individuals contribute meaningfully to the field of education.

Nurturing the Joyful Spark: Teaching Future Educators and Leading Equity-minded High School Teachers

Presenters: Dr. Megan Keiser, UNC Asheville & Nicole Cush, School of Inquiry and Life Sciences at Asheville

Swannanoa Room - 2nd floor

Where is the joy? It is time for a Project Based Learning revolution! PBL is a dendrite-building approach that elevates achievement, equity, and reignites joy. Come learn how Department of Education courses can embed Project Based Learning experiences into course work so teacher candidates

BREAKOUT SESSIONS ROUND 2

MONDAY | 1:15 - 2:15 pm

participate in learning that is relationship-based, relevant, and rigorous. Come learn about how PBL assignments solidify the value of implementing evidence-based collectivist and rigorous cognitive structures so future educators learn how to plan and teach lessons that help close achievement gap and, as Hammond (2014) describes, builds “intellective capacity”. EPP’s must connect candidates to observe in school environments where PBL is thriving and evident; come learn how the School of Inquiry and Life Sciences is making a profound impact and sparking joy!

STEM Educators for Equity & Diversity: DEI Practitioners at Work

Presenter: Katy Gash, Henderson County Public Schools

Swannanoa Room - 2nd floor

Educators must build bridges of learning by using instructional practices that are relevant to students’ needs. In this session, participants will see examples of how educators have successfully implemented student-centered and culturally-relevant strategies in their STEM classrooms. The STEM Educators for Equity and Diversity (SEED) Fellows have completed a year-long professional learning opportunity in which they have implemented elements of DEI. Participants will see how both formal and informal educators across North Carolina have enhanced DEI through STEM content, instructional delivery, and professional development in their schools or organization.

Continue...

BREAKOUT SESSIONS ROUND 2

MONDAY | 1:15 - 2:15 pm

Partnering with a Purpose: A Collaborative Approach to Equitable Access

Presenters: Kim Kessarlis, UNC Asheville; Laura Parks, Asheville City Schools; Dr. Tiece Ruffin, UNC Asheville

Berkeley Room - 2nd floor

AVID has been the most successful, long-term initiative within Asheville City Schools of closing the opportunity gap. Historically, the ACS AVID program has served >80% BIPOC students. Over the past 25 years, the AVID program has been successful in preparing AVID students not only to meet 4-year college entrance requirements but over 90% of graduating seniors enroll in a two or four-year college directly following high school. AVID's built-in accountability and assessment measures including student enrollment in rigorous courses, site teams, equity-based policy and practices, and partnerships with a university and/or community organizations ensure strong systems to support AVID student's success in high school and beyond. The purpose of our presentation is to highlight that despite a significant opportunity gap in Asheville City Schools, the partnership between Asheville City Schools and UNC Asheville has sustained the successful implementation of the AVID program supporting AVID students to pursue post-secondary education.

[Student-Centered Session]

The Students' Perspectives: High School Researchers Address Inequities in Education

Presenters: Students from Asheville High School and the School of Inquiry and Life Sciences at Asheville; Host

Teacher: Jessica Garland Williams

Cherokee Room - 2nd floor

- Mancel Adcock, "Examining Inequities: The Implications of Merging Two School Systems"
- Isabel Bishop, "Striving for Inclusive Education: Achieving Equity in Sex Education for All"
- Kevyn Carter-Long. "Unveiling Racial Disparities: Exploring Inequities in Traditionally White High

BREAKOUT SESSIONS ROUND 2

MONDAY | 1:15 - 2:15 pm

School Sports"

- Paiden Casteblanco, "Mapping the Trajectory: School Counseling Profession's Ideals and Gaps in Practice"
- Maya Resnick, "Unlocking Potential: Counselors as Gatekeepers to Honors and AP Classes - Bridging Equity in Education"
- Sophie Van Arnam, "Examining the Influence of Tracking on Educational Disparities: Strategies for Equity and Academic Success"

