



**Building Bridges, Breaking Barriers**  
**Creating Just & Equitable Schools for Everyone**



## CONFERENCE AGENDA

7:30 - 8:15 Arrival & Registration

8:15 - 9:15 Welcome & Keynote

9:30 - 10:30 Workshop Session #1

10:45 - 11:45 Workshop Session #2

11:45 - 12:30 Lunch & Book Signing

12:40 - 1:30 Closing Activity & Closing Keynote

*Need a break? The break room will be available all day with counseling staff [Room 271]*

## WORKSHOPS DESCRIPTIONS & ROOM #'S

# SESSION ONE



# SESSION TWO



*Complete our feedback survey for a chance to snag a \$100 gift card!!*



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FOR SURVEY**





# Session One Workshops

Scroll down to view workshop titles and room #'s. Click the arrow to read descriptions.

**Amplifying Youth Voice: The Path to Designing Sustainable Innovation** [\[Room 228\]](#) 

**Anti-Harassment Bystander Intervention Training Practical Strategies for Successful Intervention**  
[\[Room 250\]](#) 

**Bridging Community + Connection Through Storytelling** [\[Room 229\]](#) 

**Con-Con-Console: Challenging Discriminatory Policies in Education** [\[Room 266\]](#) 

**Creating and Sustaining LGBTQ Inclusive Schools** [\[Room 224\]](#) 

**Disability as Diversity** [\[Room 219\]](#) 

**Diversity Inclusion Group: An Introduction to Constructive DEI Discussions** [\[Room 116\]](#) 

**Don't Be a Drag Just be a Queen** [\[Library\]](#) 

**Empathy in Action: Programs to Cultivate Inclusive Mindsets** [\[Room 262\]](#) 

**Fostering Student Agency to Make Positive Changes in Your School** [\[Room 252\]](#) 

**If You Cross This Boundary, We All Die** [\[Room 230\]](#) 

**Importance of Intersectional Feminism in Schools** [\[Room 114\]](#) 

**Intergroup Dialogue for Bridging Across Difference** [\[Room 211\]](#) 



**Lions & Tigers and Racism Oh My** [\[Room 263\]](#)

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**Mapping out Your Social Justice Journey** [\[Room 223\]](#)

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**Patriarchy Affects Us All, We Can All Heal From It** [\[Room 207\]](#)

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**Poetry Slam Workshop: Exploring Culture and Justice Through Spoken Word** [\[Room 260\]](#)

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**Pronouns, Identities & Misrepresentation: Misgendering Kind of Suckz** [\[Room 258\]](#)

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**Puerto Ricans: Second Class American Citizens?** [\[Room 270\]](#)

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**Queer Trivia** [\[Room 268\]](#)

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**Social Media and Social Justice: Ways to Fight Hate Online** [\[Room 206\]](#)

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**Standing up to Antisemitism in the 21st Century** [\[Room 225\]](#)

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**Substitutes for Books by Dead, Straight White Guys** [\[Room 227\]](#)

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**The Brave Space Toolbox** [\[Room 208\]](#)

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**The Power [and Danger] of a Story** [\[Room 265\]](#)

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**Through different eyes: embracing the power of perspective** [\[Room 212\]](#)

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**The Princess Saves Herself in This One** [\[Room 221\]](#)

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**Understanding modern Antisemitism; past, present and future** [\[Room 115\]](#)

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**Using Comics to Understand Social Justice** [\[Room 112\]](#)

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**Using Music to Talk about Current Events and Justice** [\[Room 222\]](#)

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**Welcoming Spaces for LGBTQ+ People in Schools** [\[Room 264\]](#)

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## **Amplifying Youth Voice: The Path to Designing Sustainable Innovation [Room 228]**

*Assi Coulibaly & Lianne Aguilar-Barrientos - Diversity Talks*

Grounded in the science of shifting mindsets and the art of facilitating engaging, vulnerable dialogues that lead to behavioral change, Diversity Talks [DT] specializes in increasing cultural competence by providing youth-led professional development services grounded in diversity, equity, and inclusion. By elevating youth leadership in professional settings, DT creates unique learning environments that allow participants to grapple with how they understand - and exercise - power. This 60-minute session explores power dynamics between adults and youth in the classroom and community. Youth facilitators will guide adult participants through an interactive activity to examine their beliefs on youth voice and youth leadership, authentically reflect on how they have engaged youth in creating solutions to issues impacting their schools and communities, and identify actionable steps to amplify youth voice in the path toward designing sustainable innovations. **[Also available in Session 2]**

## **Anti-Harassment Bystander Intervention Training Practical Strategies for Successful Intervention [Room 250]**

*Erin Nerlino - King Philip Regional High School*

This anti-harassment bystander intervention workshop provides participants with the '5Ds' (direct, delay, delegate, document, distract) as strategies to disrupt an incident of harassment and examines the ways that power dynamics related to a victim's visible identities come into play during incidents. The workshop starts by defining the history of bystander intervention, why it's important, and the negative mental, physical, and collective effects of harassment as a public health concern. It then uses a video of a real life harassment incident as an example, covers the five strategies, and provides opportunities for participants to think through how to apply the five strategies if they were in the situation that the video portrays. Most importantly, the workshop ends with four school-based scenarios that the student presenters have witnessed/experienced and facilitates a discussion of how applying these strategies based on one's identity could help disrupt the harassment.

