

Shaping Connecticut's Tomorrow: A Conversation with Early Childhood Leaders

Tuesday, October 29, 2024

9:30 am- 12 pm

Legislative Office Building, Room 2C, 300 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT

This event will convene state governance and advisory leaders, policymakers, and early childhood experts to focus on the critical nature of the early years. This convening will create a shared understanding and alignment about early childhood for Connecticut's governance bodies and will build on the Blue Ribbon Panel goals to drive positive policy and system changes for children and families.

As the state continues to look for ways to expand and enhance its early care and education system, this event serves as a catalyst for innovation and actionable change. Connecticut is lucky to have multiple entities that provide guidance and input to the system. These entities include the CT Early Childhood Cabinet, the Early Childhood Care and Education Fund, the Blue Ribbon Panel on Child Care Membership, OEC External Steering Committee, OEC Parent Cabinet, State Board of Education Members, CT Certification Board, Early Childhood Funder Collaborative, and CT General Assembly.

9:30-9:55 am: **Check In, Networking, Coffee, and Light Refreshments**

The Early Years: Foundations of Early Childhood Development and Policy

10 am-10:10 am: Welcome Remarks by Commissioner Beth Bye

10:10 am-10:40 am: Ellen Galinsky Keynote

10:40 am – 10:45am: Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz Remarks

What's Next Connecticut? A conversation with Governor Lamont and national experts

10:45 am-11:30 am: Governor Lamont respond to keynote and then moderates panel with Deputy Commissioner Elena Trueworthy. Panelists: Ellen Galinsky, Dr. Barbara Cooper, Michelle Kang

11:30 am-11:55 am: **Q&A – attendees**

11:55 am-12:00 pm: **Closing Remarks**

Speakers



Keynote – Ellen Galinsky

Ellen Galinsky is President of Family and Work Institute (FWI). She co-founded FWI in 1989. She is the President of the Work and Family Researchers Network, a network of several thousand researchers globally. She serves as senior science advisor to AASA, The School Superintendent Organization. Up until 2022, she was the Chief Science Officer of the Bezos Family Foundation. Galinsky spent two decades at the Bank Street College of Education.

Her work revolves around identifying important societal questions as they emerge, conducting research to seek answers, and turning the findings into action. Over her career, her research has focused on work-life, children's development, youth voice, child care, parent-professional relationship, and parental

development.

Galinsky is the author of *Mind in the Making*, a best-selling book that the New York Times called “an iconic parenting manual,” and Judy Woodruff of the PBS NewsHour named “must reading for everyone who cares about America’s fate in the 21st Century”.

Her recently published book on adolescence, *The Breakthrough Years* involved nine years of research. Adam Grant, author of *Hidden Potential* says that “it smashes common stereotypes of teens and tweens”; Dan Siegel, author of *The Whole Brain Child* calls it a “masterpiece”; Mitch Prinstein of the American Psychological Association says it is “a tour de force. Don’t attempt to raise a teenager without reading this book.” She is also the author of 90 books/reports and 360 articles for books, academic journals, magazines, and the Web.

Galinsky received a Bachelor of Arts in child studies from Vassar College and a Master of Science in Child Development from Bank Street College of Education.



Panelist – Dr. Barbara Cooper Dr. Barbara Cooper is Senior Vice President of Professional Learning at Start Early. She leads Start Early’s strategy to support and advance the early childhood workforce and oversee scaling the organization’s professional learning enterprise for professionals working in prenatal through Pre-K.

In July 2020, Dr. Cooper was appointed by Alabama Governor Kay Ivey as the Secretary of Early Childhood Education and also served as the Governor’s Birth through Grade 12 policy advisor. Starting in 2018, she played a crucial role in the administration of Alabama’s First Class Pre-K program as a part of the Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education. Her contributions have significantly impacted the quality of early education in Alabama, garnering national recognition and serving as a model for others.

Dr. Cooper obtained her Certificate in Early Education Leadership from the Graduate School of Education at Harvard University. She holds a Doctorate in Education Leadership and Innovation, as well as a Masters of Science in Administration, Supervision, and Curriculum from the University of Colorado at Denver. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Education from Western Illinois University.



Panelist – Michelle Kang

Michelle Kang is CEO of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), a 60,000-membership organization for early childhood professionals. Prior to becoming CEO, Michelle served as NAEYC’s inaugural Chief Strategy and Innovation Officer where she oversaw the strategy and daily operations for Membership, Early Learning Program Accreditation, Publications, Conferences, Market Solutions, and Global Engagement. During her tenure, the organization dramatically pivoted to serve the field through the pandemic crisis, including successfully conducting virtual conferences serving thousands of educators, the first-ever Symposium on Developmentally Appropriate

Practice and a virtual Professional Learning Institute that delivered more than 235,000 certificates of professional development. She has guided the system adjustments necessary to support child care and preschools attaining and maintaining accreditation through the pandemic and shepherded the development and launch of the fourth edition of NAEYC's Developmentally Appropriate Practice book.

Prior to joining NAEYC, she served in leadership roles at Bright Horizons, an international provider of early education and most recently as Vice President of Strategic Initiatives and Operational Strategy. Her 16-year tenure at Bright Horizons included building partnerships with leading global employers to develop and implement dependent care supports - child care, back-up care, and educational advising services. She gained a deep appreciation for the life-changing work that early educators do every day.

Drawing on her experiences as the daughter of Korean immigrants, Michelle is committed to creating belonging within organizations, and developing inclusive leadership and mentoring opportunities. Michelle has served as a Resident Tutor and Scholar at Harvard University and as a member of the Student Engagement and Leadership Advisory Board for The College of William & Mary.

Michelle holds a Bachelor's degree from the College of William and Mary, a Masters of Education in Leadership and Policy from the University of Virginia, and a Masters of Science in Industrial Relations and Human Resource Management from Saïd Business School at the University of Oxford (UK).