Historicizing Book Banning and the Erasure of Racial Histories

Presenter: Dr. Kindel Turner Nash, Appalachian State University

Grand Ballroom C - 1st floor

Anna Julia Cooper (1892) was an educator, administrator, scholar, activist, and formerly enslaved person whose experiences led her to offer a humanizing and joy-full view of the purpose of education as, “for the human soul . . . [to] give power and the right direction to the intellect, the sensibilities, and the will” (n.p.). Her humanizing vision suggests that educators do not merely instruct, they facilitate soul formation by equipping young people with foundational skills, tools, and ideas that help develop their natural curiosity and wonder. It is perhaps for this reason that in the present moment, as in our complicated past, educators and schools have been targeted. Book banning is one example. This presentation historicizes and contextualizes current book-banning and other restrictive policies and offers ideas, strategies, and tools for addressing book banning in local contexts in order to center the humanizing and joyful purpose of education.

END OF BREAKOUT SESSIONS ROUND 2

Breakout Session Round 3 start on next page

BREAKOUT SESSIONS ROUND 3

TUESDAY | 11:40 am -12:40 pm

Two presentations in same room

Empowering Black Male Leaders: Navigating Social Perceptions and Fostering Comprehensive Mattering

Presenters: Travis Howard & Dr. Dramaine Freeman

Grand Ballroom C2- 1st floor

This study examines the challenges faced by Black male educational leaders in P-12 settings, focusing on the impact of social perceptions and the cultivation of comprehensive mattering. Through qualitative methods, the research provides insights and identifies strategies to empower leaders to overcome stereotypes and biases. Emphasizing the intersectionality of race and gender, the presentation explores how fostering comprehensive mattering can positively influence leadership experiences. The findings aim to inform actionable steps for creating more inclusive environments, promoting representation, and inspiring future generations of Black male leaders.

The DRIVE (Developing a Representative and Inclusive Vision for Education) Task Force

Presenter: Guy Hill, Triton High School/ Harnett County Schools

Grand Ballroom C2 - 1st floor

In 2020, Governor Roy Cooper created the DRIVE (Developing a Representative and Inclusive Vision for Education) Task Force. The mission of this Task Force is to research, promote, and recommend ideas to improve diversity in the educator workforce of North Carolina. North Carolina's population of students of color continues to grow, while its population of teachers of color has remained stagnant over many years. The DRIVE Task Force seeks to reverse that trend.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS ROUND 3

TUESDAY | 11:40 am -12:40 pm

[Student-Centered Session]

Telling Our Story: Charlotte's Black History Documentary

Presenters: Jason Miller, Western Carolina University; Maya McClain & Morgan Winston, Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools

Alexander Room - 2nd floor

Maya McClain and Morgan Winston share the joys of producing and creating the Charlotte Black History Documentary as a leadership project for their Girl Scout Troop. They highlight the importance of Black excellence being taught in school, so Black students see examples of excellence by people who look like them.

Strengthening Early Childhood Systems for Equity

Presenters: Tiffany Hagemeyer, Buncombe Partnership for Children; Dr. Ameiris Lavender, YWCA of Asheville; Dr. Jen Neitzel, Educational Equity Institute; Cici Weston, Christine W. Avery Learning Center

Windsor Ballroom B - 1st floor

Join us in uplifting the work of three early childhood professionals with valuable expertise on birth-PreK systems improvement in Western North Carolina. This insightful panel discussion will provide opportunities for audiences to reflect on these experiences and consider how they can advocate for early childhood as the stage for building more equitable communities. This session will engage participants in discussion through a Roundtable conversation immediately following the panel presentation.

Continue...

