



**MASSACHUSETTS ADMINISTRATORS FOR
SPECIAL EDUCATION**
in collaboration with
**MASSACHUSETTS ASSOCIATION OF APPROVED
SPECIAL EDUCATION SCHOOLS**

October 28, 2022 Virtual Conference

Starting the New School Year Informed and Strengths-Based:
What Every Special Education Administrator/Leader/School Team Needs to Know to Improve
Outcomes for Students Across the Continuum of Services

Keynote Presentation:

From the Lens of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education -- The Start
of the School Year - Being Informed to Improve Outcomes for All Massachusetts Students - What
School Communities Need to Know and DO



Jeffrey C. Riley, Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), was appointed by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education as the state's 24th commissioner of elementary and secondary education in 2018. A Massachusetts native, Mr. Riley's experience spans urban and suburban districts and includes teaching in Baltimore, Md., being principal of Tyngsboro Middle School, and being principal of Boston's Edwards Middle School. In January 2012, Commissioner Riley was appointed superintendent/receiver of the Lawrence Public Schools, where he served for more than six years prior to being named Commissioner of DESE.

School Safety:

The Urgency of Addressing and Responding to a
Range of School Safety Issues

CONTEXT SETTING:

Our students, staff and families need not only to feel safe and supported but to be safe and supported in the current climate of a range of violence and safety needs within our schools and programs that go beyond our current measures. Massachusetts schools will move forward in (rigorously) addressing school safety. School safety is a top priority for our students and staff.

FOCUS:

This session will focus on a range of proactive strategies and techniques to address school violence and school threat assessment including techniques to address the overall concerns of staff, students, and families as we move to greater capacity for keeping our school communities safe and secure in a climate of uncertainty and unpredictability. Schools must provide safe learning environments for our students and all staff. This presentation will provide guidelines for school leaders and school teams in designing and implementing strengths-based whole school safety and threat assessment measures. This presentation will also highlight strategies and techniques for identifying students at risk for aggressive behavior to themselves or others and interventions to support positive student outcomes.



Jamie Barrett, Ph.D., Director of Clinical Support, Cambridge Police, Assistant Professor in Psychology Harvard Medical School (part-time)

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DEI:
Shifting Cultural Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity as a Transformation Strategy
from Intent to Impact

CONTEXT SETTING: Learning institutions, both private and public, are striving to reach higher impact with diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts as high-profile priorities. To cultivate and sustain a high-impact cultural, equitable, diverse, and inclusive organization, everyone at all touch points must be included, involved, and organized for strategically shifting transformation.

FOCUS:

While there are multiple ways in which to implement cultural equity, inclusion, and diversity in educational systems, the most effective institutions are strategic in how they plan, implement, monitor, and evaluate transformation strategies that will support clarity, cohesion, and competitive advantage aligned with mission direction of meaningful intent to high impact outcomes. Attendees will learn about the Model™ with 5-key takeaways to think of how it can be adapted or customized for their institution's continuous quality improvement journey of high impact efforts of integrated cultural equity, inclusion, and diversity practices to support adults and students with an intentionally designed safe and learning environment—inclusive climate, cross-sectional engagement, and accelerated performance.



Dr. Dione Christy, Ph. D, **CCC**, Senior Vice President | Global Chief DEI Executive Business Office of Cultural Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity (OCEID) Practice Human Services Management Corporation

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DESE:
The Upcoming New School Year

CONTEXT SETTING:

Strengthening outcomes for students with disabilities across the continuum of supports and services is the mission of the schools and programs serving Massachusetts students. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is in continuous efforts to provide the necessary information to school districts to support the needs of students.

FOCUS:

This presentation will focus on the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education timely and relevant information that school communities need to know to begin the new school year informed and strengths- based, as well as why this information is important. The presentation will highlight the challenges and opportunities of this new school year in supporting students with disabilities.



Dr. Russell Johnston, Ph.D., Deputy Commissioner and State Director of Special Education, The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, former; MA Superintendent of Schools, Special Education Director, special education teacher

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Legal and Legislative Matters:

Special Education School Communities: Starting the School Year Right

CONTEXT SETTING:

Special Education Laws, Regulations, Advisories guide special education teams in determining eligibility for special education services, services, and school district responsibilities. Our goal is to continually keep updated, focused and proactive in supporting special education administration to improving student outcomes. This year is a pivotal year following a full year of in person learning in addressing varied and complex state special education issues.

FOCUS:

The presentation will include recent trends in special education cases at the BSEA and a lively, informative, relevant discussion of best practices for special education administrators to address current concerns such as staff shortages and other varied and complex state special education issues. The session will also highlight proactive strategies for special education team decision making, including a discussion on ASE's advocacy regarding special education for state and legislative matters.



Caitlin Leach Mulrooney, Esq. expert in special education law, support to the Massachusetts Administrators for Special Education (ASE) Murphy, Lamere & Murphy, P.C.F

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Managing Conflict:

Diffusing Difficult Parent, Advocate and Staff Discussions: Creating the Right Conditions for Differences of Opinion

CONTEXT SETTING: In these very complex times, school team leaders and school special education teams are often faced with challenging interactions with parents, advocates, and staff, leading to lack of trust between the parties as they work toward determining student needs.

FOCUS: Will focus on strategies and techniques to diffuse anger at team meetings, rebuild trust and promote responsive practice and team-based decision-making. The session will discuss a variety of skills to utilize in successful conflict resolution



Laurel Peltier, Ed.D., CAGS, Collaborative for Educational Services (Added Link to Bio), author, consultant, trainer and leader in professional development, special education

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“Secret Of Change is to focus all your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new”

-Socrates