Welcome to the Leadership Conference, the culminating experience for the Leadership Academy 2022 cohort. This year the conference will be held in Bowman Hall on MCLA’s campus in North Adams, and remote access is available for each session.

Dr. Tracey Benson will close the conference with a presentation based on his book *Unconscious Bias in Schools* on Saturday, July 8th at 6:30 p.m. in Murdock Hall, Room 218.

Conference sessions run on **Friday July 7th** and **Saturday July 8th** from 9:00 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. and are presented by members of the Leadership Academy 2022 cohort on topics ranging from leading inclusive, anti-racist schools to implementing instructional programs that enhance success for all. Sessions are organized according to the four standards established by MA DESE’s *Professional Standards for Administrator Leadership* (PSAL):

- Instructional Leadership
- Management and Operations
- Family and Community Engagement
- Professional Culture

In this conference program you’ll find:
1. Session schedule and links (pp. 1-3)
2. Session descriptions (pp. 4-9), and
3. Presenter Bios (pp. 10-17)

Thank you to the Leadership Academy 2022 cohort for their engagement, tenacity, and professionalism throughout the year.

Thank you to all educators.
Thank you to all students.

Marianne R. Young
Leadership Academy Director
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Thursday July 6th

6:30 p.m.  
Opening Session:  
Listening to our team: what our counselors can tell us; what we need

