Kicks off our learning series on co-creating solutions, addressing engagement and attendance challenges with historically underserved populations. Next slide. I'm Jarle Crocker. I'm the project director of SEAC, and we also like to thank the other staff who work with us and make these learning series possible.

First off we always want to make sure we acknowledge our program officers and colleagues from the Department of Education, Dr. Tracey Scott, Bryan Keohane and Liz Lembo and also my co-director from the American Institutes for Research, Sarah Frazelle, and all the other staff working behind the scenes to make this learning series possible.

Thank you so very much for all of your hard work and effort. Next slide.

To give you a quick learning series overview, we are going to have three sessions in this series. The first one today is going to focus on the Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family and School Partnerships. In a week, we'll have our second session that's going to focus on working with Statewide Family Engagement Centers to support state and local strategies.

It's going to be at the same time. And then our sessions three is going to focus on working at the community and school level to co-create engagement strategies with historically underserved populations, and that is June 18th, also at the same time. Next slide. Our overall objectives for the learning series are up on the screen.

First off we're going to focus on understanding the historical context and systemic barriers to engagement within school systems faced by underserved populations. We're also going to focus on gaining an understanding of the Dual Capacity Framework and how it can be applied to enhance collaboration with underserved populations and empower families and schools.

And lastly we'll focus on developing strategies to foster authentic and equitable partnerships between families and schools within underserved communities. Next slide. In session one today, we have a couple of specific objectives that build on those in the previous slides. First, we'll begin by defining historically underserved populations.

Then we're going to do a deep dive into the Dual Capacity Framework for family and school partnerships to see how it applies to these populations. And then third, we're going to explore approaches for co-creating engagement strategies with historically underserved populations to improve student engagement and success. **Commented [EB1]:** Title Case? Working With Statewide Family Engagement Centers to Support State and Local Strategies Next slide. For our agenda today, we're just about to wrap up our introduction, then we're going to turn to an introduction of the Dual Capacity Framework. Then we're going to look at the Dual Capacity Framework in action, how it's been applied with the Richmond Public Schools, and then we'll do a brief wrap up.

And with that, I want to turn it over to my colleague from AIR, David Blumenthal, to kick us off. Take it away, David. Thank you so much, Jarle. My name is David Blumenthal. I'm a member of the Student Engagement and Attendance Center team, and I want to begin this learning series by defining what it is we mean by talking about historically underserved populations.

We use that term throughout this series to refer to groups or individuals that have historically not been served well by public educational systems. It's not our intent to list and offer guidance on all such populations, and those populations are often geographically dependent.

There's a lot of local context that goes into what it means to be historically underserved. We list populations here as examples. And these are historically underserved populations that differ and can't really be generalized to other locales in all situations. The definition that you do see draws from the 2021 Executive Order on Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities through the Federal Government, Section 2B.

The term underserved communities refers to population sharing a particular characteristic as well as geographic communities that have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social and civic life. This is exemplified by the list and the preceding definition of equity that appears in the executive order.

There's been extensive research and data that's been collected by many different organizations, the U. S. Department of Education, individual, state, and local educational agencies, many of which you all work for as participants, that have shown that persistent gaps exist in access to opportunities and programs, gaps in academic achievement.

And disproportionate use of disciplinary and exclusionary practices for underserved populations, such as these. The systematic inequities over time contribute to disengagement from and distrust of public educational systems. This learning series will address various ways in which public educational systems can engage with and co-create strategies to improve educational outcomes for students from historically underserved populations.

The learning series is going to include three different sessions, including this first session. We're starting the session with two national leaders on the topic of family engagement, Doctors Karen Mapp and Dr. Shadae Thomas Harris. SEAC refer you know, seeks out and connects participants. We want to get each of you participants to be able to connect with each other as much as possible throughout the learning series.

Today's session you know, features two outstanding presenters and is a little more content rich than the other sessions in this series. So I encourage all of you to to join us next week when we're going to be hearing from others on this very topic. We think it's important to start this series by providing appropriate grounding, and I encourage all of you to join us for all three sessions of the learning series.

Let's introduce our presenters. Over the past 20 years, Karen Mapp's research and practice focus has been on the cultivation of partnerships among families. community members, and educators that support student achievement and school improvement. She served as the co-coordinator of the Community Organizing and School Reform Research Project and as a core faculty member in the Doctorate in Educational Leadership program at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

She's a founding member of the District Leaders Network on Family Community Engagement, as well as the National Family and Community Engagement Working Group. As well as the trustee in the Hyams Foundation in Boston, Massachusetts. She's also on the National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement Board, and the Institute for Educational Leadership in Washington, D.C. From 2011 to 2013, Dr. Mapp served as a consultant on family engagement to the United States Department of Education in the Office of Innovation and Improvement. She holds a doctorate and master's in education from Harvard, a master's in education from Southern Connecticut State University, and a bachelor's degree in psychology.

From Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut. Dr. Shadae Thomas Harris is a professor in residence at Virginia State University and is the former chief engagement officer of Richmond Public Schools. She recently founded Groundwork Consulting. Dr. Harris has spent her career building authentic and meaningful relationships with families and communities and working towards educational equity for all students.

Especially communities of color that have been underserved. Prior to joining Richmond Public Schools in 2018, Dr. Harris completed her doctorate of education leadership at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, where she had the opportunity to collaborate with Richmond Public Schools, the Virginia Department of Justice, and the Virginia Governor's Children's Cabinet to implement policy and program improvements for students whose education had been interrupted due to court charges.

Previously, Dr. Harris served as an elementary school principal, as well as a fourth grade teacher, sharing her bachelors in education and child study from Smith College, in addition to her doctoral degree, holds a master's in education from Harvard University. I'm very honored by both of them making the time out of their busy schedules to be presenters here today with all of you.

Without further ado, I'd really like to turn it over to Dr. Mapp. We'll present on the Dual Capacity Framework and how it was developed and applies to cocreating family engagement strategies with historically underserved populations. Dr. Mapp. Thank you, David. Really appreciate you and all the staff that worked so hard to put this together.

So I wanted to at least give you all a shout out. Thank you so much. And so good day, everyone. Thank you for joining us. I need to take about 24 minutes to go through what I hope will be information and learning that will help you think about your own practice. Around family and community engagement and so let me just quickly, let's see if we can get these slides to move forward.

There we go. So, the, my portion of the presentation, I'm going to very quickly define family engagement because a lot of times when I talk to people, the definitions are similar, but, possibly not quite the same. I also want to talk a little bit about what we know from the research about why family engagement is important.

I am going to be concentrating on family engagement today and then we're going to move to an explanation of the dual capacity building framework, which really talks about what conditions you need to put in place your organizations need to put in place so that you can really build and cultivate partnerships with families that are effective. And when I say effective, that they impact in a positive way, our students in our schools. So defining family engagement. So what I want to say is that this definition was created by the very populations that David talked about. A lot of our underserved families worked with in partnership with. The folks from the State Department in Connecticut, with teachers, with policymakers, on a definition that they all could agree on. And you'll see some key terms here that families really insisted would be a part of it, considering that for decades, and some would say for generations, they have been pushed away from real meaningful conversations about how we do school.

And so the families really wanted the definition to say that engagement is really a full equal and equitable partnership, full meaning families are encouraged to be engaged on a lot of different levels that they're not just relegated to being part of bake sales and you know, multicultural dinner nights that they're actually involved very much in what we would say is the teaching and learning aspects of what we're trying to do in our schools.

Equal where we see our families as equal partners, meaning that we are really honoring everybody's founts of knowledge. So our educators bring a set of knowledge. Our families bring a set of knowledge. Our community members bring a set of knowledge and all of those are seen as equally important. And then finally, that the partnership is equitable, meaning that for a lot of our families who can't come to the school, work 2 or 3 jobs you know, live in rural communities, that we're really working hard to make sure that they can be engaged and stay engaged.

And the reason when we do engagement is really to promote children's learning and development from birth to college and career. So, one of the things I'm going to be emphasizing when I talk about the dual capacity framework is that we don't just do family engagement as a public relations initiative. It really is a part of it's a strategy for how we reach our goals that we're trying to get to

with our kids in terms of their success. So a lot of times when I visit districts, which I still do a lot, and I actually visit districts and ministries of education, I do take this work internationally now in Australia and Mexico, Brazil, some of the places I've been to. One of the things that I see that's similar is that a lot of times people say to me, you know, Oh, Dr.

Mapp. You know, we're doing family engagement. Really what they're doing is family involvement. And let me talk a little bit about what's the difference between involvement versus engagement. And you're going to hear this in Dr. Harris's presentation as well. When we say involvement, involvement are really those kinds of activities that are one way.

So we're really, it's a very transactional relationship between educators and families. So it focuses on individual responsibility and you hear this a lot of

times. It's sort of the deficit-based language about families. We gave our families these tasks to do and they didn't do it. You know, we, it's just one way communication.

We're not really interested in two way. We're giving them tasks. We want them to take up the task and that's it. There isn't much space provided for families to really weigh in on anything. So, there's listening to families is really a low priority. And then, It focuses a lot on programming and not people, and we're going to be talking about how a focus on building trust is really important.

And again, like I said, the relationship is very transactional. I give you something to do, you do it, I'm satisfied, and then we move on. Engagement is different. Engagement is where we're looking at building a collective, and that we have collective responsibility. We lean on each other. We're partnering with each other.

There's lots of opportunities created for two-way communication. We're listening to families tell us what they know about their kids. That's what we call parent knowledge. So their knowledge is really honored and valued. We're really focusing on collaborative practice. So we create opportunities where we're sitting together, talking together, learning from each other.

And the relationship is really transformative, where we as educators allow ourselves to learn a lot about our families and because we've built that relationship where our families now see us listening and respecting them and honoring them, they're also willing to learn from us as well. So Larry Ferlazzo is an author who talks about sort of this difference between involvement and engagement.