### *Allison Lerman-Gluck & Kate Laskey - Narrative 4*

Narrative 4's Story Exchange is a process that builds connection and empathy through the power of storytelling. We believe that the shortest distance between two people is a story. We aim to create a space where all voices are heard. In a Narrative 4 Story Exchange, two people are partnered and they tell one another a true story from their life. They then come back together in a larger group and retell one another's stories using first person pronouns. During this workshop, participants will experience a story exchange and reflection. Educators will walk away with deep listening, self-awareness and self-management tools, as well as new connections to bring back to their teaching practice. **[Also available in Session 2]**

### **Con-Con-Console: Challenging Discriminatory Policies in Education [Room 266]**



### *Faith Jean - East Providence High School*

In this presentation students from East Providence High School will discuss the history and problems with the American school system in the modern day, as well as present modern day solutions to these problems. The goal of this presentation is to show attendees different perspectives[of people and ideas] they may have not previously considered, and encourage them to question and challenge these systems in their own school. This will be done via a series of video game inspired segments as well as interactive/ critical thinking activities

### **Creating and Sustaining LGBTQ Inclusive Schools [Room 224]**



### *Landon Callahan - MASS Safe Schools*

This session provides tools for creating queer-inclusive and gender-expansive schools where LGBTQ+ students - and by extension, all students - can thrive. This interactive workshop will include personal stories, resources, and best practices to improve school climate and student mental health. You will leave with a better understanding of the experiences of LGBTQ students, and strategies to be an ally and advocate in your school. **[Also available in Session 2]**

### **Disability as Diversity [Room 219]**



### *Erin Mayo & Gabrielle Clark - College of the Holy Cross*

This session will discuss how critical it is to think of disability as part of diversity which is often left out of the DEI conversation. Participants will create a definition of disability through use of a word cloud. This session will provide an overview of the Disability Civil Rights Movement as an outgrowth of the civil rights movement which has provided us with an expanded view of disability. The presentation will include the differences with accommodating students in high school vs. college. Participants will learn about microaggressions specific to individuals with disabilities and inclusive language around disability. We will need audiovisual equipment for a powerpoint presentation, ideally a microphone, and sound. Participants will complete an exit ticket that has them share with us why disability is important as part of the diversity conversation. Time will be saved for questions and discussion.

**[Also available in Session 2]**



*Ella Hogan & Rachel Mburu - Wachusett Regional High School*

Join DIG, a dynamic group of passionate students committed to fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion in our local community. In this engaging session, discover how DIG creates meaningful change through weekly discussions, initiatives, and service opportunities. Experience a unique interactive activity as we encourage self-reflection on personal encounters with discrimination and moments of contemplation. Participants will write down their thoughts, then crumple up their papers, toss them into a designated area, and pick up someone else's reflections, fostering empathy and understanding. Responses will be shared with the group, contributing to a collective dialogue on the challenges and achievements in our journey towards inclusivity. Participants will explore further through a sticky note activity, celebrating personal progress and addressing ongoing challenges. Don't miss this opportunity to connect, reflect, and contribute to the transformative work of DIG as we strive for a more inclusive and equitable community.

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### **Don't Be a Drag Just be a Queen [Library]**



*David Higginbottom & David Conner - Worcester Pride*

Join First Majesty of the Pride Royal Court, drag queen extraordinaire, Diva D. In this workshop you will discover more about the art of drag. Drag is not a crime, but it is an outlet for creativity and empowerment. Learn how Drag brings joy to our lives and can fulfill our creative purpose. **[Also available in Session 2]**

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### **Empathy in Action: Programs to Cultivate Inclusive Mindsets [Room 262]**



*Mary Nemeth - Ashland High School*

In this session, members of Ashland High School's C.A.R.E.S. Team will talk about the initiatives they've taken in their school and wider community to build compassion and inclusivity. They will highlight and share logistics of programs they have created for pre-K to grade 12, and beyond. This engaging workshop will offer in-depth presentations, interactive activities, and a Q&A.

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### **Fostering Student Agency to Make Positive Changes in Your School [Room 252]**



*Nga Huynh - Shrewsbury High School*

Learn how the Shrewsbury High School Impact Makers student group members are trying to make a positive impact in their school. Members of the SHS Student Impact Makers will present how they educate students and staff on how to create a culture of belonging while celebrating the diversity of our school community. Using the Teaching Tolerance resource, Speak Up At School: How to Respond to Everyday Prejudice, Bias and Stereotypes, the students are providing tools for every member of our community to confront hate language and learn how to be active 'upstanders' instead of passive 'bystanders.'



*Ousmane Power-Greene, Clark University & Michael Lawrence-Riddell, Self Evident Media - Clark University*

In 1848, William and Ellen Craft fled slavery in Macon more than 1,000 miles in steamboats, carriages, and trains to Boston, Massachusetts. Here, they were protected by the black abolitionist Lewis Hayden who, when confronted by slave catchers, declared: 'If you cross this boundary, we all die!' Willing to sacrifice his life to protect the Crafts, Hayden was prepared to make real Patrick Henry's claim, 'Give me liberty, or Give me death!' In this session, we will explore the history of African American resistance to enslavement through a short animated films and a discussion about how the Crafts', as well as others, acts of resistance change how we think about American history. **[Also available in Session 2]**

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### **Importance of Intersectional Feminism in Schools [Room 114]**



*Abigail Mitchell & Sam Vison, Naomi De Good, & Amelia Cahill - Innovation Academy Charter School*

Want to learn more about intersectional feminism? Or maybe learn how to start up your own intersectional feminist club at your school? We will talk about the club we run at our school [We Who Run The World], what we've accomplished as a group, how it impacts our community, and the importance of community service and educating the community on certain topics. Since we also find empowering each other important, we will have an activity where we decorate mirror coloring sheets and write what we like about ourselves in the mirrors. Then if enough people in the group are willing, we can share our creations and discuss how we want to empower ourselves and/or our communities!

