

WELCOME TO THE

THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA
INSTITUTE for EARLY
CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

*2nd Annual
Early Childhood Summit*

APRIL 4TH, 5TH, 6TH, 2024

*We're all
made of stories...*



THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA
INSTITUTE for EARLY
CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
RESEARCH • DEMONSTRATION • OUTREACH

Dear Summit Attendees,

On behalf of the University of Montana Institute for Early Childhood Education, welcome to our 2nd Annual Summit! We are delighted to host this gathering of local and state leaders, community and school professionals, faculty, and policymakers, all dedicated to enhancing the lives of young children and their families in Montana. At The University of Montana Institute for Early Childhood Education, we promote high-quality early learning opportunities for children from birth through age eight. Through our research, model demonstration, and community outreach efforts, we strive to create a better future for all children in our state.

At the heart of our work lies the understanding that we are all made of stories. These stories shape our experiences, beliefs, and actions, influencing how we perceive and interact with the world. Through the sharing of stories, we connect and learn from one another. Each story shared at this Summit is a testament to our collective wisdom and experience, offering insights and perspectives that can help us better support young children and families. By listening to and learning from each other's stories, we can cultivate understanding, and collaboration, creating a more inclusive and supportive environment for all children and families.

Thank you for joining us for this important event. Your participation and contributions are invaluable, and we look forward to a productive and inspiring Summit.

Warmly,



Allison Wilson, PhD
Associate Professor and Director
Institute for Early Childhood Education
Phyllis J. Washington College of Education





DR. KRISTIE KAUERZ

KEYNOTE SPEAKER AND FRIDAY WORKSHOP HOST

Dr. Kauerz is the executive director of the National P-3 Center and associate clinical professor at the University of Colorado Denver's School of Education and Human Development. Kristie specializes in education reform efforts that address the continuum of learning from birth through 3rd grade, integrating early care and education (ECE) system building and PreK-12 reforms.

Kristie's expertise spans policy, research, and practice. Her P-3 work is anchored in collaborations with school districts, state agencies, and early learning stakeholders. Her research interests straddle the paradigmatic, pedagogical, and policy divides that exist between ECE and PreK-12 systems. She has served as a policy advisor to two former Colorado governors, director of early learning at the Education Commission of the States, and director of PreK-3rd grade initiatives at Harvard Graduate School of Education. Before joining the faculty at CU Denver, she was at the University of Washington's College of Education.

POSTER DISPLAYS

THURSDAY APRIL 4TH

RESEARCH

1. *Turning the Lens in Early Childhood Teacher Education: Using GoPro Video to Focus Squarely on Children's Language Interactions*, Kate Brayko, Priyanka Bharadwaj, & Olivia Kersey-Bronec,
2. *"Much is up to the Listener": How ECE Blackfeet Teacher Candidates Engage the Authentic Literacy Component of an Indigenous Pedagogy Framework*, Lona Runningwolf, & Kate Brayko
3. *Project ELLO: Using Community Spaces to Promote Early Literacy*, Allison Wilson
4. *Building Language Intention with Pre-Service Early Childhood Teacher Candidates Through Data-Driven Action Planning*, Allison Wilson
5. *Refining our Curriculum Identity: Implementing Change Within Our University LAB School*, Allison Wilson, & Anna Puryear
6. *A Holistic Approach to Supporting Indigenous Children's Wellbeing Through Community-Engaged Research*, Jingjing Sun, Anisa Goforth, and the Project SELA Team
7. *Montana Early Intervention Statewide Needs Assessment*, Allison Wilson, & Christine Lux

DEMONSTRATION

1. *Monitoring Early Literacy in a Project-Based Learning Classroom Through an Improvement Science Approach*, Anna Puryear, & Allison Wilson
2. *Early Kindergarten Changes Lives at DeSmet School*, Lindsey McGhee, Carly Aho, Matthew Driessen, & Karen Allen

OUTREACH

1. *Strengthening a University - School District Partnership Through an Improvement Science Approach*, Allison Wilson, & Barbara Frank
2. *Journey Toward P3 Leadership in Montana*, Anna Puryear

Poster displays celebrate the recent work of UM ECE Institute faculty, student, and community catalysts through research, model demonstration, and community outreach.