And he says that, you know, those of us who are in partnership. So we're saying we're in partnership with our families, but if we're about involvement, basically, we're leading with our mouths. We're doing all the talking all the communicating, not honoring family voice at all. But if we're really about engagement, then we're really listening with our ears.

We're giving ourselves the opportunity to listen to our families. And so that's a real big difference. And I want you to be thinking about, as Dr. Harris and I talk about, you know, what does this look like in your settings? Are there opportunities where families get to weigh in and we get to gather their knowledge and learn?

You know, our families are their experts on their children. They're their children's first teachers. And a lot of times they know things about their children that would be really helpful for us to know if we're really intending to be the best educators that we can be. So what have we learned about the impact?

I'm going to go through this very quickly. This is some of the things that we've learned from the research on family engagement. I just published a book with some of my colleagues it's called Everyone Wins. And these are findings from us looking at over 40 studies on the impact of family engagement, but not just on students, which is all the research that we used to have.

So, some of you may know that Anne Henderson and I wrote a book called A New Wave of Evidence about 20 years ago. Well, we decided to write a new book for mainly practitioners so that you would have all the up to date research on the impact of family engagement. But what we found now is that the impact isn't just with our students, and here's some of the things that we see when we are engaged in partnerships with our families when it comes to student outcomes.

But we now also know that family engagement actually has positive impacts on our educators. And one of the things that I really love, one of the studies that we feature talks about how when we engage in partnership with each other, when educators and families are talking about student outcomes, working on challenges together.

That those deficit-based mindsets that we may have about each other dissolve and disappear. I often talk about how relationships are the vaccine against deficit-based thinking, you know, we've talked a lot about vaccines of the past 4 years. And so, consequently, these are some of the things that we see when we have that engagement culture in our schools in our districts.

One of the other things we see is that our educators don't want to leave schools that have that kind of culture. So that's a real big piece of a return on investment when you have that kind of partnership. Families when they're engaged with us. It really helps them with their relationships with their own children.

They have better rapport with teachers and school staff. They start making these deep connections with each other. So, we talk about social capital, their social capital is built, or built on, because they already have it, so it's enhanced. Schools, more positive school climates, and I want to jump to this slide because some of you may be familiar with the work out of the Chicago Consortium for School Research.

And they studied about 10 years ago, the recipe for school improvement, the recipe for successful classrooms, so that rectangle you see in the right-hand corner represents the classroom and the relationship between the teacher, the student and the content. It's called the instructional core. That's what the IC stands for.

They were trying to figure out why is it that some schools and classrooms thrive and others don't. And they found that if the school embraces what they call the five essential supports, that you see improvements. And what are the five? Leadership, professional capacity, meaning everybody in the building wants to be a part of a professional community, from the custodians on up.

We have good instructional guidance. We have a student centered versus an adult centered learning climate. But look at what's also there. Parent and community ties, meaning that these researchers found out that relationship between home and school is a key ingredient to the success of the school, not an add on, not something that we do or when we have time.

It's a key strategy, a key ingredient to the success of the student and the school. We were jumping for joy when this research came out because we had always known all along that this engagement piece was a part of teaching and learning. It's not separate from it. And so this validated that. This is a slide I'm going to skip over.

It's basically a quote from the book Organizing Schools from Improvement Lessons from Chicago. It basically says that it's really tempting to look at one of those ingredients separately, as a silver bullet, but it's really the interaction of those five ingredients like in a cake that makes for this success.

And then last but not least, there's big wins for our districts and our communities and Dr. Harris will be sort of talking about the impact of an engagement strategy on the schools and the community at large. So what kind of practice do we need to embrace to have these full, equal, and equitable partnerships?

Right after COVID in 2021, I was asked by the Carnegie Corporation to write a piece that was basically a call to action on family and community engagement. And this piece features the dual capacity framework for family school partnerships. But one of the things I want you to think about is,

I wanted to use language, exciting language, about when we think about partnerships now, what do we need to think about in terms of how we feel about

them? What's the excitement that should be brought to bear when we are thinking about creating partnerships with our families using the framework?

And so the practices that we embrace now need to be liberatory, solidarity driven, and equity focused. And I just want you to think for a moment what do those terms mean to you? Maybe we could we can have a few people put those terms in a chat, or put them in the Padlet that's been created. It's like, what, when you hear the term liberatory, what does that mean to you?

I'm hearing, so Amanda is saying affirming, and solidarity driven. What does that mean to you? We've already talked a little bit about equity focused, right? But I wanted to use these words because I really wanted people to feel, what do these partnerships need to feel like? As freeing, where everybody can come to the table and be their whole selves,

right? And so empowering. Thanks, Brendan. So how do we get there? How do we move towards that? It's one thing to say that's our North Star. We want our partnerships to be, you know, liberatory, solidarity driven and equity focused, but how do we get there? And that's where the Dual Capacity Building Framework comes in.