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### **Intergroup Dialogue for Bridging Across Difference [Room 211]**



*Mariah Lapiroff & Sabine Denise Jacques - The Collaborative for Educational Services*

In this session we'll explore what intergroup dialogue is and participate in fun and collaborative games and exercises that support us to be real and share who we are, support each other, and learn to talk about our different experiences. Participants will learn the difference between dialogue and debate and how dialogue helps students to take actions for changes they want in our schools and communities. We'll be talking about what makes school a fun and engaging place where students and educators want to be. The things we learn in the workshop will support us to think about the ways we can center students' choices and voices, create relationships across differences, and develop skills for how to center making school a joyful place of belonging for all. **[Also available in Session 2]**

*Dinah Mack and Fatima [Timmy] Al-Muntafik - History UnErased*

This workshop is for high school students and adults only.

How do you build bridges and break barriers, anyway? In this session participants will work collaboratively and independently to examine the theme of CONCON 2024 as they put into words their own vision for creating a just and equitable school. Through question prompts, small group conversations, and independent writing, participants will develop and add their unique vision and words to a community created podcast. We will use phone voice recorders, laptops and microphones to record. The final audio will be sent out to all workshop participants and organizers a few weeks after the session. [Also available in Session 2]

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### **Lions & Tigers and Racism Oh My [Room 263]**



*Maggie Jakubiak & Madi Cruz, & Mia D'Anello - Sutton High School*

What do lions, tigers and eagles have to do with racism? Come to our workshop and find out! In this interactive and engaging workshop, we will discuss how group-think and a lack of diversity can lead to challenging situations for schools and students. We'll talk about how a government program started during the Great Depression - Red Lining - is still impacting our schools and communities. Finally, we'll work in groups to develop a plan for your school on how to challenge these forces.

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### **Mapping out Your Social Justice Journey [Room 223]**



*Laura Mulvey & Aleeza Ghani, and Alexis Giesta - Bridgewater State University*

This session will engage participants in a guided self-reflection activity to explore their social action interests and experiences and their identity as a change maker. Our workshop will introduce participants to up to 5 Bridgewater State University students who will share their own story about how they are actively engaged in their local and college community. In small groups students will participate in a mapping activity where they will identify and reflect on their past experiences and their future social action goals. Participants will be provided with reflection prompts and materials to map their social action pathway. Participants will take their personalized social action map with them as a guide for continued reflection as they progress as change makers. **[Also available in Session 2]**

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### **Patriarchy Affects Us All, We Can All Heal From It [Room 207]**



*Fitz Pucci - Resilient Communities*

This workshop will empower both students and faculty to dive into the nature of Patriarchy, how it shows up in our everyday lives, and what we can do together to stand in solidarity, in healing from the forces that incentivize us to harm and be harmed. This subject material feels almost unilateral across the cultures and identities of the world, and is such a course material that can be applied through a multitude of lenses seen through marginalized identities. **[Also available in Session 2]**

*Peter Weller - South Hadley High School*

In this interactive workshop, participants will learn about the roots of spoken word poetry from French-speaking Black writers and intellectuals like Aimé Césaire and Léopold Sédar Senghor who drew inspiration from the Harlem Renaissance. Issues such as colonization, the African diaspora, and social oppression were all explored in their work. To this day, poetry slam continues to focus on relevant social and cultural issues thanks to the work of contemporary artists like Lyrical Faith, Rudy Francisco, and others. Members of this workshop will learn the simple rules of slam poetry and have an opportunity to conduct their own slam among willing participants. Others may volunteer to judge this lighthearted competition where anything goes as long as it's original and can be performed in 3 minutes or less. In the words of veteran poetry slammer Allan Wolf: 'The points are not the point. The point is poetry.'

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### **Pronouns, Identities & Misrepresentation: Misgendering Kind of Suckz [Room 258]**



*Richard Fahey & Dylon H. & Stephanie Essenmacher - Orchard Street Academy/Assabet - Valley Collaborative*

We will discuss misgendering and introduce a spectrum of identities from the LGBTQIA++ community and that represent current students and staff at Orchard Street Academy. Our session will offer learning through personal accounts by students of misgendering and other harm caused by misidentifying or even rejecting student's self-identifications. Our session will include a small group activity, an opportunity for the audience to reflect on their own experiences of being misidentified or misgendered, and will end with an open discussion led by a panel of staff and students from OSA

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### **Puerto Ricans: Second Class American Citizens? [Room 270]**



*Sofia Hernandez - Sutton High School*

What does it truly mean to be an American citizen? While those born with this privilege can readily share their experiences, understanding the perspective of a second-class American citizen adds a layer of complexity. For many Puerto Ricans, this sentiment has lingered for years. Despite Puerto Rico being an integral part of the United States, its native inhabitants often feel deprived of the same opportunities afforded to their counterparts on the mainland. This immersive workshop seeks to unpack the historical events contributing to Puerto Ricans' perception of second-class citizenship. Beyond a historical exploration, participants will be treated to a sensory journey into Puerto Rican culture, featuring traditional music and some authentic snacks, fostering a deeper connection to the rich tapestry of this unique American experience. **[Also available in Session 2]**

