

March 15, 2024

STATEWIDE SPECIAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE

Mid-Year Special Education
Perspectives:
Our Common Work from
Multiple Viewpoints

📅 March 15, 2024

🕒 9:00am-2:30pm

🗣️ ASL Interpretation

📍 Virtual

KEYNOTE



**Patricia Garcia,
Ph.D.**

DEI

THE WELLNESS LENS



**Alex Hirschberg,
Psy.D.**

Consistent Strong Leadership:
Supporting Your Team at
Mid-Year and Through the
Entire School Year

THE EQUITY LENS



**Claudia Rinaldi,
Ph.D.**

Multilingual Learners
in the Special
Education Process

THE POLICY LENS



**Russell Johnston,
Ph.D.**

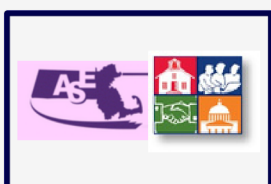
Deputy Commissioner and
State Director of Special
Education (DESE)

THE LEGAL LENS



**Paige Tobin, Esq.
Murphy, Lamere
and Murphy, PC**

Special Education:
Legal Insights



Brought to you by ASE

MA Administrators for Special Education



THE EQUITY LENS

**Patricia Garcia,
Ph.D.**

KEYNOTE: DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Creating Access and Opportunities for Students With Disabilities: Leaders and Teams as Influencers in the Process

This session will highlight the challenges and opportunities for schools in promoting diversity, equity and inclusion for students with disabilities. Additionally, it will provide targeted strategies and techniques necessary to create systemic change. Specifically, conference participants will learn how to use collective leadership and team-building activities to influence and empower a systems change to improve outcomes for students and school communities.

About Dr. Patricia Garcia:

Dr. Patricia Garcia is an accomplished educator with over 30 years of experience, including more than 17 years as superintendent of schools in Virginia, New York, and Connecticut. During her professional career, Dr. Garcia has served in a wide range of roles in the United States and overseas. Starting as a middle school teacher in her native country, Panama, she has gained experience at all levels of the educational system, from classroom teacher to principal, assistant superintendent, regional superintendent, and superintendent of schools. Dr. Garcia is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Education at Lasell University in Newton, MA.

Dr. Garcia has accumulated a proven track record of academic excellence and passion for equity and social justice through effective leadership, positive organizational change, and building high-performance teams. Throughout her career, she has significantly impacted education by advocating for equity by expanding college learning opportunities for marginalized students.

Distinctions: Connecticut State Education Resource Center's George Coleman Excellence in Equity Award; the NAACP 100 Most Influential Black Leaders in Connecticut; the NAACP Above and Beyond Award for Exemplary Commitment to Education; Connecticut Parent Power's Exemplary Education Leader; and Long Island, NY Raices Latinoamericanas, Pioneer in Education Award



THE WELLNESS LENS:

**Alex Hirschberg,
Psy.D.**

CONSISTENT STRONG LEADERSHIP: SUPPORTING YOUR TEAM AT MID YEAR AND THROUGH THE ENTIRE SCHOOL YEAR

Post pandemic, staying strong and resilient is a critical skill as special education leaders face increased challenges in serving staff and students.

This session will focus on evidence-based strategies for leaders in recognizing and managing stress in the workplace and why it is important for the overall well being of leaders and their staff. Resources, techniques and practical application skills will be highlighted and provided .



THE EQUITY LENS

**Claudia Rinaldi,
Ph.D.**

MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS IN THE SPECIAL EDUCATION PROCESS

Massachusetts special education leaders, educators are committed to increasing accountability for the education of school age students who are multilingual.

The session will guide participants to what is additional and different in the special education evaluation and eligibility process for multilingual learners. The session will present ways to address the current disproportionality of referrals, the role of MTSS in the process, the additional evaluation tools for students whose native language is not English, and how the results can connect to the IEP goals. Actionable steps for special education referral teams will be provided and critical resources for further study will be shared.



THE POLICY LENS

**Russell Johnston
Ph.D.**

SPECIAL EDUCATION POLICY AND PRACTICE

Mid-Year: Focusing on Strategies for Successful Outcomes for Students

This session will focus on state updates in special education from the lens of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, with an emphasis on policies and practices to promote equitable services and positive outcomes for all students.



THE LEGAL LENS

**Paige Tobin, Esq.
Murphy, Lamere and
Murphy, PC**

SPECIAL EDUCATION: LEGAL INSIGHTS

Mid-Year: The Current Challenges, What's it all about?

This session will discuss mid year trends and themes critical to special education coming from the BSEA, First Circuit and DESE. A robust discussion of new cases and how the decisions will impact the work of special education administrators and school special education team. The session will provide strategies and techniques for school special education team decision making in providing special education services to eligible students including highlighting the DO's and Do Not's of the process.