



Education Possibility Day

May 8, 2025, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Puget Sound Educational Service District
800 Oakesdale Ave. SW, Renton WA 98057

Session Sponsors:



Session Objectives:

- Examine the challenges and disparities in Washington's education system, with a focus on understanding root causes and envisioning new strategies to advance equity.
- Explore the role of educational equity in shaping student outcomes, and identify ways to create more inclusive, accessible, and thriving learning environments for every student.
- Strengthen connections among educators, policymakers, and community leaders to fuel collective action toward educational transformation in our region.

May Session Prework:

Purpose of this Prework

In May, we will explore **equity, education, and leadership** through the lens of **pandemic recovery** and **long-term transformation**.

This prework is designed to:

- Equip you with essential context,
- Invite you to reflect on your educational journey, and
- Spark **bold thinking** and meaningful dialogue for our time together.

Context Setting – Read, Watch, and Reflect

Read:

- [KCDB 2024 News Release](#) (*attached*)
- ["Pivoting from Pandemic Recovery to Long-Term Reform: A District-Level Analysis"](#) – *Focus on pages 3–4 (attached)*
- [Washington takes 'historic' step toward full funding for special education](#)
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Watch:

- *What is the Opportunity Gap?* ([YouTube Video](#))

Review:

- [Education Recovery Scorecard – Washington State Data](#)
- [Proactive Equity Anti-Racism \(PEAR\) Team](#)

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Reflection Prompts

Please take time to reflect on the following questions. You will have an opportunity to discuss your insights into small group conversations.

Impact of the Pandemic

- What have you observed about the impact of the pandemic on learning loss and recovery?
- In your role or field, how are you, and how could we collectively move from recovery to long-term, transformative growth?

Bold Innovation:

- **What courageous shifts or innovations are we willing to imagine and champion to ensure every child in our region thrives? What's one idea you want to bring into the room to explore together?**

Personal Reflection: Mapping Your Educational Journey

- Create a simple map of your educational journey.
- Include significant learning experiences across your life, such as:
 - Preschool, K–12 schooling, colleges or universities
 - Professional training, certifications, and continuing education
 - Informal learning spaces like social movements, mentorship, self-directed learning, or community-based education

At the start of the session, you'll be invited to share either your educational journey or your reflections on what you believe your educational experiences should have been.

Session Overview

Time	Activity	Presenter(s)
9 a.m.	Welcome and Reconnection Land Acknowledgement	C. Marie Taylor LT'23 Sofia Voz LT'19
9:25 a.m.	Cohort Connection	LT' 25 Classmates
9:45 a.m.	Exploring Liberatory Conflict (Moving to 'We')	Lindsey T. H. Jackson LT'24
11:45 a.m.	Lunch	
12:30 p.m.	Education in Washington State	Sofia Voz LT'19 Dr. Kristin J. McCowan, Community Center for Education Results (CCER) Jake Vela, League of Education Voters
2:00 p.m.	Break	
2:15 p.m.	Lessons from the field – Small group discussions with Educational Field experts	Educational Field experts (See bios Below)
4:00 p.m.	Wrap-up & LT Updates	C. Marie Taylor LT'23 LT Team
4:15 p.m.	Optional Happy Hour – Berliner Pub 221 Main Ave S Renton, WA 98057	

Education Panel BIOS



Dr. Kristin McCowan, Senior Director - Research, Data and Impact Community Center for Education Results

As Director of Research Partnerships, Dr. Kristin McCowan guides strategy and applied research efforts that centers community and boldly leads with race. Working collaboratively with community, local researchers and education system leaders, Dr. McCowan supports the conceptualization, development, and implementation of innovative approaches to research and measurement. Kristin received her Master of Social Work degree in Policy, Planning and Administration from the University of Missouri-Columbia and her PhD in Social Welfare from University of Washington. As a practitioner, educator, researcher and facilitator, Dr. McCowan wears many hats inside and outside of the organization. Kristin's favorite places are The Station, Estelita's Library and Communion Restaurant and Bar.



Jacob Vela, Chief Policy Officer, League of Education Voters Jacob Vela's strong desire to get involved in the civic process led him to work in the election cycle in Nevada. That adventure compelled him to work as a legislative assistant in the Nevada Legislature, where he focused on civic engagement and electoral issues. The strong civic culture and beautiful scenery of the Great Northwest managed to lure him away from Nevada. After settling in Seattle, Jacob attended the Evans School of Public Affairs at the University of Washington. Prior to joining League of Education

Voters in 2011, Jacob worked with local nonprofits in strategic planning and working to develop policies to improve the quality of life of formerly homeless individuals in downtown Seattle. Jacob received his BA in political science and Spanish from the University of Nevada. He earned his Master of Public Administration from the Evans School of Public Affairs with a focus on policy analysis and urban policy. When not in the office, he can be found wandering the Cascades, enjoying Tacoma's parks, or honing his skills as a woodworker. He also enjoys introducing his one-year-old daughter to the happiness of being outdoors.