BREAKOUT SESSIONS ROUND 3

TUESDAY | 11:40 am -12:40 pm

Empowering Everyone to Have a Voice: Creating an Equitable World Through Teacher Agency and Co-design

Presenters: Dr. Jennifer James, Innovation Early College High School & Dr. Lyndsay Britt, Hertford County Early College High School

Victoria Room - 2nd floor

Utilizing teacher agency in school change processes can be a powerful strategy for promoting equitable practices and fostering a more inclusive educational environment. Teacher agency refers to the capacity of teachers to make choices and act autonomously within their professional context. When integrated into school change processes, it can empower educators to drive initiatives that promote equity and inclusivity. This session will explore the way two North Carolina Early Colleges implemented equitable strategies within the schools fostering a sense of teacher agency and co-design.

Mr. Black Male Principal, Where Are You? An Investigation of the Motivational Factors Affecting Black Male Principals in Rural North Carolina

Presenter: Dr. Titus Hopper, UNC Charlotte

Cherokee Room- 2nd floor

Many Black educators and principals led the nation's schools in the early-to-mid-1900's, when American public education was racially segregated. Black male principals leading predominantly Black schools was commonplace before the United States Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* that ruled that the practice of separate was no longer equal. The number of Black male principals serving in North Carolina schools today is disproportionately low. Research on rural schools is scant and there is even less research about Black male principals leading these schools. This study focused on motivational factors affecting Black male principals working in

BREAKOUT SESSIONS ROUND 3

TUESDAY | 11:40 am -12:40 pm

rural North Carolina schools. The purpose of this study was to explore the lived experiences of these principals. The researcher's hope is that insight gained from this investigation would positively impact recruiting, mentoring, coaching of Black male principals, and aid in their retention not only in rural districts, but potentially all districts.

Microaffirmations: A framework for implementing equity and advocacy work in the classroom

Presenter: Dr. Melissa Mecadon-Mann, Western Carolina University

Grand Ballroom C1- 1st floor

The practice of using microaffirmations enables positive outcomes through small acts of active listening that encourage feelings of inclusion and shared cultural intimacy. Microaffirmations can be intersectional and are beneficial to a wide range of populations, including people of color, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and people with disabilities. This presentation describes the benefits of implementing microaffirmations in school settings and outlines a layered framework for implementation within school communities.

END OF BREAKOUT SESSIONS ROUND 3

BREAKOUT SESSIONS ROUND 4

TUESDAY | 2:00 - 3:00 pm

Empowering School Leaders for Equity and Inclusion: The Impact of Focused Time on Student Outcomes

Presenter: Tonya Morris, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

Victoria Room - 2nd floor

The quest for educational equity and inclusion hinges on the empowerment of school leaders and their ability to allocate focused time to improve student

BREAKOUT SESSIONS ROUND 4

TUESDAY | 2:00 pm -3:00 pm

outcomes. This session underscores the pivotal role that dedicated leadership plays in shaping our educational landscape. Leadership has the potential to bridge the abyss of inequity in education. Empowering school leaders to dedicate their time to the pursuit of equitable outcomes is a fundamental necessity. We will delve into the connection between enabling school leaders to prioritize student success and the attainment of equitable, inclusive practices. We examine how granting leaders the time to focus on improving student outcomes is instrumental in reducing disparities in educational achievement. This session will equip attendees with a clear understanding of how time allocation can serve as a catalyst for systemic change, leading to more equitable and inclusive educational experiences for all students. It will also highlight how focused leadership can drive equitable, positive change.

