

MACTE 2025 SPRING CONFERENCE PROGRAM

Friday, March 21, 2025

Publick House Historic Inn
Sturbridge, Massachusetts

<https://www.macte.info>





MACTE CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

The Massachusetts Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (MACTE) invites you to our 2025 Spring Conference, a dynamic, day-long gathering dedicated to advancing educator preparation in Massachusetts. This year's theme—Why Teach? Collaborating, Inspiring, and Empowering Educator Preparation—will explore the challenges and opportunities shaping our profession. Designed for thoughtful engagement, this conference provides a vital space for educators, policymakers, and leaders in educator preparation to tackle pressing issues, share innovative practices, and work together to strengthen the future of teaching.

As a statewide organization and the official Massachusetts affiliate of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), MACTE is committed to elevating educator preparation through advocacy, collaboration, and policy engagement. Our Board members actively contribute to key state initiatives, including the Educator Personnel Advisory Council (EPAC) and the Teacher and Administrator Evaluation Task Force, ensuring that the voice of educator preparation remains strong at both the state and national levels.

In this era of rapid change—where federal policies increasingly influence PK-12 education—our ability to unite, exchange ideas, and lead with expertise is more critical than ever. Join us on March 21st to be part of this important conversation and contribute to shaping the future of educator preparation in Massachusetts.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

8:30 - 9:00 AM

Registration
Paige Hall

9:00 - 9:15 AM

Welcome & Introductions
Paige Hall

9:15 - 10:30 AM

Why Teach? Collaborating, Inspiring, and Empowering Educator Preparation
Interactive Panel
Paige Hall

10:45 - 11:45 AM

Breakout Session I
Pineapple Room, Ballroom, Craft's Hall & Paige Hall

Networking Lounge

Pumpkin Room

11:50 - 1:10 PM

Lunch
Paige Hall

1:20 - 2:20 PM

Breakout Session II
Pineapple Room, Ballroom, Craft's Hall & Paige Hall

Networking Lounge

Pumpkin Room

2:30 - 3:00 PM

DESE Presentation & Closing Remarks
Paige Hall





MACTE 2025 CONFERENCE

WHY TEACH? COLLABORATING, INSPIRING & EMPOWERING EDUCATOR PREPARATION: INTERACTIVE PANEL

9:15 - 10:15 AM

PAIGE HALL

WHY TEACH? COLLABORATING, INSPIRING & EMPOWERING EDUCATOR PREPARATION

Maranda Barrett

4th Grade Teacher, Fredrick Harris Elementary School, Springfield Public Schools

Kendra Bauer

English Teacher, Lowell Public Schools

Keisha Green, Ph.D.

*Associate Professor of Teacher Education and Curriculum Studies
Founding Co-Director, Center of Racial Justice and Youth Engaged Research
University of Massachusetts Amherst*

Alicia M. Lopez Nieto

*Assistant Principal/Sub Director
Crocker Farm Elementary School, Amherst Regional Public Schools*

Julia Saint Martin, M.S. Ed.

Principal, M. Marcus Kiley Prep Middle School, Springfield Public Schools

Kirk Taveras

*InSPIRED Fellow, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Science Teacher, Methuen Public Schools
PhD Student, Leadership in Education, UMass Lowell
Adjunct Professor, School of Education, UMass Lowell*







MACTE 2025 CONFERENCE

BREAKOUT SESSION I

10:45 - 11:45 AM

BALLROOM, PAIGE HALL,
PINEAPPLE ROOM & CRAFT'S HALL



BREAKOUT SESSION I

10:45 - 11:45 AM | BALLROOM

It Takes a Village: University Teacher Preparation Programs, School Districts, and Communities Come Together to Support Literacy Teaching and Learning in an Innovative Partnership

Laura Porter, Ed.D., Adjunct Instructor/WMLC Project Coordinator, Elms College

Tyra Good, Ed.D., Executive Director of the Center of Equity and Urban Education/Associate Professor, Elms College

Terri Griffin, Ed.D., Professor, Westfield State University

Carrie Wallace, Ed.D., Associate Dean, Academic Programs, American International College

Come hear the story of the Western Massachusetts Literacy Collaborative, a regional consortium of university teacher preparation programs (Elms College, American International College, Westfield State University) and school districts (Springfield Public Schools, including the Springfield Empowerment Zone, and East Longmeadow Public Schools). The work of this innovative Collaborative is presented with a focus on its “Summer Learn and Earn Literacy Corps” program, a mentored and compensated literacy teaching opportunity for teacher licensure candidates that focuses on culturally responsive and evidence-based instructional practices that align with DESE Early Literacy Program Approval Criteria.