Friday July 7

9:00  
Thoughts to Start the Day

9:45  

11:00  

1:00  

2:15  

6:30  
Welcoming the Leadership Academy 2023 Cohort

Saturday July 8

9:00  
Thoughts to Start the Day

9:45  

11:00  

1:00  

2:15  

6:30 p.m.  
Keynote: Dr. Tracey Benson. Unconscious Bias in Schools

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| 9:00 – 9:30  | Marianne Young  
Leadership Academy Director  
A consideration to start the day: “Saying ‘Yes.’” |
| 9:45-10:45   | Data: What's the Story?  
Catherine Dodig  
During the session we will investigate how educators can use data as a tool to tell a story about what's happening within their buildings. Strategies will be shared on how to make data easier to understand and friendlier for you faculty and staff to work with. |
| 9:45-10:45   | Classroom Walkthroughs to Improve Instructional Practices  
Samantha Trudeau, Lyndsey Lutz  
Classroom walkthroughs are a powerful tool that are underutilized in the field of education. These quick observations improve rapport between teachers and administrators, cut down on stress, can inform professional development, support teacher leaders, and provide the space for ongoing reflection in best practices. In this session, participants will engage in the components of a classroom walkthrough and how they impact classroom instruction to increase student achievement. Participants will identify important factors of providing direct and timely feedback, while also lifting the level of instructional practices within their school building. Through the use of data collection, administrators will determine the appropriate professional development sessions to provide, identify teacher leaders for PLCs, and provide teacher mentoring to support individual growth and collaboration. |
| 9:45-10:45   | Boosting Extracurricular Engagement  
Keith George, James Hunt  
This workshop will focus on ways leaders can boost and promote their extracurricular offerings. Extracurricular activities are a vital part of the school system and play a significant role in the happiness and growth of students beyond academics. Through their participation students can explore their passions and find activities that resonate with their unique talents. Participants will actively engage in discussions and use technology to share information they can implement when returning to their home districts. |
| 11:00 – 12:00| NY's Tech Standards Unlocked: Navigating the Depths of Technology Integration in Education  
Tara Wolfanger  
This session will provide an overview of New York State’s technology standards for education. Participants will learn about the standards and how they can be used to guide technology integration in their schools and districts. The session will also explore current school and district practices for technology integration, the importance of leadership in technology integration, and unique new programming for technology integration. This session is designed for educators, administrators, and other stakeholders who are interested in learning more about meeting New York State’s technology standards for education. Topics Covered:  
- An overview of New York State’s technology standards for education  
- How to use the technology standards to guide technology integration in schools and districts  
- Current school and district practices for technology integration  
- The importance of leadership in technology integration  
- Unique new programming for technology integration |
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| 11:00 – 12:00 | Culturally Responsive Teaching  
Betsy D’Agostino, Noah Merksamer                         | Through a series of inquiry-based activities, respondents will discuss and examine the prevalence of white supremacy and other forms of systemic oppression in content area curriculum. Using these activities and historical analysis, teachers will begin to build a working understanding of how these harmful themes might impact their teaching and affect the way their students view the world and their place in it. Following this examination and reflection, participants will have an opportunity to reflect on and design specific curricular activities that can begin to subvert this dominant narrative of racism and oppression. |
| 11:00 – 12:00 | Increasing Family Engagement through a Family Math Night  
Da Vetta Price, Kimberly Rougeau                         | Decades of research has indicated that there is a strong relationship between family engagement and student academic success. During this session participants will learn about the benefits of family engagement and ways in which to promote family engagement through hosting a family math night. Participants will leave this session prepared to implement a family math night at their school or organization. |
| 12:00 – 1:00 | Lunch                                                                                       |                                          |
| 1:15 – 2:15 | Leading by Example  
Peerayot Noumanno                                                                 | Being a leader in today’s schools is even more challenging and important than ever. With the high demand from parents, students, and staff, we recognize that every action and word is highly scrutinized. Leading by example can have a profound impact on the staff and the building culture. As a leader, your words and actions have power. Leading by example demonstrates the qualities you expect from your team. You create a presence that impacts every individual in the building. Creating a culture around trust, team engagement, ownership, and consistency becomes the identity of not only you but everyone around you. The goal of this presentation is to give attendees a better understanding of what leading by example is and provide them with the tools to do so. Attendees will understand the benefits of leading by example, be provided with great examples, and be given strategies on how to use this tactic without being counterproductive. Throughout the presentation, attendees will have an opportunity to be actively engaged and provide insights from their own experiences. This presentation will serve as a space where we can all constructively reflect on our roles and day-to-day interactions. |
Dan Gatto                         | This workshop will focus on educating participants in the development of a district wide MTSS plan for SEL Learning. Learning objectives will include defining the three tiers of support, development and examples of interventions at each tier of support, developing clear and objective criterions for student's entry and exit into each tier of support, and the development of a tiered level system which objectively identifies the clinical evidence required to support an initial special education referral. Workshops participants will learn how district level administrators, building level administrators, classroom teachers, behavior analysts, school psychologists, and social workers can all work together to help support staff and students within their educational setting. |
| 1:15 – 2:15 | Out in the Community: The benefits and barriers of Place-Based Education  
Kelsey Allen  
Participants in this workshop will learn about the benefits and barriers of Place-Based Education (PBE). Stories that emphasize the importance of PBE will be shared, as well as strategies for getting students off campus and into their communities. Participants will assess their current school district’s opportunities for accessing their community and will leave with practical ideas and strategies to initiate or support PBE more efficiently and effectively. Skills practiced in this workshop include exploring, collaborating, and planning foundational steps for building a sustainable PBE program. Persistence and creative thinking will be encouraged. Please be prepared to go outside!  
Information for this workshop has been compiled based on the following texts:  
* Bewilderment* by Richard Powers  
* Getting Started with Place-Based Education* by the Teton Science Schools  
* Place-Based Education* by David Sobel  
* Promise of Place* online resources supported by the USDA Forest Service |
| 2:30 – 3:30 | Discipline with Dignity: A Restorative Approach to Disciple of All  
Migdalia Torres, Kymone Samuels  
Do you look at discipline and think of how punitive it is? Have you ever thought, “How can we help this change?” We will review and engage in the power of prevention and relationship building and/or restoring to prevent discipline referrals from being written and disciplinary actions from happening. We will discuss the key ideas to changing behavior and promoting relationship building, respect, and responsibility in classrooms and school wide. Most importantly, we will discuss how to provide discipline while keeping dignity intact. |
| 2:30 – 3:30 | Quiet the Chaos: A Guide to Understanding Executive Functioning Skills  
Julie Salisbury  
Self-management skills are increasingly important in our complex world, which has many distractions and competing priorities. Join us for an interactive session that will define executive functioning skills, and more importantly; explain how they influence leading, learning, and instruction. These core principles will not only help you but will help you help others quiet the chaos in their lives. |
| 2:30 – 3:30 | Therapeutic Crisis Intervention: The Life Space Interview  
Tim King, Nolan Palermo  
The Life Space Interview (LSI) is a technique used to engage students in reflective conversations about their behavior in a positive manner. This technique is intended to foster and maintain positive relationships with students and ensure that they can identify and actively practice better ways to cope with stress. |
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<td>Grading for Equity will explore ways traditional grading practices cause inequities in the classroom. This session will define equity and discuss ways it can be implemented in the grading process. The session will then explore strategies for creating equitable grading practices such as: using various assessment methods, providing students with multiple ways to present their learning, and making grading criteria transparent for all learners.</td>
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<td>Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs</td>
<td>Lesley Ramos, Amy Dunlop-Johnson</td>
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<td>For a child to be successful in school they need to be well fed, sleeping well, feeling safe at home, and have confidence in themselves. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is a popular theory which focuses on a series of needs to be successful. Abraham Maslow was an American psychologist who in 1943 published his hierarchy of needs to explain human motivation. He considered there were five needs - physiological, safety, love, esteem and self-actualization and he put them in the shape of a pyramid with the most immediate needs at its foundation. Like the rungs of a ladder, each need must be met before progressing to the next level. A child who doesn't know where his/her next meal will come from, or where home will be tonight is unable to focus on learning!</td>
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<td>Lindsay Higgins, Dan Hepp</td>
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<td>Understanding the importance of interpersonal relationships in education is a key factor in the success of a school. Both staff and student relationships are essential to a healthy, thriving, and productive learning environment. Promoting a common mission and vision through inclusive and equitable systems can be a challenge to an organization. All members must understand the “Why” and their role in the process. This session explores strategies and techniques to facilitate and develop positive relationships within the school community. Attendees will learn how to foster and develop relationships with staff to enhance morale and build trust. Additionally, they will be provided with strategies to promote staff development and continued learning around relational capacity and its importance to school culture. It will also examine the link between positive school culture and student performance. Educators who are supported and valued by their leaders contribute to increased student achievement. Strategies will be provided to enhance educational practices and improve student engagement.</td>
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<td>The experiences I have been a part of during the past year have broadened my eyes to the importance of highlighting the self-confidence and feelings of students. It has also made me realize how easy it can be for teachers and staff of schools to accidentally overlook something that can create uncomfortable feelings for students towards teachers and administrators. The idea of equity in schools and the classroom needs to be highlighted for the feelings of students to be accurate and honest. Students typically already suffer from lack of confidence throughout grade school and feel uncomfortable as individuals. Teachers and administrators need to guarantee to students of all abilities and status that they matter. Attendees will participate in a simulation that is designed to provide an example of a teacher’s attempt to incorporate equality and equity in a classroom by providing classroom materials to students to complete a task. The goal of the simulation is to provide a certain group of participants...</td>
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with a set of classroom resources that are outdated and different compared to other students. The goal is to have the participants communicate the frustrations and feelings of being provided with ineffective classroom resources compared to other peers. The participants will complete a self-survey independently to measure the amount of stress that the simulation created. An additional survey will be used to measure the amount of trust that the participants would have after the simulation if a teacher did that to them during their schooling.