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### **Queer Trivia [Room 268]**



*Jess Motyl-Szary [she/her]*

Let's play trivia! This workshop will test your knowledge of the LGBTQIA+ community through a fun, team-based trivia game. The trivia questions will cover everything from terminology to queer history. The winning team gets bragging rights for the rest of the conference [and candy]! **[Also available in Session 2]**



*Rob Greenfield - Newton North High School*

Over the last 10 years, hate speech on social media platforms has caused immense damage to individuals, marginalized communities, and democracy at large. Because of the business models of social media companies, hate and outrage is often highly recommended and pushed by their algorithms, resulting in a spike in hate speech online and offline. This workshop is in part to generate awareness as to how and why these platforms have spread outrage and hate for their own gain. However, there is much we can do about this. This workshop will also serve to provide individual and collective action we can take to limit the spread of this type of content, and to showcase examples of individuals and marginalized communities that have stood up and used these platforms to advance social justice and enact real positive change. **[Also available in Session 2]**

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### **Standing up to Antisemitism in the 21st Century [Room 225]**



*Kate Chavez & Gabi Schiller - StandWithUs*

Often described as the 'oldest hatred,' antisemitism is no relic of history. Antisemitism is a resilient virus that mutates and continues to infect societies around the world. While it may be easy to recognize blatant outbursts of antisemitism, it is much more difficult to recognize subtle expressions through stereotypes, some of which have survived and flourished for centuries! By increasing our awareness of this history, we can increase our community's immunity to this hate. This session includes a brief history of antisemitism, short clips of current high school students recounting their experiences with antisemitism today, and the know-how to stand up to this hate. The group will ultimately see how we can uplift and empower all members of our communities by learning to lead with curiosity instead of judgment, and speaking out to spread love and acceptance instead of hatred and bigotry. **[Also available in Session 2]**

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### **Substitutes for Books by Dead, Straight White Guys [Room 227]**



*Catherine Andronik - Bureau of Education and Research*

There are arguments FOR reading the 'classics' in English/Language Arts courses, most importantly that their themes are timeless. And then there are the arguments AGAINST: that the classics are, for the most part, by dead, straight, white men--categories that more and more young readers find unrelatable. Fortunately, there are many recent books for middle and high school readers that share themes, construction, and even style with classics, but feature characters and situations today's readers will more readily recognize. Books to be discussed will include female authors, LGBTQ+ authors and characters, racial and ethnic diversity, inclusion of disabilities, etc. This lively presentation will suggest and introduce some of these alternative texts. **[Also available in Session 2]**

*Teresa Cruz Foley - Brave Space Consulting*

Through storytelling, discussion, and group exercises, students will learn why the brain resists change and relies on bias, how to overcome these human tendencies, locate and leverage their power, and gain confidence as advocates for themselves and others. Students will leave with a toolbox of scientifically proven practices to help them calmly and impactfully navigate difficult situations and create brave spaces wherever they go. **[Also available in Session 2]**

### **The Power [and Danger] of a Story [Room 265]**



*Kathryn Hauver & Delaney Walch, Luke Letizia, & Fernanda Perez-Alvarez - College of the Holy Cross*

We will begin the session by watching 'The Danger of a Single Story' TED Talk. Then, students will silently reflect on questions provided. We will move into a small group discussion, where students will have the opportunity to share their stories and further discuss the reflection questions. After, we will have a large group debrief to offer space for students to talk about their responses and discussions. This will allow students to connect different themes and hear different perspectives from their peers. Students can expect to reflect on their own stories and identities, other people's narratives, and think critically about the various aspects of storytelling. **[Also available in Session 2]**

### **Through different eyes: embracing the power of perspective [Room 212]**



*Ronald Burgess Jr. - Ronald A. Burgess Jr. Foundation, Inc.*

In this engaging workshop, teens will embark on a transformative journey to discover the profound impact of perspective. Through interactive activities and thought-provoking discussions, participants will explore the dynamic nature of perception and its influence on their lives. They will engage in active exercises that challenge their assumptions, broaden their horizons, and cultivate empathy. By delving into diverse viewpoints and real-life scenarios, they will develop a deeper understanding of the importance of perspective in fostering meaningful connections, resolving conflicts, and making informed decisions. Join us to harness the power of perspective and unlock a world of limitless possibilities. **[Also available in Session 2]**

### **The Princess Saves Herself in This One [Room 221]**



*Macy Hutchinson - Sutton High Alumni/Anna Maria college*

Do you like movies? Do you find comfort in watching tv? Well, in this workshop we will be discussing how women are portrayed in things such as movies and tv shows and how this could be causing problems for the society we live within. **[Also available in Session 2]**



*Ben Medd & Leslie Appelbaum - Casco Bay High School*

This workshop will provide an in-depth look into the root causes and current forms of modern Antisemitism. We will explore themes of Jewish hate in the modern era, including the impact of Holocaust education in American society. We will review archival and modern photographs and quotes within a gallery walk, while we compare and contrast antisemitism throughout the past two centuries. Students will participate in open and group discussions centered on Jewish hate and the influence our education system has on perceptions of Jewish history. We will analyze what society has learned from the past and how we can save the future.