POSTER DISPLAYS

THURSDAY APRIL 4TH



OUTREACH: MISSOULA EARLY LEARNING FELLOWS

In year three, the Missoula Early Learning Fellows are a growing network of Missoula County early learning leaders working with and on behalf of families and their children from birth - to age eight. Work intentionally focuses on ensuring all children arrive at kindergarten with equal opportunities to learn and thrive, with sustained opportunities throughout the early school years. Missoula Early Learning Fellows is co-facilitated between Zero to Five Missoula County and the UM Institute for Early Childhood Education. Be sure to visit posters featuring the work of some of our Fellows:

1. The Story of My Three-Year, Missoula Early Learning Fellows Experience, *Danielle Bailey, University of Montana LAB School*
2. My Missoula Early Learning Fellows Story: Three Years in the Making, *Sheila V. Devins, Seeley Lake Elementary*
3. Early Literacy in Missoula County Public Schools, *Melissa Lynn, Missoula County Public Schools*
4. Three Years as a Fellow, *Doug Rossberg, Missoula County Public Schools*
5. 1000 Books Before Kindergarten, *Kayla Whitaker, Missoula Public Library*
6. My First Year Fellows Story, *Emily Bogartz-Brown, Missoula Food Bank and Community Center*
7. My Three Year Fellows Story, *Katie Little, Families First*

ARTICLE FEATURE

In Conversation: A Love Letter to a Banned Teacher Resource Text
Montana State Literacy Association

Dr. Kate Brayko
Associate Professor, Literacy
University of Montana



Scan to read our article
in Literacy Voices, 2003



Dr. Allison Wilson
Associate Professor, ECE
University of Montana



2024 AWARD WINNERS

THURSDAY APRIL 4TH

RESEARCH

EXCELLENCE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Research does not exist without meaningful data. Grace Decker's incredible work to bring the KEA to Missoula County translates into an invaluable data set that has connected with so many as a source for action research in understanding community strengths, and opportunities for change initiatives within and across nested systems that make up our community organizations, early learning, and our public schools. This work seeds future research endeavors that will continuously support equitable opportunities for children and families in Montana.



MODEL DEMONSTRATION

EXCELLENCE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Aaron Cashmore is a passionate advocate for strengths-based, play-based learning and serves as the co-founder of Canvas Early Learning Center in Dillon, MT. Canvas ELC is a recipient of a Childcare Innovations Grant, in collaboration with the University of Montana Western and the Early Childhood Coalition of Beaverhead County. This grant, aimed at expanding strengths-based, play-based learning and quality childcare in our community, is a testament to the passion of all stakeholders involved. Aaron's dedication has been crucial to the success of this grant and the innovation of childcare in our community.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

EXCELLENCE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

DEAP's Childhood Education team goes above and beyond to promote early intervention, Child Find activities. They adjust their work schedules, cancel vacations, drive in all types of weather and travel the back roads of eastern Montana to ensure families are served. They ensure that medical facilities, childcare, Head Start, CPS, tribal offices, and other social services agencies have the information they need for the referral process. Both Sherry Taylor and Sandy Peaslee have been employed at DEAP for well over 30 years and continue to work to find new referral sources and maintain current relationships.



2024 AWARD WINNERS

THURSDAY APRIL 4TH

HEALTHY START

EXCELLENCE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION



The Mineral County Parents as Teachers (PAT) program goes above and beyond to support young children and their families through a trauma-informed approach. The PAT team braides funding sources to make home visiting universally available to all Mineral County families. Home visitors are all trained birthing doulas, and provide free services to any Mineral County family. They offer birth education classes individually to families who cannot attend classes elsewhere. In a county with no birthing hospitals or OBGYN services, and only one part-time pediatrician, they have become families' go-to experts for all things pregnancy and newborn/toddler stages in Mineral County. They provide opportunities for connection, emotional support, resource referrals, child development information and guidance, and so much more to the families of young kids in Mineral County.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

EXCELLENCE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Collette Box is a force in early childhood. Since 1995, she has directed the first STAR 5 facility in Montana (awarded in 2001), which is also accredited by NAEYC. She has worked tirelessly to receive grants for small projects (creating a nature outdoor playground) and big projects (building a new facility in 2005 and a new van/bus in 2023) and has kept her center open and thriving (despite the many challenges of COVID-19). She sits on the Advisory Council for the early childhood program at FVCC and is on the steering committee for the Early Childhood Coalition of Flathead Valley. Collette participates in career days with local high schools, is working on supporting apprenticeship programs, and is now becoming more active in legislative work. She is a lead learner in every sense with over 33 years in the field!



FRIDAY APRIL 5TH

UNIVERSITY CENTER, SOUTH BALLROOM

Writing Our Story: How HB352 is Expanding Early Literacy Opportunities for Montana's Children

State leaders will share the intent behind House Bill 352, an act establishing early literacy-targeted interventions (home, classroom-based, summer jumpstart), and guidance for implementation.

