

STATEWIDE SPECIAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE

Topic :

Knowledge is Power:
Starting the School Year
Strong and Informed

📅 November 1, 2024

🕒 Check-in, Continental Breakfast 7:45
PROGRAM 8:45-3:50 PM
Light lunch will be served

📍 GPS:
Hogan Center at Holy Cross
(1 College St. Worcester)

Hogan Center Parking Lot: Park in any available spot.



KEYNOTE

**Russell D. Johnston,
Ph.D.**

Acting Commissioner, The
Massachusetts Department of
Elementary and Secondary
Education (DESE)



SPEAKER

**Torrey Trust,
Ph.D.**

Professor of Learning
Technology in the College of
Education at UMASS Amherst



SPEAKER

Iraida J. Alvarez

Acting Executive Director



SPEAKER

Jamie Camacho

Acting State Director
of Special Education



SPEAKER

Leon Smith, Esq.

Executive Director, Citizens for
Juvenile Justice



SPEAKER

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



ASE CONFERENCE

MA Administrators for Special Education

*I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did,
but people will never forget how you made them feel.*

-Maya Angelou



KEYNOTE

**Russell D. Johnston,
Ph.D.**

The New School Year: Starting Strong and Informed

Supporting and Creating Positive Learning Environments for All Massachusetts Students with a focus on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.



SPEAKER

Torrey Trust, Ph.D.
torrey@umass.edu

From the Technology Lens

AI in Special Education: Striking the Balance Between Innovation and Ethics

Generative AI technologies are becoming increasingly more popular in education, with more than half of U.S. teachers and K-12 students reporting using ChatGPT weekly in a recent study. This presentation explores how and why to bring AI into Special Education and the practical and ethical considerations (e.g., data privacy, AI bias, misinformation, digital divide) of doing so. Participants will leave the session with a deeper understanding of generative AI technologies and their impact on teaching and learning in the 21st century.

Torrey Trust, Ph.D. is a Professor of Learning Technology in the College of Education at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Dr. Trust has been a leading voice in exploring ChatGPT and AI in education and has been featured by several media outlets in articles and podcasts, including U.S. News & World Report, WIRED, Tech&Learning, The HILL, and EducationWeek.



SPEAKER

Paige Tobin, Esq.
**Murphy, Lamere and
Murphy, PC**
ptobin@m1mlawfirm.com

From the Legal Lens

The New School Year: Legal Challenges and Opportunities for Special Education as the New School Year Begins: Putting A Best Focus on Beginning the Year!

This session will focus on legal issues specific to the:

- New IEP
- Addressing discipline and health and safety needs of students with disabilities .
- Best practices -strategies and techniques in working with students and families in addressing special education legal requirements/services



SPEAKERS

Iraida J. Álvarez

Acting Executive Director

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From the State Lens

DESE: Promising Practices in Special Education

This session will focus on promising practices in special education from DESE that support schools and districts in improving outcomes and opportunities for students with disabilities.

The session will highlight strategies and techniques for advancements for Massachusetts school districts including:

- Special Education Leadership--Emphasis on Promising Practices across Massachusetts School Districts
- Special Education School-Based Team Decision Making
- Parent Engagement
- Promoting Student Voices



Jamie Camacho

Acting State Director of Education

jamie.l.camacho2@state.ma.us

From the Juvenile Justice Lens

School to Prison Pipeline and Special Education: The Massachusetts Data and Students With Disabilities : A Proactive Approach to Meeting Student Needs

This presentation will focus on the effects of the disproportionate use of school disciplinary exclusion and school based arrests leading to negative outcomes for students. The presentation will highlight the impact on students with disabilities and how the most vulnerable students enter the juvenile justice system in Massachusetts and address the role of trauma, how it manifests in classrooms and how the lack of trauma-responsive services, that address root causes of behavior, can lead to criminalizing young people for conduct that is, at its core, a treatment issue.

The presentation will culminate with a look at best practices being successfully employed in other jurisdictions across the country to address student needs while ensuring safe and supportive learning environments. It will provide strategies and techniques that are strength based for school teams to consider in addressing juvenile justice needs of students. The session will also provide a discussion on the proactive use of treatment for student behavior while ensuring the safe and supportive learning environments.



SPEAKER

Leon Smith, Esq.

Executive Director, Citizens for Juvenile Justice

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