Educational Field Expert BIOS



Kalika Curry, Eastside Pathways

Kalika is the Executive Director of Eastside Pathways, a nonprofit organization based in Bellevue, Washington, dedicated to fostering equitable systems for children, youth, and young adults in East King County. She has been deeply involved in community impact and racial equity work, including leading the development of the organization's Racial Equity Pledge and facilitating various Collaborative Action Networks.

The Hon. Debra Entenman, Washington State House of Representatives



Rep. Entenman serves as a Democratic member of the Washington House of Representatives for the 47th District, a position she has held since January 14, 2019. Born on November 27, 1961, in Seattle, Washington, she earned an AA from Highline Community College in 2001 and a BA in Political Science from Seattle University in 2003. Before her legislative role, she worked for Congressman Adam Smith for 12 years, including as his District Director, and was appointed as a Trustee at Renton Technical College in 2015.

Lizbet Huizar, Southeast Seattle Education Coalition (SESEC)



Liz is the Executive Director of the Southeast Seattle Education Coalition (SESEC). She has dedicated her career to advancing education justice for communities historically excluded and underserved by formal systems. Liz brings years of experience working at the intersection of youth development, racial equity, and community organizing. In her previous role, she integrated Ethnic Studies frameworks into youth programs across King County, supporting young people in developing strong cultural identities and confident leadership skills. At SESEC, Liz leads coalition-building efforts to center the voices of BIPOC families and

community-based organizations in Southeast Seattle, working toward a more equitable and just education system. She is passionate about shifting power into community hands and believes that those most impacted must lead the solutions. Outside of work, Liz enjoys spending time with her family, being in nature, and watching a good Netflix series.



Marcel Jones, Garfield High School

As Marcel is a student at Garfield High School and a dedicated scholar-athlete. He plays varsity basketball and football and also competes in track and field. Known for his clutch performance in the 2024 state basketball tournament, Marcel is a strong team player and leader on and off the court. He maintains a 3.0 GPA and is committed to both his academics and athletics as he prepares college in the fall.



Trish Millines Dziko, Co-Founder & Executive Director, Technology Access Foundation (TAF)

Trish Millines Dziko is a change agent, mentor, and advocates for children of color. In 1996 she left her successful 17-year career in the tech industry to ensure students of color had the same opportunities she had. Trish is the cofounder, Executive Director, visionary and strategist behind the Technology Access Foundation (TAF), one of the leading education non-profits educating children of color to their full potential. In addition to leading TAF and raising four children with her spouse, Trish is a committed, proactive leader serving on

boards of organizations that focus on children, community, and education.



Japhia McRae, Garfield High School

Japhia McRae is a senior at Garfield High School and a Running Start student at Seattle Central College, where she is actively pursuing college coursework while completing her high school education. She plans to major in Forensic Psychology, which combines psychology and criminal justice to better understand criminal behavior, assess mental health in legal contexts, and support investigative work. Outside academics, Japhia enjoys spending time outdoors, reading, and exploring new activities that spark her curiosity and creativity.



Erin Okuno, Acting Director of the Washington State Office of Education Ombuds (OEO).

OEO provides alternative dispute resolution for public K-12 families, students, and educators. Her background includes early learning policy (birth-age five) and primary and secondary education (K-12) policy work, working with communities of color, facilitating conversations, and an interest in understanding race and how it impacts communities and public education. On the side, Erin enjoys borrowing too many books from the library and fretting about finishing them on time and finding the perfect take-out meal for under \$25.



Phelana Pang, Assistant Head of School, Seattle Girls' School (SGS)

Phelana is currently the Assistant Head at Seattle Girls' School, an independent school for girls and gender expansive students in 5th-8th grades. She taught in public high schools in California and independent schools in Texas and Saudi Arabia before joining SGS in 2014. She has a true passion for learning and supporting others in their learning and leading. As assistant head of school, Phelana supports teachers in growing their cultural competency and applies an equity lens into the structures and systems of an independent school.



Dr. Paul Sutton, Associate Professor of Education, Pacific Lutheran University (PLU)

Paul is an Associate Professor of Education at Pacific Lutheran University. He teaches courses on everything from the Sociocultural Foundations of education, which include ongoing conversations around race, power, and privilege, as well as methodological courses including the Secondary Humanities Methods course in Fall. He also serves as the university's Director of the First Year Experience Program to coordinate the required first year general education courses all first year students take at Pacific Lutheran University. He has been a teacher for over 25 years, including teaching posts on three different continents, and was a high school English teacher in the Bellevue School District before returning to school to earn a doctorate degree. He also co-hosts a podcast with Mr. Shomari Jones called Coffee With a Little Bit of Cream which focuses on issues of race, racial equity, and equality in the educational system with occasional forays into popular culture.

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