And I created this framework, some of you may remember in 2011, the first dual capacity framework came out and that was in partnership with the U. S. Department of Education. I was given the wonderful opportunity to work with Secretary Duncan and others on creating a tool for the field that would provide some insights to people about what does effective high impact practice really look like, how do we go from doing things that maybe we've always been doing that haven't worked to using the research as our guide to find what does effective practice look like, what should we be doing instead of those old traditional ways of family engagement where we do something and get two, parents to show up, right?

So, I designed the first framework in 2011. It was published in 2013. And then what I did was I went on a listening and learning tour for 5 years to see, okay, how's this framework working? Does it make sense to people? What would I change to make sure that it's better serving folks? And in 2019, I published this framework.

Well, we all know what happens in 2020, right? And people came to me and said, Oh, Dr. Mapp, what are you going to do now? COVID and the racial uprising and with the death of George, the murder of George Floyd. I mean,

these things all had an impact on relationships between home and school. What are you going to do now?

And I thought for a moment and I said, you know what, actually, instead of me having to change the framework to meet this moment, the moment has actually now met the framework because all of the things that happened in 2020 served as a forcing function for people to finally realize that engagement with families was key to the success of schools.

So now, people were more interested in the framework because the framework helped them identify what effective practice should actually look like. So this is the full framework. It's set up sort of like a logic model. And in the first column, we know usually in a logic model, we identify the challenges.

And what we know is that educators have not been exposed to strong examples of family engagement. Most educators have received minimal training. Whenever I do these workshops in person and I ask people who in the room has been a classroom teacher or who has had, you know, some experience in schools, even as a school counselor, and I ask them, how many of you received any training on engaging with families in your pre service programs?

And normally, if there's 300 people in the room, maybe five hands will go up. Doing this work is a skill. And so what we have to do and organizations like NAFSCE and others are trying to do something about making sure that now practitioners are trained in the area of family engagement. And when you don't, when you're not trained, you don't see it as an effective practice or essential.

And when you try things that don't work, a lot of times people will say, even those who have good intentions may start to say, well, you know, it's got to be the parents. That's the reason why this isn't working. And on the parents side, and when I say parent or family, by the way, we mean all adult caretakers.

They've also not been exposed to great family engagement examples. Many of them have had negative experiences, they're not invited to contribute, again, they can come to the bake sales, but when we start talking about teaching and learning, a lot of times our families are left out and they may just feel downright disrespected by school.

So what do we do? This is really the meat and potatoes of the framework. This is where we've identified, using the research because this is a research-based framework, what are the essential conditions that you need to put in place in

order to cultivate these effective partnerships? And so we have two sets of conditions.

The process conditions are the steps that every single one of you on this call can take to embed in your own practice to start to build effective partnerships. But the organizational conditions are what your organizations need to do to provide the systems and structures so that the process conditions can thrive and be sustained.

And so I want to point out here in the process conditions, the number one condition that we have that a lot of times gets skipped over. And that is: you have to intentionally, and I'm going to underscore the word intentionally, build relationships of trust with your families and your communities. As I said, a lot of families have felt disenfranchised, disconnected, and in order for us to build these partnerships, you've got to spend time, you've got to come up with initiatives

that are specifically intended to build trust between your educators, your practitioners, and your families. And when we look at the elements of trust, and this also comes out of work from Chicago, from Barbara Schneider and Anthony Bryk, you know, we all know that when someone's trying to build our trust, they do things that let us know that they respect us, they're competent in what they do, and they treat us as competent as individuals, they have integrity, they keep their word. And they see us as human beings, not as some stereotype. And so, these are elements that are very important in creating trust. This is a little quick rubric that one of my former students and now someone I work with Eyal Bergman created to say, Hey, you know, am I creating trust with my families?

Do I listen to them? Am I demonstrating to them that I see them as competent? Do I keep my word and do I show my families, and this is work from Paulo Freire, that I see them as people versus objects? So I'm double clicking on this because a lot of times we say we're creating trust with our families, but we skip over this step.

The organizational conditions. Let me just go back quickly. To the process conditions, the five others have to do with, first of all, as I mentioned before, family engagement is not a goal. It's a strategy. It needs to be linked to your goals. So it needs to be linked to learning and development. When you're doing an event about reading, your family should be included in those discussions about how do we get our kids to read in grade level. Your families don't want to

just talk about the rules and regulations of the schools. So how do we connect all of our engagement efforts to our teaching and learning goals? Also, your work has to be asset based, again, going back to seeing your families as assets, not seeing them through a deficit-based lens.

Your work needs to be culturally responsive and respectful. Everything needs to be looked at through a collaborative lens. So, in other words, how do we co-design, not just send out a survey where we ask families for their opinion, but create councils and create advisories where our families are right there with us making decisions.

And then we want our work to be interactive, to be fun. That's how human beings learn.

So let me talk a little bit now about the organizational conditions, and why I get so excited about presenting with Dr. Harris is because the work that she was able to do with her team in Richmond shows how a district can make a commitment to engagement, and that engagement is a part of their line item, a part of their budget.

