



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING


GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL F. RICE, Ph.D.
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 9, 2021

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents
Public School Academy Directors
Michigan PreK-12 Educators

FROM: Delsa D. Chapman, Ed.D., Deputy Superintendent 
Division of Educator, Student, and School Supports

SUBJECT: Diversity in Literature Four-Part Virtual Conference Series

Registration is now open for the Michigan Department of Education's (MDE's) second session of a four-part virtual conference: ***The Role of Diversity Within the Literature that We Teach***. This free virtual conference series for PreK-12 teachers and administrators will take place on:

- January 27, 2022 *Keynote Speaker: Shonda Buchanan*
- April 28, 2022 *Keynote Speaker: Derrick Slack*
- July 28, 2022 *Keynote Speaker: TBD*

All conference times are from 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. EST.

A key factor in developing and supporting a life-long love of reading is ensuring that children are engaged and see themselves in the literature that reflects their lives and the world's diversity. As students understand that diversity is an integral and vital part of our country, another step toward equity in America can be made.

MDE's ongoing efforts in this area include identifying and presenting resources that provide the opportunity to experience educational materials that reflect students' ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation.

MDE is committed to helping educators understand the role and importance of diversity within the literature taught in classrooms Pre-K-12. Each conference session will feature a unique keynote address from a celebrated author renowned for their work around diversity. Keynote speakers will discuss the history and purpose of diverse literacy materials within classrooms, professional and personal experiences, and ways to bring inclusive texts and materials to the classroom to aid in instructional practices that will engage students.

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Each virtual conference session will include an opportunity for participants to choose a 50-minute educator-led breakout session aligned with their current professional interest: Pre-K, K-5, 6-8, 9-12, or administration. Breakout sessions will address the role of Diversity in Literature within the classroom, ways to intentionally expand school and classroom materials, and ways to use diverse materials for instruction.

Michigan educators can register for the second session of the four-part conference series through January 25, 2022, by visiting the conference registration page: [The Role of Diversity within the Literature that We Teach](#). SCECHs will be available for those who attend the virtual conference series.

If you have questions regarding this diversity in literature professional learning series, please contact the literacy team at mde-earlyliteracy@michigan.gov.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance
Confederation of Michigan Tribal Education Directors