### 11:00 – 12:00
**Empowering Students as Leaders in Education in a SEL Focused Curriculum**  
*Griffin Labbance*

Social Emotional Learning curricula has taken the forefront of our instruction following a post-pandemic shift in educational needs within our schools. Students are walking in our schools each morning with needs that must be met before we can expect them to be successful in the academic instruction.  
Join two elementary students and me as we guide you through the work that has taken place in our building and classrooms to foster student directed, student empowered, SEL best practices, supported through the CASEL 5 Framework. This work, when overseen by a building leader, will have immense impact on the ownership from students, as well as how other students are receptive of the information.

### 11:00 – 12:00
**The Quiet Ones: Teaching our Introverted and Shy Shining Stars**  
*Tina Mitchell*

Creativity, active listening, a dislike of small talk and group work, a preference for spending time alone (particularly after social interactions), careful consideration before taking a risk, ability to focus for an extended period of time, and a preference for deep thought and reflection. While every teacher has a different approach, many of these characteristics do not set up the introverted student to succeed in a traditional classroom model. We will learn more about our introverted students and ways in which we can set them up for success in the classroom.

### 12:00 – 1:00
**Lunch**

### 1:15 – 2:15
**Special Education Leadership 101**  
*Sarah Allen, Patricia Gardner*

Servicing the needs of special education students is a legal and moral requirement that can be overwhelming for school leaders. This hour-long professional development guides educational leaders through the history of legislation which impacts special education programming and helps educators understand their responsibilities to students. Key elements of the professional development include deepening understanding of IDEA and 504 requirements. This session helps educators recognize different types of special needs and guides leaders as they plan to meet students' individual and unique needs.

### 1:15 – 2:15
**Restorative Circles: A Tool for Building Community, Healing Harm, and Reducing Conflict in Schools**  
*Leann Victor, Brianne Taylor*

Restorative justice is a way of thinking about and responding to conflict that focuses on repairing harm and building relationships. Restorative circles are a tool that can be used to facilitate restorative justice processes.  
This session will explore how restorative circles can be used to create safer, more positive learning environments. Participants will learn about the principles of restorative justice and how to facilitate restorative circles. They will also hear from educators who have successfully used restorative circles in their schools.  
**Learning Outcomes:**  
By the end of this session, participants will be able to:  
- Define restorative justice and restorative circles.  
- Explain the benefits of using restorative circles in schools.
Facilitate a restorative circle. Participants will also have the opportunity to:
Network with other educators who are interested in using restorative justice in their schools.
Share their own experiences with restorative justice.

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<td>Teacher well-being is key to fostering a healthy educational environment, both for staff and for student outcomes. Burnout and attrition are on the rise, at the very time when we need passionate and effective teaching more than ever. In this workshop, we will look at the eight dimensions of well-being and how to apply them in our lives as educators and leaders.</td>
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<td>Discover the power of communication in leadership. This one-hour presentation will cover practical tips from the book “The Language of Leadership” by Joel Schwartzberg to engage and inspire school staff. We will present these skills with interactive activities so you can get a hands-on understanding of the key elements of effective communication. Use these strategies to build trust, encourage collaboration, and foster engagement with your faculty.</td>
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|              | In Post-Pandemic public education, administrators and educational leaders must navigate the turmoil of increasingly negative student behavior, a devastating teacher shortage, a significant decrease in student motivation and positive measurable outcome and ever-changing state & testing standards. Educational leaders are uniquely positioned to affect a positive cultural shift through the implementation of SWPBIS programs. These initiatives are instituted with the goal of greatly improving student achievement and measurable outcomes, but also improving teacher morale and retention rates. During this season participants will:
I Can... identify the framework of SWPBIS and the role that an educational leader can play with implementing this system.
Participants will be able to identify the definitions, terms and objectives of the SWPBIS system and how it can be implemented with fidelity.
So I Can... determine how to best create buy-in for this program and how to best implement the SWPBIS system utilizing student and teacher voice.
Participants will be able to determine these strategies through real-world scenarios and programs that have been implemented with success.
I’ll know that I have it when... I can evaluate how SWPBIS strategies can be implemented with fidelity to improve student outcomes through the examination of different SWPBIS and Socio-Emotional learning situations that have been reviewed during this presentation.
Participants will be able to identify and evaluate how different SWPBIS systems and strategies can be implemented for both students and staff and how it can be utilized to improve morale and create a positive culture for learning within a building. |
Sarah Allen joined Lake Placid Central School District in 2007 as a member of the special education department. In 2014, she transitioned from the role of teacher to CSE/CPSE Chairperson for the district. Prior to her tenure at Lake Placid, Sarah taught at National Sports Academy in Lake Placid. She has worked with students as a consultant and resource room teacher. Serving in the capacity of Chairperson she worked to create a more inclusive special education program throughout the district. Sarah earned her Bachelor of Science degree at the College of St. Joseph in Rutland, VT with a concentration in elementary and special education. She holds a Master of Education degree in Elementary Reading and Literacy. Sarah is also Wilson Reading System Level 1 Certified and is a Therapeutic Crisis Intervention for Schools (TCIS) trainer. She was nominated for the NYCASE Special Education Administrator of the Year 2021.