Teacher licensure candidates hired as “Literacy Intervention Teachers” by participating school districts receive professional development from participating universities and school districts that includes coursework in culturally responsive teaching, training in a structured literacy curriculum, and ongoing literacy coaching. The college students teach reading for 4-5 weeks within participating elementary and middle school summer programs. Survey data on teacher licensure candidate learning and perceptions of self-efficacy was collected at the launch of the program, after one intensive week of professional development, and at the end of the program. Presenters share this data with suggestions for continued refinement of the program and reflections from the perspective of participating university teacher educators, school district personnel, and teacher licensure candidates. Implications for teacher preparation programs related to addressing the Early Literacy Program Approval Criteria are shared. Participants will also share reflections on their efforts to build and sustain a regional ecosystem anchored in a vision of literacy learning through dynamic community engagement.



BREAKOUT SESSION I

10:45 - 11:45 AM | PAIGE HALL

Redesigning Lesson Plan Templates through Translanguaging: A Loving & Joyful Process

Maria José Botelho, Professor of K-12 Literacy Education and Culture

Margaret Felis, Adjunct Faculty

Carolyn Peterson, Doctoral Student

University of Massachusetts Amherst

The lesson plan template is centered in K-12 preservice teacher education as a scaffold for teacher candidates' curriculum development for courses and pre-practicum and practicum field experiences. Lesson plan templates, however, might inspire fixed notions of learning and teaching, sometimes standardizing and decontextualizing these experiences. Teaching and learning in multicultural and multilingual classrooms are situated and dynamic processes. How teacher educators invite preservice teachers to design classroom learning shapes K-12 students' language, literacy, and content learning. This session will critically engage with the lesson plan template as a text. Teacher educators and teacher candidates come to understand that this text holds assumptions about teaching, learning, language, and literacy.

As a scaffold for thinking and doing, we will demonstrate how offering a lesson plan palette, informed with a robust understanding of translanguaging that includes multiliteracies and multimodalities, can support the redesign of language and literacy lessons that are loving and joyful. In analyzing lesson plan templates as a text through guiding redesign questions (e.g., How might you think of students' languages, literacies, and cultural practices as equally valuable and interrelated? How might you provide opportunities for all students to engage meaningfully with the content, no matter their experience with English?), teacher candidates are able to reconstruct their thinking, design, and practices towards critical culturally and linguistically sustaining pedagogies. The structure of this session will frame, model lesson plan analysis and redesign, and small group redesign through guided practice, and whole group sharing. Participants will come to understand that this palette redesign can be loving and joyful because love can inspire ways of knowing and doing that are attentive, intentional, sociocultural, and collaborative.



BREAKOUT SESSION I

10:45 - 11:45 AM | PINEAPPLE ROOM

Rekindling Joy: Strategies for Supporting and Empowering Student Teachers in the Practicum Experience

*Kerri Olore, Assistant Professor
Bridgewater State University*

The student teaching practicum is a transformative phase of educator preparation, but it's also one filled with challenges that can overshadow the joy of teaching. How can we ensure that future educators find and sustain their passion during this critical experience? In this engaging session, we'll explore practical strategies to empower and uplift teacher candidates, helping them navigate the highs and lows of student teaching while rediscovering the joy that brought them to the profession.

Drawing on real-life stories, research, and evidence-based practices, this session will provide actionable ideas to foster resilience, collaboration, and growth. Participants will learn how to celebrate small wins, build supportive networks, and embrace culturally responsive teaching practices that create meaningful connections. Through interactive activities and group discussions, attendees will co-create a "Joy Toolkit" filled with resources and strategies to inspire and support teacher candidates during their practicum.

Whether you are a program supervisor, mentor teacher, or faculty member, this session will leave you equipped with the tools and insights needed to cultivate joy and sustain passion in the next generation of educators. Join us to reignite the joy of teaching and learning—one practicum at a time. academic year. This pilot program aimed to support year-one teachers that were MHC licensure graduates beginning their first job with NPS. During this presentation we will actively seek feedback from participants that will help us to move this program to the next level. We believe that this particular moment in time should be harnessed to create new and promising practices between Higher Education and K-12, that will impact how we prepare, retain and prepare teachers, thereby addressing teacher attrition and improving our profession.



