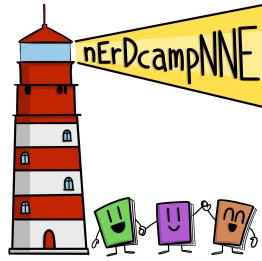


NerdcampNNE 2025 Presentations



For the first time, NerdcampNNE will be offering one 45-minute preplanned block of sessions presented by outstanding local and regional educators and literacy leaders.

Leveraging Decodable Texts~Marie Munteer Bailey 301 Classroom

Marie will lead participants through the key research around decodable texts and their power for the earliest readers—including typically developing students as well as those with difficulty learning to read. Participants will learn about how decodable texts fit with high-impact instructional practices, including the time in children's reading development when decodable texts are most beneficial (and when they're not!). In addition to learning replicable, practical ways to use decodable texts alongside any core phonics or reading curriculum, participants will leave with a clear understanding of the difference between leveled and decodable texts, how to evaluate decodable texts, and how to use decodable texts in assessment-based instruction.

Marie Munteer is a literacy consultant and co-founder of Daffodil Hill Press, an independent publisher and literacy collaborative. A former New York City public school teacher, Marie works in schools across the country to implement literacy instruction that makes an impact. In addition to creating inclusive, engaging decodable books and instructional resources with the DHP team, she has particular expertise in supporting multilingual learners and in practical, concrete ways to support comprehension in the middle grades.

Driven by Curiosity: Motivating Students to Read Nonfiction~Cathy Potter Bailey 301 Open Area

Informational texts can inspire curiosity, spark inquiry, and help students see the world in new ways. This session will provide educators with practical strategies to elevate nonfiction in their classrooms and libraries. Discover how to curate high-quality collections, promote nonfiction in creative ways, and connect readers with nonfiction texts. You'll leave with a toolkit of new ideas, book recommendations, and approaches to making nonfiction an important part of your school's reading culture.

Cathy Potter has been an educator for 30 years. She is currently a school librarian and tech integrator at Falmouth Middle School. Cathy is a National Board Certified Teacher and reviewed

nonfiction on the Nonfiction Detectives blog for ten years. She has served on several book award committees including the 2018 Newbery Award Committee and the 2022 Sibert Award Committee, which she chaired.

Children's Literature as a Gateway to Social-Emotional Learning: How Stories of Identity and Culture Build Social Comprehension For All~ Melissa Guerrette and Kirsten Cappy

Bailey 206

In this time of othering and unbelonging, how do we help students find themselves in the stories of others? How do our classroom literacy experiences help students navigate both their own social-emotional growth, and the racial and cultural landscape of their classrooms, homes, and the broader community? Because we aspire to prepare students to thrive as critical thinkers and empathetic leaders, it is crucial that we support their development of strong literacy skills AND robust social comprehension skills in our classrooms today. Using all-ages picture books featured in the PINE Project: Professional Development, story-enthusiasts Melissa Guerrette, National Board Certified Teacher, and Kirsten Cappy, Executive Director of I'm Your Neighbor Books, will facilitate a hands-on workshop in which you will interact with texts, plan forward for your classrooms, and swap ideas that can be used when you return on Monday.

Kirsten Cappy is the Executive Director I'm Your Neighbor Books. Honored by the Maine Education Association, the nonprofit cultivates welcoming behaviors and builds a sense of belonging in communities by increasing access to and engagement with Immigrant and New Generation children's literature. The nonprofit's Welcoming Library project received an American School Library Association commendation for creating a 'culture of welcoming and belonging' in US schools. She is a co-creator of the Pine Project Professional Development which uses Welcoming Library picture books to increase educator's capacity to include race, culture, exclusion, and inclusion in their SEL teaching. With Congolese educator Yaya Gentille, Kirsten has released the award-winning multilingual picture book Kende! Kende! Kende!, the story of a Congolese family's migration to America's Northeast.

Melissa Guerrette is a National Board Certified Teacher with 24 years of teaching experience in grades 4-6 at Oxford Elementary School (MSAD #17). Melissa is the 2021 Oxford County Teacher of the Year and was named the 2025 Claudette and John Brassil Distinguished Educator by the Maine Council for English Language Arts. Melissa is a member of the Teach Maine Center Design Team and NCTE's Classroom Corridors publication team and serves on committees related to reading communities, ELA curricula, teacher leadership and school improvement in MSAD17. She has created more than a dozen educator guides for tradebook publishers and was a lead consultant and contributor to the Pine Project Professional Development modules. Her professional passion is empowering students and helping them uncover their identities--as readers, as writers, and as people--for themselves.

Navigating Tricky Behavior with Compassion: Building Classroom Community from Day One~Becca Burk

Bailey 202

At the start of the year, behavior challenges can feel overwhelming—but they are also opportunities to build trust, connection, and a positive classroom culture. Drawing from her work with *Sticky Hope*, special educator Becca Burk will guide participants through practical, hope-centered strategies for addressing tricky behavior with empathy and consistency. This interactive session will highlight the role of literature in building emotional intelligence and self-regulation, exploring how carefully chosen texts can spark conversations, offer models of coping, and create shared language for navigating challenges. Participants will engage with real-world examples, reflect on their practice, and walk away with concrete tools—grounded in literacy and compassion—to foster inclusion, maintain dignity, and strengthen relationships from the very first day.

Becca Burk is a Maine-based educator with over a decade of experience in early childhood and elementary teaching, currently a special education teacher with a focus on supporting significant behaviors. She is the co-founder of Sticky Hope, a trauma-informed initiative supporting teachers with behavior challenges, and a contributing writer for *Choice Literacy*. Becca is committed to equity, empathy, and inclusive learning for all. She lives in Maine with her husband, foster children, and adopted children, where love and learning lead the adventures they go on daily.