Kelsey Allen (she/her) joined Saratoga Springs CSD as a member of the Physical Education department in 2013. She began her career as a traveling PE teacher, where she taught at both the elementary and secondary levels. Kelsey has taught courses such as Adventure Education, Lifetime Activities, and Adapted Physical Education. Now, Kelsey works at the secondary level, where she serves as the 6-12 Department Head for Health and PE. Kelsey was a leader in the 2019-2022 curriculum renewal cycle for 6-12 PE, where the entire curriculum was overhauled, and electives were implemented. Kelsey contributed to the designation of SSHS as a National Banner Unified Champion School by Special Olympics in 2020 and is part of her district legacy planning committee and Ally program. She coaches Varsity Girls Soccer, Unified Basketball, and Archery Club. Kelsey believes in creating an inclusive school community where all students are accepted, celebrated, and included.

John Batch, Jr. joined the Albany City School District in 2014 as a member of the Social Studies department. He currently works as a 7th grade Social Studies teacher at Myers Middle School. He has served the scholars of the ACSD as a 7th and 8th grade Social Studies for the last decade. Mr. Batch has been recognized and awarded the Teacher of the Year award twice during his career. He was first honored as “New Teacher of the Year” for the Yuma County School District and was later awarded the “Golden Apple” or Teacher of the Year at West Hill in 2016. Mr. Batch has a philosophy that he preaches every single day: “make a positive difference.” He understands that as an educator and a future building leader, he has the capacity to enact positive change which can affect future generations in the district in which he serves.

Terrence Campo, a dedicated educator and leader, recently became the Dean of Students at Pathways Academy. He began his career at Herkimer BOCES in 2017, teaching courses like Algebra and Geometry while mentoring new teachers. Terrence holds a Bachelor of Arts in Adolescence Education with a Mathematics concentration from SUNY Cortland and a Master of Arts in Mathematics from Stony Brook University. Currently pursuing certification as a school building leader at MCLA, he is committed to continuous professional growth. Terrence’s expertise has led to invitations to interview committees and curriculum mapping teams. He is a member of the Mohawk Valley Regional Teacher Center Policy Board and actively participates in book studies and mentoring programs. Terrence’s student-centered approach fosters a learning environment where students can thrive. Beyond education, he enjoys gardening, caring for his animals, and traveling with his family.

Betsy D’Agostino joined the North Adams Public School District in 2017 as a member of Greylock Elementary School. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education and a master’s degree in special education- Moderate Disabilities. Betsy joined Greylock Elementary School in North Adams, MA in 2017 where she teaches fourth grade ELA and Social Studies. She was selected to serve on the Social and Emotional Learning Committee, and the Professional Learning Committee team as a group facilitator. Prior to her career as an elementary teacher, she worked as a middle school behavior specialist and special education teacher for 12 years in the Pittsfield Public School District. During her time in middle school, she helped to design and implement a behavior program where
the goal was to help students stabilize behavior while increasing academic expectations. Betsy also spent her time coaching girls soccer at the high school level for several years.

Catherine Dodig joined Catskill Middle School in 2014 as a member of the mathematics department. In addition to teaching, she is the head coach of the varsity girls soccer and softball programs. Born and raised in Saugerties, New York, Catherine attended Saugerties High School and went on to earn a Bachelor of Science degree in mathematics at Springfield College. She also holds a Master of Science degree in Curriculum Development and Instructional Technology from the State University of New York at Albany. Catherine continues her education through attending conferences to further her background in teaching practices and educational leadership. She was selected to serve as the CMS 8th Grade Team Leader and to be a member of the campus-wide Data RESULTS Team. Catherine believes that the ultimate educational experience occurs when students and staff feel valued and celebrated.

Amy Dunlop-Johnson joined The School at Northeast in 2017 as a member of the History department where she taught U.S. and World History to 7th, 8th, and 9th grade students. Prior to The School at Northeast, Amy taught Reading classes at Glenmont Job Corps for three years. Amy earned her associate degree from the State University of New York at Farmingdale in Liberal Arts and Sciences and earned her Bachelor of Sociology Degree at The State University of New York at Albany with a concentration in Psychology. She holds a Master of Education in Childhood Education that she earned from The College of Saint Rose. Amy continues her education through Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts in the School Building Leadership Program. She is the recipient of the Dean’s List at The State University of New York at Albany and the recipient of Employee of the Month award at both Glenmont Job Corps and The School at Northeast. While earning her degrees, Amy worked as an Administrative Assistant at Philip Livingston Magnet Academy as well as the Special Education Department in the City School District of Albany. Additionally, she worked in the Human Resources Department for the City School District of Albany. Throughout her nine years of employment with the City School District of Albany she gained an understanding of the academic policies and procedures in a variety of departments within the school district. During her three years of employment with Glenmont Job Corps she brought the literacy ranking from last place out of one hundred twenty-one centers to a consistent number one nationally.

Patricia Gardner is a highly experienced and dedicated professional in special, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Pre-K-6: Special Education from St. Thomas Aquinas College and a Master of Science degree in Assistive Technology/Augmentative Communication from Southern Connecticut State University. Currently serving as the CPSE/CSE Chairperson, 504, and RTI Coordinator at the Town of Webb UFSD in Old Forge, New York, Patricia excels in chairing meetings, developing IEP and 504 plans, initiating co-teaching programs, managing budgets, and fostering effective communication with families and teachers. A strong advocate for inclusion, she actively promotes the rights of all students. With experience as an Assistive Technology Specialist and Special Education Teacher, Patricia has conducted evaluations, provided training, and successfully implemented assistive technology and augmentative communication systems. She demonstrates her expertise in using different technologies and AAC devices to meet student’s diverse needs.