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### **Using Comics to Understand Social Justice [Room 112]**



*Mosie Senn-McNally - South Hadley High School*

We will look at some comics and graphic novels that illustrate the artist's perspective on a variety of social justice issues - racism, mental health prejudices, gender issues, etc. Then we will brainstorm and create our own pieces to illustrate our journey on the path to creating just and equitable lives. Art supplies provided. **[Also available in Session 2]**

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### **Using Music to Talk about Current Events and Justice [Room 222]**




*Lindsay Lyons, Educational Justice Coach & Jeanette Shorey, The Happy Music Teacher*

What's going on in the world right now? Express how you feel about a current event through words, movement, and music. Experience connection with others' humanity while talking about an issue of in/justice. Learn how to use these activities to enter conversations about current events in a way that invites humanity...something that we rarely see on social media. **[Also available in Session 2]**

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### **Welcoming Spaces for LGBTQ+ People in Schools [Room 264]**



*Gretchen Pollard-Ramos - Woburn Memorial High School*

Are LGBTQ+ students welcomed and celebrated in all spaces in your school? What about the LGBTQ+ parents, guardians, or loved ones? Do you want resources to support students and adults of various sexual and gender identities? This workshop will detail ways that we can not only create safe spaces, but affirm LGBTQ+ students and the LGBTQ+ adults in the lives of students. Students and staff are invited to engage in conversation about the current climate in your schools and how we can address needs. Attendees will learn about affirmative interventions and resources that may be implemented to create safer classrooms and spaces, for LGBTQ+ people, throughout schools.



# Session Two Workshops

Scroll down to view workshop titles and room #'s. Click the arrow to read descriptions.

**A Collaborative Journey: Creating Brave and Safe Cultures of Belonging** [\[Room 258\]](#) 

**Addressing Harm and Building Community through GSA** [\[Room 114\]](#) 

**Amplifying Youth Voice: The Path to Designing Sustainable Innovation** [\[Room 228\]](#) 

**Bridging Community + Connection Through Storytelling** [\[Room 229\]](#) 

**Creating and Sustaining LGBTQ Inclusive Schools** [\[Room 224\]](#) 

**DEI And Sports: It is a must!** [\[Room 260\]](#) 

**Don't Be a Drag Just be a Queen** [\[Library\]](#) 

**Disability as Diversity** [\[Room 219\]](#) 

**Empowering Multicultural Skills for High School Students** [\[Room 252\]](#) 

**Honoring Student Identity & Voice Through Inclusive Curriculum** [\[Room 266\]](#) 

**Identifying and Addressing Microaggressions in the Classroom** [\[Room 264\]](#) 



















**If You Cross This Boundary, We All Die** [\[Room 230\]](#) 

**Intergroup Dialogue for Bridging Across Difference** [\[Room 211\]](#) 

**Just and Equitable Schools for All: A Podcast** [\[Room 226\]](#) 





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- Middle School Students Advocating for Change: Small School Big World** [\[Room 116\]](#) 
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- Student Voice! How Students Start!** [\[Room 115\]](#) 
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- Student Voices: Combating Hate Through Solidarity** [\[Room 262\]](#) 
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## **A Collaborative Journey: Creating Brave and Safe Cultures of Belonging [Room 258]**



*William Collins & Phil Fogleman, Jeremiah Ames, & Veronica Fenton - Lenox Public Schools*

In this workshop, a school district will share with participants its early learnings from a collaborative effort in Creating Brave and Safe Space and a Culture of Belonging for students and staff and the impetus behind this effort. In response to a racial incident, Lenox Public Schools reached out to the Anti-Defamation League for assistance. It soon became clear that the incident was a symptom and deeper work would be required. This gave birth to a bold proactive initiative with multiple partners to educate the entire school community to recognize and address the systemic dimensions of identity-based bias and build a culture of belonging. Participants will learn key takeaways from this collaborative endeavor including: school committee, school and district administration, teachers and students.

## **Addressing Harm and Building Community through GSA [Room 114]**



*Emily Hanlon - Innovation Academy Charter School*

The GSA will share how they have addressed harm and built a strong sense of community through student-led meetings and advocacy. We will disseminate resources for LGBTQ+ students to go to in times of need, address the importance of teacher involvement and student advocacy in schools, and interact with students and staff to build connections with LGBTQ+ people across schools.

### *Assi Coulibaly & Lianne Aguilar-Barrientos - Diversity Talks*

Grounded in the science of shifting mindsets and the art of facilitating engaging, vulnerable dialogues that lead to behavioral change, Diversity Talks [DT] specializes in increasing cultural competence by providing youth-led professional development services grounded in diversity, equity, and inclusion. By elevating youth leadership in professional settings, DT creates unique learning environments that allow participants to grapple with how they understand - and exercise - power. This 60-minute session explores power dynamics between adults and youth in the classroom and community. Youth facilitators will guide adult participants through an interactive activity to examine their beliefs on youth voice and youth leadership, authentically reflect on how they have engaged youth in creating solutions to issues impacting their schools and communities, and identify actionable steps to amplify youth voice in the path toward designing sustainable innovations. **[Also available in Session 1]**

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*Tara Cole - South Hadley High School*

Diversity, equity and inclusion is a hot topic; we all know that. It seems like it is being talked about everywhere you turn - but, how often do you hear DEI mentioned in connection with sports; well, besides Title IX? This workshop is going to look at the intersectionality of identities and how they relate to privilege and discrimination within the world of sport. We will dive into this topic through: interactive activities, videos, group discussions and private reflections.