Two presentations in same room

Building a Community of Joy Through the Systematic Inclusion of Students with Extensive Support Needs

Presenters: Meaghann Denkenberger & Jennifer Ryan, Franklin School of Innovation

Alexander Room - 2nd floor

Inclusion of students with extensive support needs in general education classrooms enhances high quality work for ALL students through intensive Universal Design for Learning, provides diverse collaboration opportunities for ALL students, and allows leadership application for ALL students, thus enhancing equitable practice, highlighting strengths and contributions, cultivating belonging, and reclaiming joy for ALL students in our magnificently diverse classrooms. The research is clear on the benefits of inclusion. So why do so few schools implement full inclusion? Why do we still have self-contained classrooms? We believe there is a lack of information on HOW to include students with extensive support needs in general education

BREAKOUT SESSIONS ROUND 4

TUESDAY | 2:00 pm -3:00 pm

classrooms. In our conference session we share our case study of how one 5th grade science teacher and one special ed teacher are successfully collaborating to create systematic guidelines for full inclusion at their school. Their mission is to break down barriers to facilitate empathetic and collaborative citizens.

Incorporating Choice and Voice in Expeditionary Learning

Presenters: Dr. Lora Hawkins & Jessica Bragdon, The Franklin School of Innovation

Alexander Room - 2nd floor

This session will focus on designing problem based learning units. We will share our experiences with incorporating student choice and voice in problem based learning units. Student choice pedagogies are inherently culturally sustaining and equitable practices that will help all students be able to excel and feel confident as learners. This session will help you create or modify an existing problem based learning unit to incorporate more student choice and voice in the learning process to guide students in taking responsibility for their own learning using reflection and self discovery to lead the problem based learning unit rather than passively participating in a teacher generated unit. Participants will leave this session with ideas and an outline for implementation in the classroom as well as an exemplar packet to guide teams in designing student-led problem based learning units.

Using Data for Liberation

Presenter: Dr. Brandi Hinnant-Crawford, Clemson University

Grand Ballroom C2- 1st floor

In education - we are tired of the DRIP (being data rich and information poor). Despite our data teams and continuous improvement efforts, we fall into

BREAKOUT SESSIONS ROUND 4

TUESDAY | 2:00 pm -3:00 pm

routines of gap gazing without changing outcomes. This session asks us to evaluate the usefulness of the data we gather and to reimagine what data we need to inform our pursuit of liberation.

Two presentations in same room

Supporting the Education of Students in Foster Care or Experiencing Homelessness

Presenter: Beth Branagan and LJ Von Dohlen North Carolina Homeless Education Program/NCDPI

Windsor Ballroom B - 1st floor

This session will provide a basic introduction to the “Every Student Succeeds Act” (ESSA) with specific emphasis on the components of this law regarding the education of students experiencing homelessness and students in foster care settings. Participants will gain an understanding of the “McKinney-Vento Act”, including a discussion of the potential causes of homelessness and its impact on a child’s education. Similarly, a discussion about the impact of foster care on a child’s education, and how protections provided through ESSA, seek to level the educational playing field for these most vulnerable student populations. A review of the most recent data available for students experiencing homelessness and placed in foster care settings will be provided.

Piecing Together the Newcomer Puzzle

Presenter: Helen Atkins, Zaida Walker, Gina Bacheler, Rebekah Concepcion, Zulma Urena, International Welcome Center / Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools

Windsors Ballroom B - 1st floor

Have you heard the quote from Damon Richards, “Your customer doesn’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.”? During this session, we will share our experience in opening a welcome center as a tool to demonstrate to families

BREAKOUT SESSIONS ROUND 4

TUESDAY | 2:00 pm -3:00 pm

how much we care. We will explore the methods used to help us gain trust, break barriers, and empower second-language families as they navigate unfamiliar territory. From enrollment to instructional practices to building community partnerships, learn how to effectively place the puzzle pieces for your newcomer students/SIFE. Explore key components of our enrollment process, instructional practices, and building relationships with community partners to serve newcomer students/SIFE best. We will share specific tools such as newcomer exit criteria based on WIDA CAN DOs, multilingual parent orientation videos, and newcomer pathways.