Mr. Gatto has been working with children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders (2006) since 2006. He received a graduate degree in psychology from Queens College, as well as a graduate degree in Special Education from Touro College. Daniel has been working as a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) since 2010 and has served as a Licensed Behavior Analyst in New York State since 2014. He has experience working with children from ages 2-21. Daniel has held various positions within the field of behavior analysis such as teaching assistant, special education teacher, home based provider, parent trainer, home based supervisor, early intervention (EI) team leader, school- based supervisor, school district consultant, and program director. Daniel currently works as a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) for the Oyster Bay-East Norwich School District.

Keith George began his career in education in 1999. Over the next 21 years he taught 5th, 6th and 3rd grade. From 2019-21 he acted as K-12 Library Media Specialist and in July of 2022 accepted the role 5-12 Dean of Students. He has his Bachelors in Elementary Education with a concentration in Sociology, a master’s in education and will
complete his School Building Certification in August. Over his career, he has been deeply rooted and active in the community and his school through multiple committees, groups and organizations and was a union officer for ten years. Outside of school he enjoys hunting, fishing, is a beekeeper, produces maple syrup, and gardens among others. He has been married to his wife Danette, who is a secondary math teacher for 25 years and has two children, Brady (23) and Kyleigh (21).

Corie Hart-Nelson joined the City School District in Albany, NY in 2014 as a member of the English Language Arts department. Corie has experience serving both elementary and secondary students. Corie holds an Associate of Science in Early Childhood Education from Hudson Valley Community College, a Bachelor of Science in Childhood Education and Middle School Education with a concentration in English Language Arts, and a Master of Science with a major in Literacy Education from Russell Sage. Corie has spent the last year continuing her education at MCLA, where she is now pursuing her School District Leader certification. Corie is skilled at using data to make informed decisions to drive change. She is committed to creating an equitable environment where all students and staff feel valued and heard.

Daniel Hepp joined Schenectady High School in 2017 as a member of the business department. He is a member of the Schenectady City School District Career and Technical Education Advisory Board which seeks to further CTE in the district through creating community partnerships and programs. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree at Siena College in Business with a concentration in Marketing and Management and a minor in Computer Science. He holds a Master of Science degree in Business and Marketing Education. He is currently pursuing his School Building and District Leader certifications at MCLA. He believes this role will afford him the opportunity to initiate and guide change for students on a wider scale. Dan believes in creating a differentiated and welcoming school environment where students are empowered to develop a space that provides opportunities and access to all. He is passionate about building relationships with his students and recognizing them as individuals.

Lindsay Higgins joined Schenectady High School in 2004 as a member of the World Languages Department. Lindsay has taught students in a variety of Spanish courses, as well as has served in the capacity of World Language Team Leader to support and guide new and veteran teachers in the district. Lindsay earned her Bachelor of Arts degree at Siena College, majoring in Spanish and holds a Master of Arts degree in Foreign Language Education from the University at Albany. Lindsay continues her education through her participation in the Leadership Academy at MCLA where she is pursuing her School Building and District Leader licenses. She is a member of the Capital Area Language Leaders Consortium, is a director of the NYS Capital Area Languages exams and is a member of the World Language Leadership Council for NYS. Lindsay believes that “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”- Nelson Mandela

James Hunt has been teaching Physical Education at Sandy Creek Central School for the past 24 years. He has taught kindergarten to the 12th grade. Through his employment at SCCS, he has coached many young people, modified, JV and Varsity level sports including volleyball, basketball, track, and football. He currently coaches Boys Varsity Basketball and Varsity Golf at SCCS. He earned his bachelor’s degree and teaching certification from SUNY Cortland in 1999. He continued education by receiving his master’s degree and permanent certification in education from SUNY Potsdam in 2004. His hobbies include fishing, boating, ATV riding, and golfing. He enjoys most of his summers at the family cottage in Chaumont, NY or at the beach in Sandy Pond, NY. He is married to his wife Christina and has two boys Hudson (15) and Treylen (11).

My name is Brad Hupfl and for the past nine years I have taught Mathematics for 7th grade at William S. Hackett Middle School in Albany, NY. I graduated with my master’s in education from The College of Saint Rose in 2013. I landed my first teaching job at the middle school I was student teaching at during the last few months of my degree. I am looking forward to becoming a part of a school community and taking on a greater role of involvement within the school building. In my free time I love to exercise. I love spending time with my one-year-old daughter, Kinsley and my wife Megan. My favorite exercise is cardio mixed in with strength building. My
favorite exercise is a burpee, which consists of squatting low, then performing one pushup, then landing into a squat and jumping up vertically and raising your hands as high as possible.

**Clarisse Camille Kaufman** joined Schenectady City School District in 2017 as a member of the Academic Intervention Services Department. Clarisse earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education at SUNY New Paltz with a concentration in English. She holds a Master of Science degree in Curriculum Development and Instructional Technology from SUNY Albany. She has spent the last year continuing her education at MCLA where she is now pursuing her School District Leader certification. She uses current research to drive her own professional development sessions for teachers. She has organized opportunities for teachers to discuss the new and innovative strategies for teaching all learners through a culturally responsive lens. Clarisse believes in building strong relationships with both students and staff to help foster a positive school climate. She is committed to being an antiracist school leader, a guardian of equity, and a champion for her scholars.