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### **Don't Be a Drag Just be a Queen** [\[Library\]](#)



*David Higginbottom & David Conner - Worcester Pride*

Join First Majesty of the Pride Royal Court, drag queen extraordinaire, Diva D. In this workshop you will discover more about the art of drag. Drag is not a crime, but it is an outlet for creativity and empowerment. Learn how Drag brings joy to our lives and can fulfill our creative purpose. **[Also available in Session 1]**

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### **Disability as Diversity** [\[Room 219\]](#)



*Erin Mayo & Gabrielle Clark - College of the Holy Cross*

This session will discuss how critical it is to think of disability as part of diversity which is often left out of the DEI conversation. Participants will create a definition of disability through use of a word cloud. This session will provide an overview of the Disability Civil Rights Movement as an outgrowth of the civil rights movement which has provided us with an expanded view of disability. The presentation will include the differences with accommodating students in high school vs. college. Participants will learn about microaggressions specific to individuals with disabilities and inclusive language around disability. We will need audiovisual equipment for a powerpoint presentation, ideally a microphone, and sound. Participants will complete an exit ticket that has them share with us why disability is important as part of the diversity conversation. Time will be saved for questions and discussion. **[Also available in Session 1]**

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### **Empowering Multicultural Skills for High School Students** [\[Room 252\]](#)



*Alberto Carrero & Felicia Pasley - Chelsea Public Schools*

During this session participants will be able to learn more about immigrant students entering high school in the United States. Our presenters will engage all participants in real cases of the experiences that newcomers confront to adapt to a new culture, their challenges, dreams, and values. The session will address the danger of looking at immigrant students through a deficit lense and implicit bias, instead of embracing the opportunities to create a more inclusive multicultural and diverse society. The presenters are using a variety of interactive activities including a gallery walk, videos, an implicit bias guide, and much more resources to improve participants' knowledge about immigrants in our communities.

*Francesca Daniele - The Gilbert School*

How many times in your educational experiences so far have you felt represented in the texts and coursework you were encountering in your classes? In this session, participants will reflect upon their experiences with curriculum and instruction, focusing on the frequency with which they are exposed to texts and activities that honor and represent their experiences and identities. After reflecting, participants will engage in activities that facilitate an exploration of how curriculum and instructional activities can be revised, updated, and even completely rewritten to be more inclusive and representative of the diversity in our classrooms and our world. Participants will actively engage in conversations and activities surrounding changes that can be implemented immediately and in the future, build toolkits to support their efforts, and hear specific experiences and strategies from the presenter's work in writing more inclusive ELA curricula 7-12 and implementing it effectively in the classroom.

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### **Identifying and Addressing Microaggressions in the Classroom** [\[Room 264\]](#)



*Leslie Briggs - Westwood High School*

Many of our students experience daily microaggressions at school. Staff and other students can help combat these assaults on dignity by intervening and creating a more inclusive space for all. In this workshop, participants will identify, analyze, explain, and practice responding to various forms of microaggressions that they might encounter inside the school building. Participants should expect to discuss examples and role play responses in pairs and debrief in a full group discussion.

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### **If You Cross This Boundary, We All Die** [\[Room 230\]](#)



*Ousmane Power-Greene, Clark University & Michael Lawrence-Riddell, Self Evident Media - Clark University*

In 1848, William and Ellen Craft fled slavery in Macon more than 1,000 miles in steamboats, carriages, and trains to Boston, Massachusetts. Here, they were protected by the black abolitionist Lewis Hayden who, when confronted by slave catchers, declared: 'If you cross this boundary, we all die!' Willing to sacrifice his life to protect the Crafts, Hayden was prepared to make real Patrick Henry's claim, 'Give me liberty, or Give me death!' In this session, we will explore the history of African American resistance to enslavement through a short animated films and a discussion about how the Crafts', as well as others, acts of resistance change how we think about American history. **[Also available in Session 1]**

*Mariah Lapiroff & Sabine Denise Jacques - The Collaborative for Educational Services*

In this session we'll explore what intergroup dialogue is and participate in fun and collaborative games and exercises that support us to be real and share who we are, support each other, and learn to talk about our different experiences. Participants will learn the difference between dialogue and debate and how dialogue helps students to take actions for changes they want in our schools and communities. We'll be talking about what makes school a fun and engaging place where students and educators want to be. The things we learn in the workshop will support us to think about the ways we can center students' choices and voices, create relationships across differences, and develop skills for how to center making school a joyful place of belonging for all. **[Also available in Session 1]**

### **Just and Equitable Schools for All: A Podcast** **[Room 226]**



*Dinah Mack and Fatima [Timmy] Al-Muntafik - History UnErased*

This workshop is for high school students and adults only.