PANEL MODERATOR



Caitlin Jensen, Executive Director
Zero to Five Montana

GUEST SPEAKER



Rep. Brad Barker
(R) HD 58

GUEST SPEAKER



Sen. Shannon O'Brien
(D) SD 46

PANELIST



McCall Flynn
Executive Director
MT Board of Public Education

PANELIST



Dr. Rob Watson
Executive Director
School Administrators of MT

PANELIST



Dr. Christine Lux
Associate Professor
Montana State University

PANELIST



Marie Judisch
Senior Manager
Teaching and Learning OPI

PANELIST



Alex DuBois
Policy and Engagement
Zero to Five Montana

FRIDAY APRIL 5TH

UNIVERSITY CENTER, SOUTH BALLROOM

Real Life Stories: Literacy Collaboration and Partnership Across Montana

This panel, facilitated by UM Associate Professor, Dr. Kate Brayko, will highlight unique stories of early literacy partnerships in Livingston, Great Falls, Bozeman, and Missoula.

PANEL MODERATOR



Dr. Kate Brayko
Associate Professor of Literacy
University of Montana

PANELIST



Colette Getten
Early Childhood Coordinator
Great Falls Public Schools

PANELIST



Megan Roth
Bozeman Reads Coordinator
Bozeman School District

PANELIST



Barbara Frank
Director of Academic and
Community Services
Missoula County Public Schools

PANELIST



Anne Penn Cox
Principal & Early Childhood Liaison
Livingston Public Schools

PANELIST



Rachel Gott
MCLSDP Program Manager
Office of Public Instruction

FRIDAY APRIL 5TH

UNIVERSITY CENTER, SOUTH BALLROOM



1:10 - 2:00 PM

Missoula Kindergarten Entry Assessment: Our Story of Children, Families, and Community

*Grace Decker, Montana Budget & Policy Center,
Coordinator, Montana Advocates for Children*

2:10 - 4:00 PM

Leadership for Strong Early Childhood Systems: Preschool - Third Grade

*Dr. Kristie Kauertz, Executive Director
National P-3 Center*



FRIDAY APRIL 5TH

PJW College of Education Room 241



1:10 - 2:00 PM

Moving Through Math: An Arts Integrated Instructional Program

*Karin Bartels, Instructional Coach
Missoula County Public Schools*

2:10 - 4:00 PM

Play with Early Literacy: Intentional Experiences Through Project Based Learning

*Danielle Bailey, Early Childhood Clinical Specialist
UM LAB Schoolt*

*Dr. Kate Brayko, UM Associate Professor
Department of Teaching and Learning*



Project ELLO
www.helloello.org



Everyday Language and Learning Opportunities is a research-based public engagement campaign.

ELLO has the overarching goal of increasing the number of quality, language-rich interactions between caregivers and young children. ELLO connects with home routines and community spaces routinely accessed by families such as the grocery store, laundry mats, public transit, libraries, and outdoor spaces. Resources encourage caregivers to talk with their children and are thematically tailored to familiar routines and community settings. Intentionally embedding opportunities for conversations throughout everyday routines can empower all caregivers to realize how much they can benefit their child's life through something completely free, talking!

FREE conversation card sets for children and families are available to take home from the Summit today!



WWW.HELLOELLO.ORG



*Reimagining Everyday
Language Learning: A
Community-Based
Participatory Approach,*
Allison Wilson



Scan to visit our website,
learn about partnerships,
and access FREE resources
for everyday language and
learning opportunities



SATURDAY APRIL 6TH
PJW COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ALI AUDITORIUM

Every Child Ready to Learn & Daily Literacy Routines



Trainers from the Lee Pesky Learning Center will facilitate a workshop that supports classroom teachers in building a strong foundation of literacy skills. Participants will gain ideas and resources that are easy to implement to foster critical literacy skills purposefully and playfully. The workshop will focus on language and vocabulary, phonological (sound) awareness, print awareness, and strategies for daily literacy routines. Participants will receive materials to take back to their classrooms.

Location: PJW College of Education ALI Auditorium

Time: 8:45 - 3:15 (breakfast 8:00 - 9:00)

Meals: Breakfast and Lunch will be provided

Credit: OPI and ECP Credits will be available



SATURDAY APRIL 6TH

PJW COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ALI AUDITORIUM

A Conversation Roadmap for Talking with Families About Their Child's Development



Dr. Catherine Knowles-O'Brien is a developmental educator with extensive experience and expertise in the early childhood fields of early intervention (EI), early childhood growth, development, education (ECE), and parent, family, and community engagement (PFCE). Catherine brings experience as both a program and building administrator in EI (IDEA) and public schools working closely with faculty, staff members, babies, toddlers, young children, and their families, and communities. Catherine has been with the Brazelton Touchpoints Center at Boston Children's Hospital since 2015, as a resource developer and trainer at the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement and as a BTC Staff Facilitator.