**Tim King** (Timothy) is currently an elementary special education teacher in the Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk Central school district. He previously worked in an inner-city school prior to his current district. He has served in public education for a total of 6 years as a special educator in various classroom settings. Tim will be transitioning to the role of special education instructional coach and chairperson starting this July. He is also a Therapeutic Crisis Intervention for Schools certified trainer for his district and teaches verbal de-escalation, building positive relationships with students, and utilizing physical restraint when deemed necessary. He has a bachelor’s degree from The College of Saint Rose in Elementary & Special Education and his masters in Curriculum and Instruction from the University at Albany. Tim enjoys spending time with his girlfriend and is an avid fan of the New York Giants. He currently resides in the Capital Region of New York.

**Griffin Labbance** is a current 4th grade, math, and science teacher at Brayton Elementary School in the North Adams Public School district. During his time at Brayton, Griffin has served on various committees, steering groups, as well as in various leadership roles; both in school and out of, in the local community. Griffin’s educational philosophies are rooted in community development and building family and community relationships. This can be seen in his work to boost social and emotional learning support within the classroom, as well as his work to relate his instructional practices to real life situations and connections to engage his students. Prior to arriving at Brayton, Griffin spent 9 years working at MCLA in the housing office, serving as the Assistant Director. During this time, he supported the needs of the residential students in various capacities.

**Lyndsey Lutz** has proven to be a successful teacher and leader during her 16 years in education. Prior to joining the Troy City School District in 2014 as an elementary teacher, she began her teaching career in charter schools. Lyndsey is currently an instructional coach at Troy Middle School where she serves as a member of the Building Leadership Team, the MTSS Committee, and as a Data Liaison. Born and raised in East Greenbush, New York, Lyndsey earned her bachelor’s degree at Oswego State in Adolescent Education, holds a master’s degree in Literacy, and gained certification in Childhood Education. In her free time, Lyndsey enjoys spending time with her family, being active, and reading. She is a driven individual who is always seeking new opportunities for professional growth and learning.

**Noah Merksamer** joined the Wright Science and Technology Academy (WSTA) in Chelsea Public Schools as a member of the teaching faculty. Prior to his tenure at WSTA, Noah worked in campaign politics, most recently for Hillary Clinton’s Presidential Campaign in Columbus, Ohio. His experience in politics and governments informs his teaching, as he strives to weave themes of government, civic responsibility, and current events into the ancient history curriculum.

Born in California and raised in Chicago, Noah attended high school at Salisbury School, a boarding school in northwest Connecticut. He then earned his Bachelor of Arts degree at Colgate University in Hamilton, NY with a concentration in Political Science and Middle Eastern Studies. Noah also holds a Masters of the Arts in Teaching from Tufts University. A prolific reader, Noah continues to pursue his education through independent reading and studying. He is working toward his Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies in school leadership at the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts and will be moving to College Station in the fall to pursue a PhD in
Curriculum and Instruction at Texas A&M University. Noah’s goal as a history teacher is to give students the tools to become active and informed members of their community. To him, history is not just about teaching the students information, it’s about teaching them how to use that information and, to a greater extent, how they can discover and evaluate that information as part of a larger argument or idea. It is for this reason that all his lessons are inquiry based and emphasize elements of student agency, two key parts of literacy and higher order thinking skills. Every unit he teaches ends with an assignment that includes these literacy and higher order thinking skills, whether it’s an argumentative essay, research project or graded discussion. In his free time, Noah enjoys reading, mountain biking and skiing. He is also a lifelong hockey player and golfer.

Tina Mitchell, M.A., CCC-SLP, has been an educational Speech-Language Pathologist since May of 2002. She obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communication Disorders and Sciences, graduating Cum Laude in 1998 from SUNY Plattsburgh. She obtained her Master of Arts degree in Speech-Language Pathology as well as her Teacher of the Speech and Hearing Handicapped certification from SUNY Plattsburgh. She is a current licensed Speech-Language Pathologist in New York State, and she also is a member of the American Speech and Hearing Association (ASHA) where she maintains her Certificate of Clinical Competence in Speech-Language Pathology. She will complete the leadership certificate program, at Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, in July of 2023. Tina has been offered and accepted a Principal position at Champlain Valley Educational Services at their Mineville, NY campus. She will oversee both The Rise Center for Success special education programs as well as CV-TEC’s CTE programs, in her role as building Principal.

Peerayot Noummano joined Taconic High School in 2018 as a member of the CTE department as a carpentry instructor. Before his tenure at Taconic High School, Peerayot Noummano taught at Reid Middle School. Peerayot has worked with students in courses such as Skills USA serving in the capacity of a mentor to vocational students. Born in North Carolina and raised in Berkshire County, Peerayot attended Taconic High School and earned his Bachelor of Elementary Education degree at MCLA in 2012 with a concentration in Biology and early childhood development. He obtained a Master of Occupational Education degree in 2021. Peerayot continues his education through MCLA’s leadership academy. He enjoys fine woodworking as well as working with his hands. He also values the time spent with family and friends. Peerayot believes that all students are entitled to an education that best suits their learning styles. He is committed to seeing that vision become a reality.