How do you build bridges and break barriers, anyway? In this session participants will work collaboratively and independently to examine the theme of CONCON 2024 as they put into words their own vision for creating a just and equitable school. Through question prompts, small group conversations, and independent writing, participants will develop and add their unique vision and words to a community created podcast. We will use phone voice recorders, laptops and microphones to record. The final audio will be sent out to all workshop participants and organizers a few weeks after the session. **[Also available in Session 1]**

### **Mapping out Your Social Justice Journey** **[Room 223]**



*Laura Mulvey & Aleeza Ghani, and Alexis Giesta - Bridgewater State University*

This session will engage participants in a guided self-reflection activity to explore their social action interests and experiences and their identity as a change maker. Our workshop will introduce participants to up to 5 Bridgewater State University students who will share their own story about how they are actively engaged in their local and college community. In small groups students will participate in a mapping activity where they will identify and reflect on their past experiences and their future social action goals. Participants will be provided with reflection prompts and materials to map their social action pathway. Participants will take their personalized social action map with them as a guide for continued reflection as they progress as change makers. **[Also available in Session 1]**

*Emma Blydenburgh, Chloe B., Kasey S., & Maggie N. - Groton Dunstable Regional Middle School*

Middle school students in the GDRMS Diversity Club will lead a panel describing their experience in increasing awareness and acceptance of the LGBTQ+ community here and in the world, bringing a Day of Silence to Groton-Dunstable Middle School. They will share how they found student and faculty allies by leading the game they created to help others understand differences, and how they met with the principal and later informed our School Committee of their work on this and other projects during the school year. They will also talk about personal experiences they've had as young adults and how we can best support them.

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### **Patriarchy Affects Us All, We Can All Heal From It [Room 207]**



*Fitz Pucci - Resilient Communities*

This workshop will empower both students and faculty to dive into the nature of Patriarchy, how it shows up in our everyday lives, and what we can do together to stand in solidarity, in healing from the forces that incentivize us to harm and be harmed. This subject material feels almost unilateral across the cultures and identities of the world, and is such a course material that can be applied through a multitude of lenses seen through marginalized identities. **[Also available in Session 1]**

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### **Puerto Ricans: Second Class American Citizens? [Room 270]**



*Sofia Hernandez - Sutton High School*

What does it truly mean to be an American citizen? While those born with this privilege can readily share their experiences, understanding the perspective of a second-class American citizen adds a layer of complexity. For many Puerto Ricans, this sentiment has lingered for years. Despite Puerto Rico being an integral part of the United States, its native inhabitants often feel deprived of the same opportunities afforded to their counterparts on the mainland. This immersive workshop seeks to unpack the historical events contributing to Puerto Ricans' perception of second-class citizenship. Beyond a historical exploration, participants will be treated to a sensory journey into Puerto Rican culture, featuring traditional music and some authentic snacks, fostering a deeper connection to the rich tapestry of this unique American experience. **[Also available in Session 1]**

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### **Queer Trivia [Room 268]**



*Jess Motyl-Szary [she/her]*

Let's play trivia! This workshop will test your knowledge of the LGBTQIA+ community through a fun, team-based trivia game. The trivia questions will cover everything from terminology to queer history. The winning team gets bragging rights for the rest of the conference [and candy]! **[Also available in Session 1]**

*Cynthia Leitich Smith - Keynote*

Storytelling for Activism & Awareness will focus on the impact of narrative sharing on fostering empathy, igniting activism, and instigating positive societal shifts. Whether fiction or nonfiction, individual or collaborative, discover the unique ability of stories to transcend boundaries and create connections that drive social change.

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### **Social Media and Social Justice: Ways to Fight Hate Online [Room 206]**



*Rob Greenfield - Newton North High School*

Over the last 10 years, hate speech on social media platforms has caused immense damage to individuals, marginalized communities, and democracy at large. Because of the business models of social media companies, hate and outrage is often highly recommended and pushed by their algorithms, resulting in a spike in hate speech online and offline. This workshop is in part to generate awareness as to how and why these platforms have spread outrage and hate for their own gain. However, there is much we can do about this. This workshop will also serve to provide individual and collective action we can take to limit the spread of this type of content, and to showcase examples of individuals and marginalized communities that have stood up and used these platforms to advance social justice and enact real positive change. **[Also available in Session 2]**

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### **Standing up to Antisemitism in the 21st Century [Room 225]**



*Kate Chavez & Gabi Schiller - StandWithUs*

Often described as the 'oldest hatred,' antisemitism is no relic of history. Antisemitism is a resilient virus that mutates and continues to infect societies around the world. While it may be easy to recognize blatant outbursts of antisemitism, it is much more difficult to recognize subtle expressions through stereotypes, some of which have survived and flourished for centuries! By increasing our awareness of this history, we can increase our community's immunity to this hate. This session includes a brief history of antisemitism, short clips of current high school students recounting their experiences with antisemitism today, and the know-how to stand up to this hate. The group will ultimately see how we can uplift and empower all members of our communities by learning to lead with curiosity instead of judgment, and speaking out to spread love and acceptance instead of hatred and bigotry. **[Also available in Session 1]**

*Beth Corkum & Addee Cooper - Bow High School*

Students start! At Bow High School a group of students approached administration and asked for the best way to be able to talk about issues amongst the student body, they were provided the opportunity to start a Student Diversity, Equity and Inclusion committee. The committee meets bi-monthly and works to increase diversity, equity and inclusion awareness in our school community through student led initiatives. The students also participate and share out to the District Diversity Equity and Inclusion committee which is part of a larger wellness committee.

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### **Student Voices: Combating Hate Through Solidarity [Room 262]**



*Assif Ankori, Chloe Bruce, Cadence Curto-Leavy, Viha Desai, Olive Ellis, Rhiannon Esposito, Parker Ferguson, Elizabeth Qian-Tsuchida, Malia Thompson-Leong, Ava Qiu, Tess Sullivan, Dave Bennett, and Michele Leong - Newton North High School*

This workshop will celebrate the acts of solidarity from the students of Newton North's Human Rights Council. Student leaders will share their experiences working together to combat hate, and will offer practical advice for student groups committed to diversity and anti racism work.