That's how I always know: is engagement taken seriously? Are there resources provided? Is the leadership talking about engagement? Are there people on the senior level team who are in charge of engagement? And you know, resources, that's not just money, that's time. How is time provided to our practitioners so that they can do this engagement work?

So, you have your process conditions. But you can't just tell staff, well, go forth and do family engagement and we'll see you later. The organization has to provide the support through an infrastructure, through systems, through resources. And again, the leader has to embrace engagement, not just in words, but in actions.

When we start doing this is when we're starting to get into our outcomes now. When we start to do this work well, when we embrace the essential conditions, what we see happening is that we see the adult system around the students change. So, these four C's are what we now start seeing the adults of capacity.

These are the capacity areas that are being built. One of our colleagues, Monica Higgins, at the Ed School came up with these. And so, when we start working together in partnership, our skills and knowledge base increases. So, that's our capabilities. Our social networks, our connections are increased, we're now, you

know, parents and teachers and others are working together, which is building a wonderful social network. I talked about how our beliefs, our cognitions about each other's begin to shift, and our confidence to do this work is also increased. So we call these the four C's. When that starts happening, now we're really taking off.

We're off to the races. For some reason or another, this is not moving. Now let's see if we can get it to go.

Oh, there we go. So what happens next is that we've got our folks that are really now using these best practices, using the essential conditions. This part of the framework, you can see it's like a puzzle piece connected because now our educators and our families are connected to one another. Our education educators are empowered to really work with families in ways where families are seen as co-creators.

They're not afraid of working with families. Sometimes when I talk to teachers, they say, Dr. Matt, we're actually afraid to work with families, especially families who are different. This is where training is really important. And now our families feel more empowered to be engaged on all different levels.

And what does that do? Now we're working on making sure that we're creating these effective partnerships that actually support student learning and school improvement. The one thing I want to emphasize here is that I really want you to shift from seeing engagement as a goal because a lot of times on strategic plans, I see "we want kids to read at grade level, we want to reduce chronic absenteeism, we want our students graduating on time, and we want to increase family engagement."

Guess what gets dropped off that goal sheet? What I want you to do is to move the engagement from the goal sheet to the strategy sheet. It should be seen as a strategy for those other things that I just said. It's a strategy for reducing chronic absenteeism. It's a strategy for making sure your kids are graduating on time.

It's a strategy for making sure that kids are reading at grade level. So that's where we want to go with this work. And I also want you to be thinking about how you can shift the conditions within your own sphere of influence. Sometimes my students get overwhelmed. They say, Dr. Mapp, we want to change the entire system.

I say, no, start using those process conditions in your own sphere of influence. Okay, that might seem small, but it has a ripple effect. So how can you change your practice in what you already have control over? This is a quick list of additional supports and resources, things that will be happening in the near future.

So if you're interested in continuing to learn about family and community engagement, these are some of the things that are out there for you. And with that, I'm going to pause for any quick questions that we may have, because we definitely want to move on and listen to Dr. Harris's presentation. She's going to be talking about the framework in action.

So she's going to be giving you an example of how she used the framework to come up with an extraordinary initiative in Richmond. Thank you so much, Dr. Mapp. I really appreciate you showing us the dual capacity framework. And I think we have a couple of minutes to take a few audience questions. I'm going to So I'm going to go ahead and turn to my colleagues virtually because I can't see anybody or anything.

Turn to my colleagues at SEAC to see if there's any questions that have been coming in from the chat room or on tablet. Yeah. Thank you, David. One of the first questions that we have is for elementary schools. "Is there a size of a school community that is too big? I'm finding a lot of schools consolidating to save money and creating these mega schools.

Is there a recommendation on size to keep the community engagement high?" I don't think size should be a problem because if you see this, well, let me just say this, one of the reasons why everybody, you know, one of my friends, Michelle Brooks, who does this work says engagement is everybody's business.

So, in a school community, if engagement is a part of the DNA of the school, everybody embraces it. From your you know, your counselors your people in the lunchroom your custodians. I was at a school where one of the custodians, they had an advisory and the custodian was a part of the advisory group.

He reached out to families, right? So. If you're only assigning the engagement work to one person, then it's way overwhelming. Even in the school of 100 students, it's overwhelming. That person can't do the whole thing. But if engagement is embraced by the whole school, and people divide up the responsibilities to reach out to families, then it is manageable, even at the school,

I mean, a lot of our schools are 1000 kids that I've worked with. But when they use an advisory strategy when they make it so that maybe they have community

partners, maybe they have family liaisons in the community, but still, it shouldn't all be dumped on that one person to do the work. That's when we really see it succeed.

The whole school has to embrace this as a part of their core mission and vision. Thank you. And then one last question before we move to Dr. Harris. This is from Ross Davis. "I've been reading a lot about academic parent teacher teams as a model of family engagement, especially for elementary schools.

It seems to be an achievable model to implement. I'm wondering if you're familiar with the model and if you have any thoughts on it as a model for family engagement?" I am very familiar with APTT, and in fact, if you come to my summer institute we use that as an example of a practice that really uses the framework.