Nolan Palermo is a program director at Schuylerville Central School District, where he is also completing his School Building Leader and School District Leader certifications through MCLA. Nolan graduated from the University of Florida with a Bachelor of Science degree in applied physiology and kinesiology. Nolan completed his graduate work at Regis College, earning a Master of Arts in Teaching degree in special education. Certified in both special education and mathematics, Nolan previously taught middle school math at the Gifford School, a private outplacement school for students coping with a variety of social, emotional, and behavioral challenges, in Massachusetts. Throughout his decade-long career in education, Nolan has worked in public, private, and charter school settings and with students in all grade levels, K-12. Professionally, Nolan is committed to better understanding and supporting the emotional needs of all students and is trained in Therapeutic Crisis Intervention for Schools. Nolan is also interested in exploring the links between cognitive science and teaching and learning. Outside of the school setting, Nolan enjoys making memories with his wife, Kimberly, their son, Jackson, and their dog, Tucker. Nolan and his family reside in Saratoga Springs, New York.

Tyler John Pombrio joined Northern Adirondack Central School in 2018 as a member of the family and consumer sciences and physical education departments. Tyler is the chair of the family and consumer sciences department, and coaches both boys’ soccer and tennis. Born and raised in Altona, New York he attended SUNY Plattsburgh, earning his Bachelor of Arts degree in history with a concentration in political science. He holds a Master of Science of Teaching degree in adolescent social studies grades 7-12. Tyler continues his education by pursuing his certification in School Building Leadership at the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts. Tyler enjoys an array of sports and spending time with friends and family. Tyler is passionate about providing equitable learning opportunities to all students. He also recognizes the significance of technologically integrating his classroom curriculum to ensure that students are better prepared for the twenty-first century global job market.
Da Vetta Price joined South Avenue Elementary School in 2017. Since then, she has taught both 1st and 4th grades. Prior to her tenure at South Avenue Elementary School, Da Vetta was a General Education Teacher at The Bronx Academy of Promise. She also worked as a Community Habilitation Specialist working to integrate individuals with disabilities into the community. Da Vetta earned her Bachelor of Science degree at University at Albany in Albany NY with a concentration in Sociology and Criminal Justice. She holds a Master of Science degree in Education and Students with Disabilities. Da Vetta continues her education through the Leadership Academy at Massachusetts College of Liberal Art and is on track to obtain both her School Building Leader Certification and School District Leader Certification. She is a proud member of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Incorporated and a member of the National Honor Society for Educators Kappa Delta Pi.

Lesley A. Ramos joined AuSable Valley Central School in September 2017 as a member of the Foreign Language department. She currently is the Spanish teacher in the High School. Prior to her tenure at AuSable Valley Central School she worked in Beekmantown Central School in-charge of the In School Suspension classroom. During her time in ISS classroom, she worked with students across the curriculum to help them meet their daily assignments. She was born in Puerto Rico and raised in The South Bronx, NY, attended St. Raymond Academy for Girls, earned her Bachelor of Science degree at SUNY Plattsburgh in Secondary Education. She holds a Master of Science degree in Teaching. Lesley continues her education through Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts in the School Building Leadership Program. She is the advisor for the Spanish Club and S.A.D.D program. During her time as the advisor for S.A.D.D. she helps young students to become aware of the risks and challenges that they will be facing through their daily lives. She wants to make schooling a rewarding experience for each student. She believes that each classroom has a unique blend of students that have many abilities of learning and yet differ from each other through their styles and learning curve. During her spare time, she enjoys hiking and being outdoors with her family. One fun fact about Lesley is that she is a sneaker junky! Her favorite quote: "No one is perfect that's why pencils have erasers"-Author Unknown

Kimberly Rougeau began her career in education in 1999. She has worked with students as a reading interventionist and as a classroom teacher of second, third and fifth grade. She currently teaches third grade at Clarksburg School. Kimberly is also a teacher mentor to new teachers and has served as Chair of the Instructional Leadership Team, Lead on the ELA Curriculum Review, and Support Team Chair. Kimberly earned her Bachelor of Arts degree at Providence College in Providence, RI with a concentration in elementary and special education. She holds a Master of Science degree in Reading from the College of Saint Rose and a Specialist in Education degree in Language and Literacy from Simmons College. Kimberly will receive her SBL through the Leadership Academy at Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts in North Adams, MA. Kimberly believes in the benefit of collaborating with other professionals and families to build the best educational experience for all students.

Julie Lynn Salisbury joined Pine Bush Senior High School in January 2000, as a member of the special education department. She has worked there for 23 years and built the Life Skills program. She is also currently serving in the capacity of special education department chairperson. She earned her Bachelor of Arts degree at SUNY Geneseo with a concentration in elementary and special education. She holds a Master of Arts degree from the College of New Rochelle in gifted and talented education. Julie anticipates earning her SBL and SDL certificates this summer from MCLA. Julie participates in a variety of educational teams such as the District Leadership Team, the interview committees, Personalized Learning, and DataWise. Julie has volunteered to assist the coach for Varsity Unified Varsity Unified Basketball and Unified Bowling coach Basketball and Unified Bowling. Education should be accessible to all; she is committed to providing that for her students and training other educators. Teaching comes from the heart, and Julie embodies that in her commitment to her students, in the way she handles difficult situations, and in her leadership of other teachers.

