

Elizabeth Whipple McKenna

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Executive Summary:

An innovative leader and author with over 20 years of experience devoted to building progressive learning communities that embody twenty-first century teaching and learning where communication, collaboration, critical thinking and creativity are held to the highest levels of importance. A thought-partner with a proven track record of building the skills of talented professionals, by advancing conversations through question, reflection, observation, and practice.

Recent Publication:

Rucci, B. and McKenna, E. (2016) *Art Workshop for Children*. Beverly, MA: Quarto Publishing Group USA Inc.

Professional Experience:

Exponential Returns, New York, NY

July 2014- Present

Founder, Consultant and Certified Coach

Provides services as leader, educator, certified coach and consultant in the following areas—aesthetics and environment (organization and school design), culture and community (supportive environments for teaching and learning), professional development (developing teachers and leaders through training and/or coaching), early elementary program design and creation, performance management (evaluations and conversations), and parent engagement and partnership.

- Selected clients and accomplishments include, but are not limited to:
 - Bank Street Education Center—partnership with New Haven Public Schools, *New Haven Early Childhood Review*, Newark Public Schools, *Building a Pre-K Teacher Leaders Fellowship Program*
 - Bank Street College—facilitate and train professional development workshops to NYC Department of Education Pre-K educators in *Getting Ready for Pre-K Institute*, *Culturally Responsive Practice*, and *Pre-K for All: Advancing Social & Emotional Development*; brought together a collective and collaborative team of teachers who were empowered to voice interests, needs, concerns, and reflect on their teaching practices
 - AltSchool, Brooklyn Heights—*Growing Leaders*—consult and coach to grow head of school leaders, build teaching teams through the design and implementation of AltSchool professional development
 - The Jewish Education Project, *Project LEAD: Exploring Reggio Inspired Schools*—coach leadership, facilitate and lead professional development workshops
 - Chelsea Piers CT Early Learning Center—coach leadership and identify program needs to deliver model team teaching techniques; support and foster relationships between staff, leadership, and parents; align assessments to Connecticut Early Learning Standards; and implement a teacher inventory model
 - Caedmon School—provide leadership coaching to advance the decision making process at the senior administrative level; administer the NBI Assessment to measure thinking preferences of team members and foster communication and collaboration at a higher level

The Town School, New York, NY

June 2011-June 2014

Head, Lower School Division (Grades 1-4), independent school

Reporting directly to the Head of School on matters pertaining to school performance, curriculum design, instruction and professional development with key accomplishments in the following areas:

- Oversaw 30 staff members in setting the vision and mission of a school with a population of 170 students
- Developed professional development workshops to support teacher performance and create rubrics for innovative project-based learning assignments and assessments designed to engage students and increase academic performance
- Increased parent engagement and rejuvenated the learning community by seeing parents as equal partners

New Canaan Country School, New Canaan, CT

1995-2011

Head, Early Childhood Division, independent school

2002-2011

Served on the senior administrative team and reported directly to the Head of School of all three school divisions on matters pertaining to academic performance, school design and layout, faculty management, curriculum design, school scheduling and professional development with achievements in the following areas:

- Hired, developed and managed 20 staff members to deepen the learning community of the Early Childhood Division
- Oversaw 104 children and promoted parent engagement and involvement through various initiatives
- Developed and updated curricula and professional development workshops to define vision and improve student progress; developed program in Reggio Emilia inspired space
- Created classroom and portfolio assessments to allow formal and informal data to drive instruction

Founder and Teacher, Beginners Program (Ages 3-5)

1995-2002

- Interfaced with architects during conceptual and design phase of Early Childhood building to create a Reggio-inspired learning environment

Education

Teachers College, Columbia University Coaching Certification Program, Certification 2015

Bank Street College, Master of Science, Education (Specializing in Supervision & Administration) 2005

University of Vermont, Bachelor of Science, Education (Major: Elementary Education) 1980

Certification

Teachers College, NBI Assessment (measuring thinking preferences), Certification 2015

Teachers College, MBTI (a personality assessment tool), Certification 2015

Adjunct Faculty

Bank Street College, New York, NY 2010-Present

Adjunct Professor - “Dynamic Leadership: Inspiring and Supporting Your Teaching Faculty”

Professional Affiliation

Advisory Council, Portfolio School, New York, NY 2016- Present

Director, Henry Street Settlement Board, New York, NY 2014- Present

Director, READ Alliance, New York, NY 2014-Present

Founding Board Member, Stepping Stones Museum for Children, Norwalk, CT 1994- 1995

Recent Professional Contributions:

Reggio Emilia, New York, NY 2015- Present

Exhibit Facilitator - “The Wonder of Learning Exhibit”

National Association of Independent Schools 2011

Presenter - “Environment, Architecture, and Program: Tools for Integrating Private and Public Schools”

International Society of Education through the Arts 2010

Presenter - “Integrating People, Environment and Sustainability through Art Education”

Columbia University, New York, NY 2008- 2009

Co-Leader - “Spirit of Teaching and Learning” (Designed a pilot study) & “Classroom as a Spiritual Space”

Chicago International Charter Schools, Chicago, Illinois Summer 2009

Intern - Collaborated with a team of educators to perform research on the link between high quality teaching and technology in the classroom

United Nations, New York, New York Summer 2005

Intern - United National Development Fund for Women

Continuing Education/ Professional Development:

Lego Idea Conference, Billund, Denmark 1995-Present

Facilitative Leadership Seminar, NYU Metro Center for Urban Education, New York, NY

Art of Tinkering Workshop, Exploratorium, San Francisco, CA

Responsive Classroom, Chicago Ill

Grant Wiggins Feedback -Authentic Education, Lambertville, NJ

Deeper Learning, High Tech High, San Diego, CA

Project Based Learning, PBL World, Napa, CA

Learning and the Brain: Educating for Creative Minds, San Francisco

Design Thinking, Lime Design, The Town School, New York, New York

Differentiated Instruction, The Churchill School, New York, New York

Design Thinking, Henry Ford Learning Institute, Detroit, MI

Design Thinking Institute, Nueva School, CA

Differentiated Teaching-Carol Tomlinson, Teachers College, New York, New York

Reggio Emilia International Conference: “Crossing Boundaries”, Reggio, Italy

People of Color Conference, Chicago, IL

Reggio Emilia Delegation, Reggio, Italy