Teachers of Color and Allies Summit Oct. 18 Breakout Sessions

“Understanding Student Engagement Through the Lens of Poverty” – Room 124
This session will give educators a general overview of the impacts of poverty on students. Participants will then experience and learn instructional techniques to increase engagement and the academic achievement of students living in poverty. Participants will explore ways to engage families as well.
Ariane Rivera and Jason Firestone, Office of Student Engagement, Jefferson County Public Schools

“Teaching Students of Poverty: Summary of Eric Jensen’s Work” – Room 125
A brief overview of Eric Jensen’s work as it relates to poverty – specifically as it applies to students and teachers with some insights as to how a local school addresses those issues.
Victor Carl Sanchez, School Counselor, Alicia Sanchez International Elementary School

“STEM for All: Recruiting and Maintaining a diverse student interest in STEM” – Room 126
Race, ethnicity, and culture are playing increasingly important roles in STEM fields. Together we will share opportunities for promoting diversity in STEM along Colorado’s Front Range and learn strategies to take back to your school or community. All students can be successful in STEM careers if they so choose... it is our responsibility to open their perception to that future.
Michael O'Toole, Science Coordinator, St. Vrain Valley School District; Becky Peters, Innovation Center Program Manager, St. Vrain Valley Schools

“Conversations on Bias” – Room 127
Participants will collaborate in a shared experience that involves deep conversations coupled with actions that are sustainable and build capacity. Using a purposeful conversation model participant’s will talk about strategic meeting planning using self-awareness as a tool for transformation. These tools will support the conversation on bias where we sit in dialogue about how our biases inhibit or enhance our ability to be in authentic relationship? We will conclude with authentic dialogue about next steps?
Bill de la Cruz, Director of Equity and Inclusion, Denver Public Schools

“Understanding Student Engagement Through the Lens of Discipline: Understanding Racial Disparities in School Discipline Practices” – Room 128
Racial disparities in school discipline and the overuse of harsh disciplinary measures has caused irreparable harm to students, families, schools and communities. Unfair policies and practices unfairly target and marginalize students based on their race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and ability and those with a history of abuse, neglect, poverty or learning disabilities. This session is an overview of current theory and practice related to school discipline in order to reduce these disparities and ultimately increasing student engagement and achievement.
David Kollar and Hilario Benzon, Office of Student Engagement, Jefferson County Public Schools

“Creating Culturally Responsible Teachers using a Warm Demander Framework” – Room 129
There is a cultural context to teaching and learning and this conceptual framework comes from the research on teachers of color. As such, participants will have the opportunity to examine these culturally specific practices using Ware’s (2006) Warm Demander research as a guide. Participants will examine the practices of relationships, relevance, and rigor, and will narrow their focus to the impact of high expectations, content knowledge, nurturing, and ethic of caring as concrete strategies for students’ academic and social success.
Franita Ware, Ph.D., Culture Equity and Leadership Team, Denver Public Schools
“Creating Hope Through Leadership Development” – Room 133
As teacher leaders and educator leaders we can only give hope to our students of need through our own preparedness in leadership. This session will allow you to explore your own leadership inventory, identify your current needs and interests as well as defining your long term goals. You will leave this session with your own leadership plan and tools for supporting your students in developing their own. Please bring a device – laptop, Chromebook, tablet, iPad, or Smartphone – or you can bring a good ol’ pen! This session is not “sit-n-git” it does require your active participation.
Diana Gamboa, Boulder Valley School District

“Breaking the Silence around Gender and Sexual Diversity: Opening the Conversation” – Room 134
Framed around knowledge-building, critical self-reflection, and action, this session aims to break the silence around gender and sexual diversity in schools, and to support teachers in their efforts to create schools and classrooms that are safe and affirming for all youth. After screening a short documentary that showcases youth perspectives, we will consider what action we can take in our own educational contexts to break the silence and move toward safer schools.
Bethy Leonardi and Sara Staley, A Queer Endeavor, School of Education, University of Colorado Boulder

“Measuring What Counts” – Room 135
Every year Colorado districts and schools report their dropout, graduation and discipline data disaggregated by race/ethnicity and gender. These data tell part of the story about how our youth are faring. This workshop will provide an overview of the data, plus look at the implications. Participants will have an opportunity to discuss variables that are difficult to measure but can impact the rates, such as school climate, implicit bias and “push out” policies.
Judith Martinez, Director of Dropout Prevention and Engagement, Colorado Department of Education