Kymone Samuels joined Bronxdale High School in 2016 as a member of the special education department, earning tenure in 2021. She has worked with students in courses such as Integrated Co-taught (ICT) Geometry, Algebra Modeling and Visual Arts, as well as serving in the capacity of the head cheerleading coach of the Christopher Columbus Campus and Coordinator of Student Activities.
Born and raised in the Bronx, New York, Kymone attended the Collegiate Institute for Math and Science High School. She earned a Bachelor of Art degree at Iona College with a concentration in English. She holds a Master of Science in Education degree from St. John’s University in Adolescent Special Education 7-12. Kymone continues her education through currently pursuing a post-graduate advanced certification in school building and school district leadership at the Leadership Academy at Massachusetts Academy of Liberal Arts. Currently, she has completed over 500 hours of school building leadership internship hours. Outside of being a teacher, Kymone enjoys event planning and specializes in balloon décor. She also enjoys spending time with her family, husband, 4-year-old son, Ethan, and a Yorkshire Terrier named Snickers. Kymone believes learning takes place across boundaries and outside of restrictions and true learning occurs when students are willing to take risks. She believes there is value in embracing differences and mistakes and encourages others, especially her students, to listen to understand, not to respond and to reflect when something is challenging. She believes for students to succeed, they must be seen, heard, supported, challenged, and given high expectations, regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, political or cultural background.

Dr. Jenny Stanberry joined the Rochester City School District in 2016. During her time with the district, she has taught students in every grade of middle and high school. She has served as a Special Education teacher across settings and all core subject areas, including consultant teaching, integrated co-teaching, self-contained, in a specialized program, and in charter schools. Prior to her tenure with RCSD, she completed a post-doctoral interdisciplinary fellowship with the Leadership in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities at the University of Rochester Medical Center and coordinated a community-based adult and family literacy program that partnered the University of Delaware, local school district, and community organizations. Over the course of her career in education, she has worked with individuals and families across the lifespan, teaching in classes from preschool through undergraduate. Regardless of the setting, she seeks to inspire joy, curiosity, and a love of learning.

Breanne Taylor is a 2010 Graduate of SUNY Plattsburgh with a BS in Childhood Education 1-6, with an extension of Early Childhood Education B-2. She immediately went on to Graduate from SUNY Albany in 2011 with a dual Master’s in Literacy K-6, and Students with Disabilities 1-6, as well as Students with Disabilities B-2 extension. She spent almost 13 years working as a kindergarten/special education teacher in the North Colonie Central School District, receiving tenure in both areas. During this time, she developed strong leadership skills within her school building and community and was eager to pursue the avenue of Educational Leadership. During the spring of 2023, Breanne was hired as the building principal for the Mary J. Tanner Primary school in Granville. Currently, she is excited to make a direct impact on students and teachers, and over time help to increase reading and math scores with while continuing to foster the excellent sense of community within the building. She looks forward to what’s to come in the next part of her journey in educational leadership.

Migdalia Torres joined Giffen Memorial Elementary School in September 2015 as a school social worker. Before her tenure at Giffen, Migdalia worked as a behavior specialist with Northern Rivers. Migdalia has worked with students in developing social emotional skills and behavior regulation. She has also taken a leading position in the role of PBIS Coach and Social Emotional Learning Coach for the building. Migdalia graduated from Albany High School in 2008. She earned her Bachelors and Master of Social Work at The University of Albany. Migdalia continues her education through district and building led professional development opportunities and continuing education credits in social work. Migdalia most recently completed over 500 internship hours under her building principal's supervision for her postgraduate certification in school building leadership. Migdalia believes in the work being done in schools to promote success but knows that we need to take it one breath at a time.

Samantha Trudeau joined Stafford Middle School in September 2018 as a Literacy Specialist. This is her 16th year in education. Prior to her tenure at the Plattsburgh City School District, Samantha taught reading K-6 at Chazy Central Rural School for ten years. Samantha has worked with students in academic intervention for reading, writing, comprehension, and fluency. She is currently the Coordinator for Literacy Intervention, a member of the district level literacy team which employs a comprehensive three-tiered approach to intervention, and the point person for easyCBM, and Cleartrack. Born and raised in Plattsburgh, New York, Samantha attended Seton Catholic Central High School, and earned her Bachelor of Arts degree at SUNY Plattsburgh in Elementary
Educa
tion with a concentration in English. She holds a master’s degree in Literacy, birth through Grade 6. She enjoys spending time with her family, being outside, and reading. Samantha will be the building principal at Keeseville Elementary School beginning July 10, 2023!

Leann Victor joined Hoosick Falls Central School District in 2016 as a member of the school counseling department. Prior to her tenure at Hoosick Falls, Leann worked at Schenectady High School. Leann has worked with students as a clinician and a peer mediation coordinator. Leann earned her Bachelor of Arts degree at Niagara University with a concentration in Psychology. She holds a Master of Science degree in Professional School Counseling. Leann continues her education through professional development opportunities in restorative justice, mediation training, social emotional learning, trauma informed care and compassion fatigue. She has presented at conferences on restorative justice and has been asked to speak on panels in Rensselaer County regarding the opioid crisis and its impact on school aged children. Leann believes, “People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” – Maya Angelou

Tara Wolfanger is a current 5th grade teacher at Mohonasen Central School District. Tara has worked with students in various Special Education positions of many elementary levels. She has served in the capacity of Data Team Leader, Crisis Intervention Team Member, Educational Technology Action Group Member, Professional Development Committee Member, Google Certified Trainer, and Google Trusted Tester District Contact. Tara was one of three educators globally selected to participate in the filming and production of the Google Anywhere School 2022. She has had tremendous direct influence in several educational technology advancements in the recent past. She volunteers her time with the Grow with Google partnership bringing technology instruction to local communities. Tara’s passion in education is integrating instructional technology in meaningful ways as well as approaching student behavior from a different lens. She values collaborative and purposeful decision making that is flexible, responsive, and representative of every individual impacted.