Conversations about developmental screening results and concerns can be time-consuming and anxiety-provoking for families and pediatric primary care providers, early educators, and home visitors. Yet the benefits are clear: when families and their child's providers have productive conversations about a child's development, they are better equipped to work as a team to co-create and follow through on a collaborative plan that supports the best outcomes for the child. This 3-hour, interactive workshop introduces participants to the Roadmap and its focus on honoring families' knowledge of their children. We explore why providers and families sometimes have differences of opinion about children and screenings. We will practice strengths-based ways to invite all perspectives into the conversation and move ahead with equitable shared decision-making.

Location: PJW College of Education ALI Auditorium

Time: 9:00 - 12:15 (breakfast 8:00 - 9:00)

Meals: Breakfast and Lunch will be provided

Credit: OPI and ECP Credits will be available



This nationally renowned training is brought to Montana through DPHHS and the PDG Bright Futures Birth to Five Grant.

THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA INSTITUTE for EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

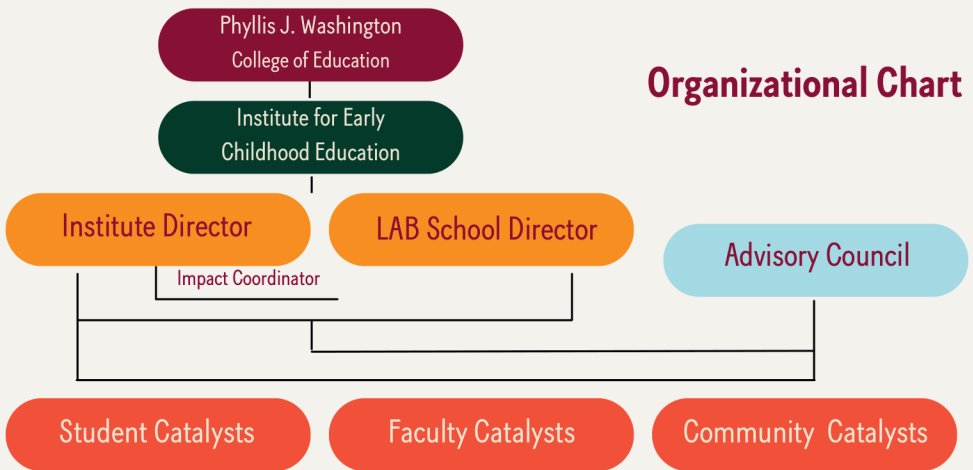


Our Mission of Research, Demonstration, and Community Outreach

Anchored in the values and core beliefs put forth by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the goal of advancing a diverse, dynamic, early childhood profession and support for all who care for, educate, and work on behalf of young children and their families the University of Montana Institute for Early Childhood Education will:

- foster collaboration among university faculty with a common interest and commitment to research with early childhood populations
- model demonstration of research-based, high-quality practices through the Learning and Belonging (LAB) School and community school partnerships
- promote research to practice across degree programs, local classrooms, informal learning spaces, and community settings
- engage in productive, collaborative relationships with local, state, and regional stakeholders

Organizational Chart



Advisory Council: Supports the overall well-being and strategic direction of the Institute for Early Childhood Education and is a direct link between the goals of the Institute and opportunities for impact. The Advisory Council represents early childhood stakeholders within our community so that the Institute may remain responsive to the priorities and needs of young children and families in Montana and our greater region.

Catalysts: Student, Faculty, and Community members who are an extension of the Advisory Council and include diverse, interdisciplinary content experts with overlapping interests in promoting positive outcomes for young children (birth-age eight) and their families through model demonstration, cutting-edge research, and community outreach.

Meet our team!



Dr. Allison Wilson
Director & Associate Professor



Kristin Dahl Horejsi, MEd
Director, LAB School



Anny Brown,
Impact Coordinator



Dr. Christine Lux
Associate Professor, MSU
Advisory Council Member



Grace Decker
Montana Budget and Policy Center
Advisory Council Member



Karen Allen
Retired MCPS Leadership
Advisory Council Member



Caitlin Jensen
Executive Director
Zero to Five Montana
Advisory Council Member



Barbara Frank
MCPS Director of Academic &
Community Services
Advisory Council Member

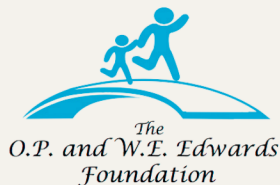


Recruiting three additional Advisory Council Members

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS & SPONSORS



DENNIS & PHYLLIS
WASHINGTON
FOUNDATION



Special thanks to Anny Brown, UM Institute for ECE Impact Coordinator, and Anna Puryear, UM ECE Doctoral Fellow, for their support in organizing our 2nd Annual Summit