And so, if you Google APTT, Maria Paredes, At WestEd is the person who heads up APTT. It is it is something that takes time to learn how to do well. You want to make sure you follow all the steps in APTT. So it is a bit of a lift, but it's an extraordinary practice, it changes a lot of the old,

not effective things that we do with families to a wonderful event that actually links families very specifically to learning and has a relational component to it as well. Thank you. I think we're ready for Dr. Harris.

Wonderful. Thank you so much. I am going to make sure I can advance my slide.

There we go. Good afternoon. Everyone. Thank you so much as always, Dr. Mapp for laying that foundation. I tell people so often that the Dual Capacity Framework was literally the blueprint to which I was able to design, along with the families and community of Richmond, the first ever office of engagement. So in this very quick time, I just want to tell you a story, y'all. I want to talk about so often we hear about these frameworks. You hear about the theory, but what does it look like an action? And I want to tell you the RPS story on how we use the dual capacity framework as a foundation, but more importantly, how we reframed attendance through an engagement lens to have

significant impact over the past couple of years. So, I came to Richmond, daughter of a community organizer, daughter of a lifelong educator had the privilege of being a fourth-grade teacher, shout out to all my teachers or anyone who used to teach. I tell people, I played school for way too long. Do not judge me, but my dream was to become a teacher.

So both as a teacher, and then as a principal of an elementary school, I then found myself going back to the Harvard Graduate School of Education for my doctorate. And I kept and I went back because at every level was just more curious about how those systems are either set up to really work in concert or in conflict with one another.

And also it was really important for me as a young person not seeing myself reflected in my teachers and my leadership. But what could I do to create a system where more people who look like me saw themselves reflected in the community, in their learning community, in leadership? So, as I was working on my capstone, that's what brought me to Richmond, Virginia.

Governor Terry McAuliffe at the time put together a children's cabinet in conjunction with the Department of Juvenile Justice in Richmond Public Schools. They had an initiative called Classrooms, Not Courtrooms. And for 10 months, I literally used this, I told you guys, I'm an elementary school teacher,

I had this visual, and was going around the community really exploring how the school system and justice system either worked in concert or conflict with one another. But in those 10 months, what I was really doing is building relationships with families, listening to a group of students who felt invisible and making those stories visible.

And through that work the superintendent, superintendent Kamras, who had just joined the division, asked me to stay on and think about how do we build a system of engagement in Richmond? And that's exactly what we started to do. Now, I was very scared and nervous because, again, I've seen the framework, but I kind of forgot, like, oh no, no, there's 50 years of research

that says that, you know, as you build strong relationships with families, as you value their expertise, you can get to those strong school partnerships. So I knew it was there, but the question became "how?". So the first thing was, in any context, the first thing you have to do is honor the history. I am not from Richmond, Virginia: Springfield, Massachusetts, right?

That is where I was born and raised, did not go to school outside of Massachusetts. So this was my first time in an unfamiliar context. So I knew when you think about the dual capacity framework, Dr. Mapp said, if the most important thing is relationship and building trust, you can't do that withouthonoring and acknowledging the history. So that's the first thing I had to do. So about Richmond, I learned about the strengths, the power, the resilience of the neighborhoods, like a Jackson Ward. It was referred to Harlem of the South, thriving black community, black businesses, restaurants, banks, like this is what Richmond was.

So having that asset-based approach, you see that, but this is what it looks like. It means I'm going into a community or I'm being intentional about the community I work in, and I'm thinking about: what are the ways in which I'm acknowledging and honoring the rich history of the place I'm in? And when you do that, you can't do that without also acknowledging what harm has been done in the community.

So as I learned about the amazing Jackson Ward, people like Maggie Walker, first black woman to be a charter bank president. I also had to know Richmond was a place where they intentionally built a highway Through Jackson Ward, which really broke up this thriving black middle class. So there's been a lot of harm and distrust in the community.

So when I'm working with families and there's a little apprehension, when you understand history in the context, it's not that I have to fix it, but I have to acknowledge it if I'm working towards building trust. So that's the first step y'all - honor that history of where you work. And then from there, you're able to then think about, not practices, but if I want a system of engagement, what are the organizational conditions that need to be in place?

The first one, it started with me being situated as a Chief Engagement Officer at the cabinet level. I had access to decision making, I had a seat at the table to make sure engagement wasn't an add on, but rather embedded in everything we do, especially as we thought about teaching and learning. But again, not at the table.

It would have been much harder to for people to see engagement as something as a through line and an embedded. And then also when you think about the conditions - our strategic plan. Was this a priority in the strategic plan? We heard it from our community, but was it being translated into the writing in the focus areas?

And what we did, our priority, Priority four was about deep partnership with families and communities. So naming that again, that sent a message to the

community that no, this is more than just, you know, talk. We heard you, but we're also making sure this is a core part of our strategic plan.

So again, we want to be systems focused. We start with honoring the history, but we are building a system. And we want to create strong conditions for: what type of system do we want? So this is when we had to look at what were some of the gaps right now in our ability to build relationships. And we just didn't have a lot of credible people who were in the community.