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### **Substitutes for Books by Dead, Straight White Guys [Room 227]**



*Catherine Andronik - Bureau of Education and Research*

There are arguments FOR reading the 'classics' in English/Language Arts courses, most importantly that their themes are timeless. And then there are the arguments AGAINST: that the classics are, for the most part, by dead, straight, white men--categories that more and more young readers find unrelatable. Fortunately, there are many recent books for middle and high school readers that share themes, construction, and even style with classics, but feature characters and situations today's readers will more readily recognize. Books to be discussed will include female authors, LGBTQ+ authors and characters, racial and ethnic diversity, inclusion of disabilities, etc. This lively presentation will suggest and introduce some of these alternative texts. **[Also available in Session 1]**

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### **The Brave Space Toolbox [Room 208]**



*Teresa Cruz Foley - Brave Space Consulting*

Through storytelling, discussion, and group exercises, students will learn why the brain resists change and relies on bias, how to overcome these human tendencies, locate and leverage their power, and gain confidence as advocates for themselves and others. Students will leave with a toolbox of scientifically proven practices to help them calmly and impactfully navigate difficult situations and create brave spaces wherever they go. **[Also available in Session 1]**



*Madyson Raskett - Sutton High School*

In our workshop, you will not only learn how to incorporate social justice into your schooling, but combine it with the world of the Boston Celtics. Using basketball, we strive to make fighting social injustices as simple as a playbook. The playbook initiative, in a partnership with Project 351 and the Celtics community, is based on the purpose of making our current youth into our leaders!

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### **The Power (and Danger) of a Story [Room 265]**



*Kathryn Hauver & Delaney Walch, Luke Letizia, & Fernanda Perez-Alvarez - College of the Holy Cross*

We will begin the session by watching 'The Danger of a Single Story' TED Talk. Then, students will silently reflect on questions provided. We will move into a small group discussion, where students will have the opportunity to share their stories and further discuss the reflection questions. After, we will have a large group debrief to offer space for students to talk about their responses and discussions. This will allow students to connect different themes and hear different perspectives from their peers. Students can expect to reflect on their own stories and identities, other people's narratives, and think critically about the various aspects of storytelling. **[Also available in Session 1]**

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### **The Princess Saves Herself in This One [Room 221]**



*Macy Hutchinson - Sutton High Alumni/Anna Maria college*

Do you like movies? Do you find comfort in watching tv? Well, in this workshop we will be discussing how women are portrayed in things such as movies and tv shows and how this could be causing problems for the society we live within. **[Also available in Session 1]**

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### **Through different eyes: embracing the power of perspective [Room 212]**



*Ronald Burgess Jr. - Ronald A. Burgess Jr. Foundation, Inc.*

In this engaging workshop, teens will embark on a transformative journey to discover the profound impact of perspective. Through interactive activities and thought-provoking discussions, participants will explore the dynamic nature of perception and its influence on their lives. They will engage in active exercises that challenge their assumptions, broaden their horizons, and cultivate empathy. By delving into diverse viewpoints and real-life scenarios, they will develop a deeper understanding of the importance of perspective in fostering meaningful connections, resolving conflicts, and making informed decisions. Join us to harness the power of perspective and unlock a world of limitless possibilities. **[Also available in Session 1]**



*Mosie Senn-McNally - South Hadley High School*

We will look at some comics and graphic novels that illustrate the artist's perspective on a variety of social justice issues - racism, mental health prejudices, gender issues, etc. Then we will brainstorm and create our own pieces to illustrate our journey on the path to creating just and equitable lives. Art supplies provided. **[Also available in Session 1]**

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### **Using Music to Talk about Current Events and Justice [Room 222]**




*Lindsay Lyons, Educational Justice Coach & Jeanette Shorey, The Happy Music Teacher*

What's going on in the world right now? Express how you feel about a current event through words, movement, and music. Experience connection with others' humanity while talking about an issue of in/justice. Learn how to use these activities to enter conversations about current events in a way that invites humanity...something that we rarely see on social media. **[Also available in Session 1]**

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### **Welcoming Spaces for LGBTQ+ People in Schools [Room 220]**



*Gretchen Pollard-Ramos - Woburn Memorial High School*

Are LGBTQ+ students welcomed and celebrated in all spaces in your school? What about the LGBTQ+ parents, guardians, or loved ones? Do you want resources to support students and adults of various sexual and gender identities? This workshop will detail ways that we can not only create safe spaces, but affirm LGBTQ+ students and the LGBTQ+ adults in the lives of students. Students and staff are invited to engage in conversation about the current climate in your schools and how we can address needs. Attendees will learn about affirmative interventions and resources that may be implemented to create safer classrooms and spaces, for LGBTQ+ people, throughout schools.



## PDPs for Connections Conference Form

An email with your PDP certification will be email to the email provided following the conference.

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\* Indicates required question

**Name \***

*As you want it to appear on your certificate*

Your answer

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**School/Organization \***

Your answer

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**Email Address \***

Your answer

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**Choose one option: \***

- I attended Connections Conference 2024 [5 PDPs]
- I attended and presented one (1) workshop at Connections Conference 2024 [7 PDPs]
- I attended and presented two (2) workshops at Connections Conference 2024 [8 PDPs]

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