Hypothesizing Hope

Presenter: Dr. Lucy Arnold, UNC Charlotte

Cherokee Room - 2nd floor

In this session, we'll talk about why having a robust theoretical framework is crucial for all teachers and educators. Teachers without a teaching philosophy are enacting someone's else's goals, which may not be in alignment with their own goals after all; we'll explore this concept in some specific teaching scenarios. We'll review some theorists on the concept of hope and talk about how our understandings of theory impact our practice and what practicing hope looks like for teachers. Participants will be invited to articulate their own teaching philosophies and consider possibilities for grounding their thinking in theory. Most importantly, we'll talk about how a theory of hope, which differs from idealism, can help us get out of bed in the mornings because that's the first step to changing the world.

Continue...

BREAKOUT SESSIONS ROUND 4

TUESDAY | 2:00 pm -3:00 pm

Acting Up: Fostering Joyful Teaching as Resistance in the American South and Appalachia

Presenters: Dr. Adam W. Jordan; Dr. Todd S. Hawley, Kent State University; Dr. Sonya Wisdom, Kent State University; Dr. Tracey Hunter-Doniger, College of Charleston

Ballroom C1- 1st floor

In this session, we discuss an upcoming book edited by the presenters entitled, “Acting Up: Fostering Joyful Teaching as Resistance in the American South and Appalachia.” In this presentation, we will highlight the importance of teacher educators in the mission to return joy to teaching, recognizing practices, approaches, and strategies intent upon empowering teachers to teach joyfully. In addition, rationale development, a practical strategy intent upon increasing reflective practices will be outlined. The concept of rationale development, which is a strategy used by the presenters in their own quests to maintain joyful practice, involves supporting educators in answering the question, “What are you teaching for,” with emphasis placed on “for.” Through sharing narratives as well as a powerful and practical strategy, this presentation supports a framework for considering targeted joyful practice for all participants at the P-12 and higher education levels.

END OF ALL BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Scholarly Posters, Lunch & Learn Topics and other information below

YOU CHOOSE

Choose one of the three following sessions you'd like to attend

Joyful Wellness: Participatory Music for All African Percussion with

MONDAY | 2:15-3:00 pm

Windsor Ballroom

Come join Adama Dembele as he leads summit participants in African drumming. You can participate in the drumming or simply come to enjoy the music and meet a world-renowned musician. Give yourself the experience of joy through participatory music. Adama Dembele is a master djembéfolá (djembe player) from Ivory Coast, West Africa and tailor of West African clothing, and for 12+ years Adama is a leading Master Teaching Artists with LEAF Global Arts! Adama come from a family of musicians for 33 generations, and has toured several continents with various major acts such Oumou Sangare, Salif Keita & many others. Adama has created and played in several drum and dance companies such as Yelemba d'Abidjan, Ensemble Koteba, Congoba and many more. You can play drums with Adama most Saturdays 12-2at his Yala! at LEAF Global Arts downtown Asheville. "When I share my culture, I am representing all of my family of drummers, storytellers and culture keepers in Ivory Coast and Mali. I am grateful to have a place to share my culture with so many great people. This means everything to me and the future."

Coffee and Connect

MONDAY | 2:15-3:00 pm

In this session, participants will have the opportunity to collectively reflect on their learning with their team members, network with other attendees at the conference, or develop/strengthen partnerships with the Dean and faculty members from WCU's College of Education and Allied Professions.

Scholarly Poster Walk (See Full Description for Details)

MONDAY | 2:15-3:00 pm

SCHOLARLY POSTER SESSIONS GALLERY WALK

SCHOLARLY POSTER SESSIONS

MONDAY | 2:15-3:10 pm

Grand Ballroom C2

Come take a walk through our gallery of scholarly posters. These posters highlight the work of three groups: WCU Principal Fellows leading equity-based change projects in their schools, WCU counseling students sharing school-based research findings, and Asheville High School students presenting their research on issues of injustice.”