So what we did is we really thought about instead of our family liaisons being tied to a school, what would it mean if we prioritized neighborhoods? Where we really said the expectation is for you to understand Church Hill, Fairfield Court, or Creighton Core. Who are the community members? What do we do on Saturday nights?

The corner store? The churches? But like, that's what we led with. What are the assets of the communities? And how do I build trust in the communities? But more important, y'all, who already has trust in the communities? When you talk about serving historically underserved populations, there are intricate systems of communication that already exists.

It's just that, how are you tapping into those and how do you build trust within those relationships already? So we set up neighborhood teams. And that's how we organized our office. And then, once that's like your structure, but we have the structure, but when we say engagement as a division for Richmond, the next thing we really had to do is we had to define it for us.

We see what the research says. But what does RPS say about engagement? So we use the five core things to steep us in: these are our key dimensions of engagement because so often if I'm talking to a school leader, a teacher, what they were naming was involvement, right? We are past Donuts with Dads, Granola with Grandma, engagement is linked to personal teaching and learning.

But we have to name that. We have to make sure whenever we talked about it, we have these core dimensions and we were able to move from what does engagement just as involvement, right? Or the differences, excuse me, between involvement and engagement. So Dr. Mapp talked about leading with your mouth versus leading with your ears.

But when you look at these differences. Involvement is a very still, "we are here to serve you." And many of you may be thinking like, "I am a servant leader. What is wrong with that, Shadae?" and yes, it is okay, I want to serve as well.

However, when you think about engagement, it's about gaining partnership and the difference between service and partnership is: you have to share power and that's really hard for people to do.

So really thinking about, no, this is like co-creating co-design. That means we got to give up a little bit of this power, but we have to define that as a division and naming that. And then as I close, right, once you're building a system, we have these, we have a definition because we had to change mindsets.

Attendance allowed us something very tangible that was linked to learning that allowed us to reframe it through an engagement lens. So in our division, every single school had not attendance goals, they had engagement goals. And under your first engagement goal was decreased chronic absenteeism. Because if we say as a division engagement is linked to learning, it prioritizes relationships.

What better way than to have one of our main goals be around making sure our students are coming to school each and every day, ready to learn. So we reframed attendance through an engagement lens, and that meant we went from this kind of truancy, punitive approach, right, very focused on rules, legal solutions, we had attendance officers, right, we move from that to chronic absenteeism. So chronic absenteeism we define in Virginia is missing 10 percent of the school year, but you're looking at any time a student is out. So both excused and unexcused absences. So the impact of academics on any missed day, and that allows you to really understand the nuance of some of the needs and trends in your community.

And we move to more proactive, positive strategies. For example, in Richmond, one of the things we realized is we had about a thousand students who were living in hotels. So that means our families had enough for month to month, but they didn't have enough to put first month's down payment and last month's down payment down to get them into something more secure.

So what we did is, in writing an innovation grant, we use direct finances, we use our funding to give direct finances to our families. Over the past 2 years, we've housed over 130 families in stable housing. A huge part of how we've been able to decrease chronic absenteeism because we know housing is an educational issue, right?

So as families started to trust us. us and share their needs, we were able to see clear barriers and trends within our community and target our partnerships and our efforts to addressing that. Even at the most punitive level, where we should be engaging in petitions with law enforcement, we held those court hearings in a middle school.

We partnered with the juvenile justice system, Judge Langer, We surrounded the auditorium with services. It was a real docket. The judge would call up a family and the family had to see, they were ordered to see every single service there. And if the student made progress, whether it was 30, 60, 90 days, the judge would drop the petition.

So even at the most punitive level, if the goal is relationships, if the goal is support, you, it looks different. Right. Your practices, you're innovating in a different way, if the goal is relationship. I strongly believe, you know, post pandemic, we saw the number soars. We don't have an attendance, attendance issue. We have a relationship issue, right? So building strong relationships with our families. And then again, we're doing all this work, but one of the biggest things Dr. Map has pushed on us is, Shadae, how are you quantifying your engagement? So we created a tracker where anytime we reached out to a family, whether it was the division level team, and then it spread onto our teachers, we were capturing what were we talking about? What were the needs? So sometimes we would have five people calling the same family. So it helps streamline us and our efforts internally, but it also allowed us to really quantify our engagement. And all that rolled up to an engagement dashboard. So I can tell vou right now how many home visits Richmond Public Schools had and what we saw is: as engagement went up as home visits went up, chronic absenteeism went down, and we were able to make those causal connections because we were quantifying our engagement.

We were tracking our outreach and we saw these really powerful connections of what happens when you're building stronger relationships with their families and you're having more outreach. Home visits was a key strategy that allowed us to do that. So we were everywhere. In neighborhoods, and I had created this tagline called "we love you here", and that was something because it's important.

How are we telling the story? So that was our tagline. We have multi-year initiative. "We love you here". We had shirts. We had hoodies, but that was what we wanted them to know. There was a lot of trust that had been broken in our school division, like many of yours. We went through a pandemic where, two years, we told you to stay home.