BREAKOUT SESSION I

10:45 - 11:45 AM | CRAFT'S HALL

Implementing the Early Literacy Crosswalk as a Tool to Encourage Cross-Departmental Collaboration and Program Revisions

Jennifer Bryson, Program Director, Elementary Education and Senior Lecturer

Ryan Lovell, Assistant Dean, Academic Affairs and Director of Professional Preparation

Boston University

Implementing the Early Literacy Crosswalk as a Tool to Encourage Cross-Departmental Collaboration and Program Revisions will showcase how one institution participated in vision work to design an early literacy working group, a literacy framework, propose curricular revisions, and embed the early literacy observation protocol across multiple programs and departments. Participants will leave this session with literacy retreat agenda ideas, early literacy resources such as recommended texts and course activities, as well as a chance to begin or continue their early literacy crosswalk with colleagues.



MACTE 2025 CONFERENCE

BREAKOUT SESSION II

1:20 - 2:20 PM

BALLROOM, PAIGE HALL,
PINEAPPLE ROOM & CRAFT'S HALL



BREAKOUT SESSION II

1:20 - 2:20 PM | BALLROOM

Cultivating Socially and Historically Responsive Literacy Practices in Educator Preparation

Kristen DiGiovanni, Associate Dean of the School of Education

Maureen Gilman, Director of Field-Based Experiences

Endicott College

How can educators foster literacy that reflects students' diverse cultural identities, historical experiences, and unique voices? This session delves into the transformative power of culturally and historically responsive literacy practices in educator preparation. Rooted in the framework of our Clinical Field-Based Experience II course, participants will explore strategies to build inclusive, equitable learning environments that empower students through literacy.

Join us for an interactive and thought-provoking session designed to address a critical problem in education: preparing future educators to integrate social awareness, cultural responsiveness, and family engagement into their teaching. Participants will unpack the complexities of addressing implicit biases, leveraging students' identities as assets in the classroom, and navigating the challenges of creating equitable literacy opportunities.

Through hands-on activities, scenario-based discussions, and collaborative reflections, participants will gain practical tools to design culturally sustaining lesson plans, create inclusive classroom libraries, and engage families and communities in literacy development. You'll also learn how to apply an equity-based framework to elevate literacy instruction and foster meaningful connections with students from all backgrounds.

Walk away with actionable insights, tested strategies, and a renewed commitment to equity-driven teaching practices. Whether you're a teacher educator, program director, or aspiring educator, this session offers a valuable opportunity to enhance your approach to literacy instruction and strengthen your impact on the next generation of educators. Together, let's build classrooms where every student feels seen, valued, and inspired to achieve their fullest potential. We look forward to learning and growing with you!



BREAKOUT SESSION II

1:20 - 2:20 PM | PAIGE HALL

Supporting Teacher Mental Health: Practical Strategies for Educator Preparation Programs

Margaret Carroll, Doctoral Candidate
Boston University

Teacher mental health is a critical factor influencing professional effectiveness, retention, and student outcomes. Educator preparation programs have a unique opportunity to equip future teachers with the skills and strategies needed to navigate the emotional demands of the profession. In this session, we will explore insights from recent research on teacher mental health, focusing on the connection between educators' well-being and their professional roles. Participants will gain a deeper understanding of how mental health challenges impact teachers and learn practical approaches to supporting resilience and well-being. Through interactive activities, participants will analyze case studies, reflect on their own experiences, and engage in small group discussions to co-create actionable solutions.

This session is designed to inspire and empower participants to make meaningful changes in their programs, ensuring future teachers are prepared to manage stress and maintain their well-being. By addressing this critical issue, we can create healthier, more sustainable teaching environments that benefit both educators and students. Attendees will leave with practical tools, real-world examples, and resources to continue their work in fostering teacher mental health. Join us to explore how we can transform teacher preparation and prioritize well-being in education!



BREAKOUT SESSION II

1:20 - 2:20 PM | PINEAPPLE ROOM

Advocating for Play in Early Grades with School Partnerships: Leveraging the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Position Statement on Play

Ysaaca Axelrod, Associate Professor Children, Families and Schools

Sandra Sarucia, Educator Preparation Coordinator

University of Massachusetts Amherst

Research points to the importance of reciprocal relationships to support strong partnerships between PK-12 schools and educator preparation; however, in our work as teacher educators, we notice disconnects between what we seek to foster and teach our pre-service teachers and what they experience in their placements, particularly as it relates to play. DESE's Position Statement on Play emphasizes play as a leading instructional strategy for PK-3 classrooms, essential for cognitive, language, social, and emotional development. Yet, many educators struggle to integrate purposeful play into their day while meeting curricular demands, and student teachers have few opportunities to see play in their placements. The goal of this presentation is twofold: one is to understand the importance of incorporating play and being intentional about teaching about and supporting play in our teacher education programs, and the second is to build advocacy for play, so that teacher educators can join efforts to push for more play in classrooms in Massachusetts.