WCU Principal Fellows

Principal Fellow Name	School District	Poster Session Title
Annah Lord	Henderson	Equation Elevation: Unleashing success through effective vocabulary instruction in Math 1
Bekah Mulligan	Jackson	From conflict to connection: Embracing restorative practices to reduce office referrals and exclusionary practices in response to minor behaviors
Brandon Ball	Henderson	Crafting futures: Elevating student success through dynamic employability skills at Henderson Career Academy
Cindy Ensley	Jackson	Creating an inclusive classroom community for multilingual learners
Craig Shimer	Asheville City Schools	Increasing reading proficiency in third grade students at Ira B. Jones Elementary
Dwight Shelton	Buncombe	Improving Latinx family access through equitable communication
Gloria Painter	Macon	Tackling chronic absenteeism in marginalized communities for equal academic opportunities
Jessica McCall	Transylvania	Empowering every learner: The dynamic impact of small group instruction in inclusion classrooms
Jennifer Kruk	Buncombe	Building relationships and academic growth in multilingual learners
Kimberly Mostiller	Burke	Empowering first-year immigrant multilingual learners: leveraging cultural, linguistic and experiential strength at Freedom High School
Lakiesha Lee	Buncombe	Culturally responsive practices to reduce office referrals
Laura Thompson	Rutherford	Guiding stars: Illuminating paths to success through inclusive discipline strategies
Ronald McDaniel	Durham	Improve ACT scores and provide equitable support to all students
Suzanne Shultz	Johnston	Fostering peer respect in elementary settings to support academic improvements for historically marginalized students
Kathleen Willi	Buncombe	It takes 15 villages: Making connections with multilingual learners

SCHOLARLY POSTER SESSIONS GALLERY WALK

SCHOLARLY POSTER SESSIONS

MONDAY | 2:15-3:10 pm

Grand Ballroom C2

WCU Counseling Students

Student Name	Poster Session Title
Shannon O'Reilly	Trauma Sensitive Schools
Jasmine McAllister	Transformative Social-Emotional Learning
Mary Elizabeth Drummond	Recess Time is Learning Time

ASHEVILLE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Student Name	Poster Session Title
Isaiah Huggins	Beyond the Binary: Addressing Inequities in High School Athletics for Transgender Athletes
Kaimaiha' McDaniel	Fostering Success: The Impact of Early Elementary Educators on Black Students' Empowerment and Achievement
Madeline Peeples	HB 49: Assessing its Impact and Implications as a Potential Violation of Title IX in Education
Sebastian Wilson	Equity in Education: Exploring Tracking and Racial Diversity in AP Classes

LUNCH & LEARN ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

TUESDAY | 12:40-1:45pm

Grand Ballrooms A & B

	Round Table Topic	Facilitator
#1	Building Pathways between the College of Education and PK-12 Schools	Dr. Kim Winter, Dean, WCU's College of Education & Allied Professions
#2	Coaching Conversations	Dr. Jan King & Dr. Andy Peoples, WCU
#3	Foundations of Equity: A Compassionate Start For Educators	Stacey Collins, Ray Crawford, Eleanor Macaulay, Sherry Maney, Pam Martin, Mikaela Painter, Fairview Elementary School
#4	Instructional Leaders Building Equity Through Mini Observations	Dr. Lisa Swinson, Swinson K12 Consulting LLC