So we needed to what was the messaging we were going to share with our families and what better message than we love you here. And that's exactly what we did. So let me end with impact. Overall, at the end of this year, over the past two years, we've reduced our chronic absenteeism more than almost about 20 percent.

We've decreased every single subgroup. And we've gained about 89,000 hours of academic instruction. And I really encourage you, when you're talking about attendance, don't always frame it by what you're losing, frame it by what you're gaining. So take one of our schools: Fairfield Court Elementary. Post-pandemic, they were about 55 percent of their students were chronically absent.

More than half the school. This is in a very high poverty neighborhood, serving Our students and our families. Over the course of the past two and a half years, that school has increased 60, almost 6300 academic hours. That's 37 class hours per day that they're gaining. So, our ability to even like, how we message the work change because it was about the relationship.

It was about thanking and praising families about what their students had gained by coming to school. So we would just go to houses just to say "we love you here" and had little gift bags just to talk about and thank families, honor their wisdom, thank them for their support. So we've made a lot of progress.

These again, these are some of the schools that have just showed tremendous growth, you know, differences between 10, 15 percent, and 85 percent of our schools right now are on track to decrease their chronic absenteeism. And then lastly, I always just end with joy. This work is hard work. This is my joy.

Stone, who's the little football, is two, and Blue, he'll be four in October. So send lots of good vibes, y'all. It's a lot. But in order to do this work, you have, it has to be centered in joy. Our families, what they send to school, that is their joy. That is their pride. And I'll end with a quote from Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot.

She says, "families do not enter school buildings as individuals. They enter them as representatives of their families, their histories and their aspirations woven through the tapestry of their children's lives." Remember that as you continue to work with families and centering it around systems of engagement that honor history, prioritize relationships, quantify outreach and, lastly, are just embedded with joy.

Thank you. Thank you so much, Dr. Harris. I really appreciate your contributions and extending the discussion to see what could happen from a

district perspective. Really wanted to emphasize how the Dual Capacity Framework plays out. And you've done such a wonderful job of that. I think we have time for maybe one or two questions before our time is up today.

I'm wondering if my colleagues can jump in with questions that we've received through the Padlet or the chat room. Yeah, I think there's just one question right now. So, from an anonymous on the Padlet, Dr. Harris, "Thank you for recognizing the realities around our underserved families in the U. S.

and the connections they have, or may not have, with educators. How do you see DEI and cultural competency playing a role in effective family community engagement?"

And that's to you, Dr. Harris. That was directed to you, Shadae. Oh, sorry, you had that look on your face like you wanted to take it. You want to start or you want me to start? Oh, okay. So, this work, again it, the goal is relationships. You can't build relationships, again, and I'm talking about trust. You can't do that without honoring and humanizing the person you want to build a relationship with, right?

It's integral to the work. There's a level of empathy that has to be there. There's a level of understanding. So I would say take all the labels, anything out because when you get at the core of what those things are, if you're focusing on building relationships, you are doing that inherently. And I would say focus on impact and what it would mean to build trust because, DEI, that's embedded in it, right?

I don't have to have a presentation that says, DEI, I could. And I'm not mad at that, but I'm also can tell you how to build a strong relationship. And the first thing we're going to do is we're going to start with empathy, right? We're going to start with honoring history. And you heard me when I went honoring history, like you have to acknowledge the harm that was done.

The first step in healing is truth. So like you have to start there. And a lot of those efforts are all about telling the truth. So that's what I would focus on is tell the truth. And when you do that, you are going to build strong relationships that are, at the core of it, is trust. And through that, not only will you see, you know, chronic absenteeism go down, you're going to see your academics go up because you have people who have the expertise, the knowledge, the wisdom of their young people at the table, co-creating in true partnership with you.

Again, I just want to thank Dr. Mapp and Dr. Harris so much for their contributions. I see the chat room just blowing up with praise for the presentations, and I can certainly understand why. We're going to continue this conversation next week. At one o'clock Eastern, Learning Series Session 4.2, we're going to hear from Statewide Family Engagement Centers, a federally funded initiative, and hear about state and regional perspectives on this very issue of co-creating engagement strategies with historically underserved populations.

And then on June 18th, same time, same place on zoom, we'll hear from more school and local perspective with Dr. Jessica Dace and her colleagues from the Rena B. Wright Primary School in Chesapeake, Virginia. We'd love to have you attend all 3 sessions to continue this conversation as well as Learning Series 5 on student family engagement coming up in July and August.

If you'd like to get in contact with our center, you can contact Taneco Reid or Sarah Frazelle at the email addresses listed on the screens to follow up around session slides or working one-on-one on topics with the Student Engagement and Attendance Center. You can also contact us by following this QR code or the SEACenter@westat.

com email address. Thank you all so very much for your participation in the first session of our learning series on co-creating family engagement centers. I'm sorry, on co-creating family engagement. I appreciate all of your participation and contributions throughout the learning series session today.

We'll see you again next week.