Participants will explore how we co-designed a four-part professional development workshop with Springfield and Holyoke Public Schools to integrate DESE's Position Statement into classroom practices and strengthen our partnership with these districts. Through hands-on activities, case studies, and reflective dialogue, attendees will experience the power of purposeful play and discover ways to foster joy in teaching and learning. For example, we'll guide participants through structured play activities that align with academic standards and model techniques for adapting these approaches in their own contexts.

Each participant will leave with a comprehensive toolkit of resources, including DESE's Position Statement on Play, workshop outlines with objectives and agendas, and slides from our sessions. We'll conclude with an action-planning activity to help participants identify next steps for integrating play into their work, whether they are teacher candidates, faculty in educator preparation programs, or PK-12 educators.



BREAKOUT SESSION II

1:20 - 2:20 PM | CRAFT'S HALL

Culture Objectives Make Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy Explicit and Equitable

Emily Spitzman, Associate Professor TESOL

Alexandra Balconi, Associate Professor

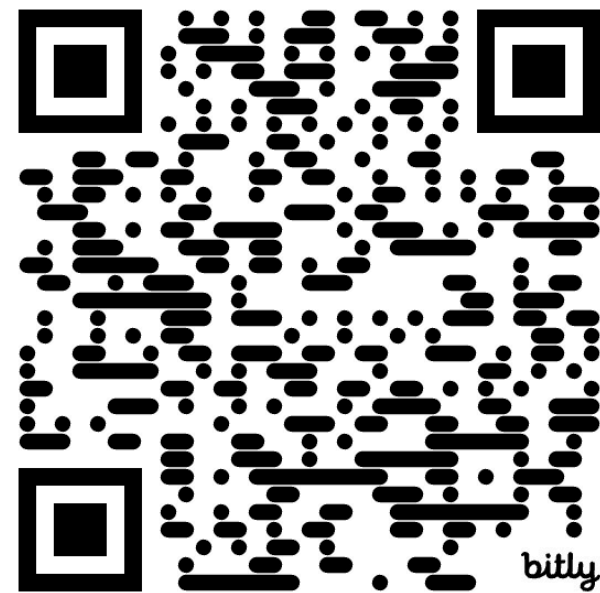
Bridgewater State University

The revised Professional Standards for teachers (PSTs) as well as the revised components for the Candidate Assessment of Performance (CAP) include a more explicit emphasis on culturally and linguistically sustaining pedagogy. One way to enact culturally sustaining pedagogy is through focused culture objectives in lesson plans, a practice with a great potential, which has not yet become common in content area and ESL lesson planning. Culturally sustaining pedagogy, compared to culturally responsive and relevant methods, is an underexplored area. Culturally sustaining pedagogy strives to sustain as opposed to eradicate cultural ways of being for communities of color (Paris & Alim, 2017), and while this builds from culturally responsive and relevant practices, it more explicitly and critically promotes equity in teaching and learning.

In this presentation, presenters first explain an overview of culturally sustaining pedagogy and how it is foundational to teaching and learning effectiveness. Presenters will then describe how they guided their teacher candidates to focus on culturally sustaining pedagogy in lesson planning. In lieu of establishing general goals for integrating culture in the classroom, teacher candidates were instructed to develop explicit culture objectives (Medina, 2022) to focus the lessons on cultural and linguistic connections and equity. Presenters will share resources and activities that they used to explain this to their students. Finally, presenters will explain their document analysis research analyzing culture objectives in lesson plans. Through this research, they examined culture objectives using a framework they generated that integrates social justice standards. They uncovered strengths and areas that need improvement in the culture objectives and their enactment in the lesson. Presenters will share examples of culture objectives that their teacher candidates generated in order to engage the participants in a rich discussion of the analysis. There will be a culminating activity in which participants develop culture objectives for their contexts.

EVALUATION & THANK YOU

We sincerely appreciate your partnership and collaboration. As we look ahead to future gatherings and refine our collaborative work, we ask that you take a moment to complete MACTE's 2025 Spring Conference Evaluation.



To learn more about our organization or to become involved in future programming, we invite you to connect with the MACTE Board:
macteboard@gmail.com