LUNCH & LEARN ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

TUESDAY | 12:40-1:45pm

Grand Ballrooms A & B

#5	Seeking Camaraderie: Mentoring, Networking, and Supporting English Teachers Doing Critical Pedagogy	Dr. Lucy Arnold, Dr. Meghan Barnes, & Dr. Heather Coffey, UNC Charlotte
#6	SparkNC: Igniting Futures in Tech	Brittany Branch, SparkNC, Mount Airy City Schools & Sara Toothman, New Hanover County Schools
#7	STARward STEM: Illuminating Pathways to Joy, Equity, and STEM Careers	Jovan Jones & Sabrina Steigelman, Cumberland County Schools
#8	Strengthening Early Childhood Systems for Equity	Tiffany Hagemeyer, Dr. Ameiris Lavender, Dr. Jen Neitzel, Cici Weston
#9	Thriving with Imposter Syndrome	Dr. Frederick Buskey, Strategic Leadership Consulting
#10	Warmth and Demand: Why Building Relationships with Students is Vital to Success	Dr. Emily Virtue, WCU & Dr. Brandi Hinnant-Crawford, Clemson University
#11	Evidence Based Practice to Prepar Paraprofessionals Working with Students with Disabilities	Aarti Bellara
#12	Palette of Possibilities: Nurturing Well-being through Art Therapy in Secondary Education	Rayna Davis Crowe & Dr. Debora Foerst, Cherokee High School
#13	Strategies for our Music Students for Mental Health: Emotional Regulation to Increase Success and Serenity	Jenna Jaffe
#14	Homelessness and Foster Care Education: Critical Conversations	Heidi B. Von Dohlen, WCU, & LJ Von Dohlen & Beth Branagan, NCDPI
#15	Critical Conversations: Historicizing Book Banning and the Erasure of Racial Histories	Kindel Nash
#16	Culturally Responsive Instruction and the “Why” of Equity	Sheldon Lanier
#17	Equity Audits: A Necessary Step in Inclusive Instruction	Dr. Cristina Viera

PANEL DISCUSSION: “WE ARE NOT OKAY”

MONDAY | 3:10-4:10 pm

Grand Ballroom Salons A & B

Beginning in the spring of 2023 a group of school-based educators, academics, and community-based educators gathered to discuss student and teacher wellness in P12 schools across Western North Carolina. We started with the basic premise that in general, we are not okay. Based on our initial collaborative information gathering and planning session, two strategic working groups with specific goals were formed. One group focused on gathering relevant local data to share an up-to-date data story; and a second group focused on QPR training for (future) teachers in basic strategies to promote mental health. This sharing session will describe the process and outcomes to-date as well as serve as an invitation to be a part of a related working group designed to promote equity in wellness across WNC schools.

Moderator: Dr. Joy Howard, Associate Professor in Educational Leadership, Teacher Education DEI coordinator, WCU

Panelists:

- Dr. Jess Weiler, Associate Professor Educational Leadership, WCU
- Dr. Loidaly Rosario-Singer, Assistant Professor Counseling, WCU
- Dr. Melissa Mecadon-Mann, Assistant Professor Counseling, WCU
- Tima Williams SEL Coordinator Asheville Schools
- Liz Nihart MAHEC School Based therapist
- Dr. Myra Watson Assistant Professor and Teacher Education Coordinator
- Maggie King Assistant Principal Haywood County Schools

WORLD CAFÉ

Tuesday | 10:30-11:20 am

Grand Ballroom Salons A & B (1st Floor)

A World Café is an easy-to-use method for creating a living network of collaborative dialogue around questions that matter in service to real work. During this session, participants will expand on the “We Are Not Okay” panel from Day 1 and engage in an interactive small group dialogue focused on student and teacher wellness in Western NC. This is an organic discussion intended to build professional networking among participants, share ideas for future events or programs, and spark innovative approaches to tackling these issues.

WELLNESS SPACE

Monday and Tuesday

Windsor Ballroom (1st Floor)

Going along with our theme of “Reclaiming Joy in Our Schools,” we have allocated space to facilitate the cultivation of joy and wellness with educators during the Summit. The space will be reflective in nature and offer a variety of activities including:

- “Education is Hard” Support Group (Janna Carlson, WCU Counseling Program)
- Dialogue and Cyphers Wellness Sessions (Dr. Dramaine Freeman, App State & Travis Howard, WCU Counseling)
- Cultivating Joy through Yoga (Jazmyne Baylor, WCU Libraries)
- Guided Meditation and Tapping (Beth Sanderson Cooper).

Enjoy this time to reflect, rejuvenate, and reconnect with yourself!