



## *Reading Specialists Council of Suffolk* *(RSCS)*

6 Cliftwood Place, Kings Park, NY 11754

e-mail: [suffolkreads@yahoo.com](mailto:suffolkreads@yahoo.com)

[www.rscsuffolk.com](http://www.rscsuffolk.com)

**Christine Guercio, Co-President, 631-265-6556**

**Lisa Wenz, Co-President, 631-499-8339**

*Affiliated with the International Literacy Association (ILA, formerly IRA)*

*Member of the New York State Reading Association (NYSRA)*

*Listed in the SCOPE Directory*

*and with Western Suffolk BOCES Instructional Support Services*

### **Celebrating Our 50<sup>th</sup> Year!**

### **2018 - 2019 Workshop Catalog**

## *Transforming Minds Through Literacy*

**The RSCS is a NYSED-approved CTLE Sponsor, ID: 3086**

*The Reading Specialists Council of Suffolk (RSCS) provides a forum and network to further an awareness and understanding of current research in the field of literacy education. We are a professional organization comprised of various stakeholders, including teachers of all levels and specialties, school administrators, college professors, school and public librarians, student teachers, literacy volunteers, and community members who are committed to improving all aspects of literacy instruction.*



October 11, 2018: ***Commonsense Ideas for  
Nurturing Young Writers***

**Ralph Fletcher**

**Author and Consultant**

**Courtesy, Elizabeth A. Oakes-Lani and Scholastic**

Over the past few years our writing classrooms have changed, and not for the better. Many teachers report that the spark - the sizzle - has gone out of the writing classroom. In this presentation, Ralph Fletcher will reaffirm essential conditions for growing writers.

Ralph Fletcher is a former member of the Teachers College Writing Project, working in New York City schools as a consultant and coach. He is the author or coauthor with his wife, JoAnnn Portalupi, of numerous professional books and videos about the teaching of writing, including *The Writing Teacher's Companion: Voice, Choice, Purpose, and Play*, *Joy Write: Cultivating High-impact Low-Stakes Writing*, *Making Nonfiction from Scratch*, *Writing Workshop: The Essential Guide*, *What a Writer Needs*, *Craft Lessons: Teaching Writing K-8*, *Nonfiction Craft Lessons*, and more. Mr. Fletcher speaks at national conferences around the U.S. and abroad. He also conducts his own one-day seminars and does occasional author visits to schools.

Ralph is also the author of many books for children of all ages. He has written several picture books, including *Grandpa Never Lies*, *The Circus Surprise*, *Twilight Comes Twice*, and *Hello, Harvest Moon*. His novels for older readers include *Marshfield Dreams*, *Spider Boy*, *Fig Pudding*, and *Flying Solo*.

November 8, 2018: ***Mindfulness Practices for Educational Professionals***

Deborah DeBetta, Consultant  
Mindfulness – Based Stress Reduction  
Mind-Body Educational Consulting

Come explore, learn and investigate the practices of mindfulness which involves paying attention to your present moment experience through thoughts, feelings, and emotions. Mindfulness practice supports emotional regulation, cultivates focus, attention and patience, decreases stress and improves mental and emotional resiliency. Both teacher and student will be more mentally, emotionally and physically equipped to handle the stresses and demands of everyday life. These practices will help them enhance their relationship with their own bodies, minds and hearts, and improve their communication skills and relationships to others and the world around them. They will understand how to work with the constant forces of change in daily life without feeling overwhelmed, disenchanting, or disappointed. They will learn the skills that are necessary to deal with emotions, thoughts and stressful events that accompany life today.

Workshop participants will explore and discuss current research on the topic of mindfulness and learn various mindfulness meditation techniques that can be used with their students.

Deborah DeBetta is a teacher of Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) and a certified Mindfulness instructor with Mindful Schools. She began her studies at the University of Massachusetts Medical School Center for Mindfulness under Jon Kabat-Zinn in Mind-Body Medicine and continues to deepen her understanding with silent retreats and continuing education with Mindful Schools. Deborah is the creator of Mind Body Education and teaches a year-long mindfulness elective at Lynbrook High School and has created and taught Mindfulness programs throughout Long Island to both students and faculty. Her extensive education includes an MA in Physical & Health Education, BA in Psychology and Special Ed/Elementary Ed, 200hr Registered Yoga teacher, and a Reiki level 2 practitioner.

January 10, 2019: ***Unlocking Writing Minilessons Within Mentor Texts: A Closer Look at Various Genres with a Writer's Eye***

Randi Bernstein Roschnotti and Debra Wachtler  
Literacy Consultants, Distinctive Educator's Institute

This workshop will include the presentation and review of outstanding mentor texts and the authors who inspire us, both as readers and writers. Participants will learn the methods of discovering model mini-lessons within different genres of texts and at varying stages of the writing process. Participants will have the opportunity to "Read Like Writers" using their own favorite picture books to develop classroom-ready minilessons for various stages of the writing process within a unit of study.

Randi Bernstein Roschnotti is a Literacy Consultant for the Distinctive Educator's Institute. She is passionate about engaging with staff and administration to develop and implement literacy curriculum that is aligned with the standards and relevant to today's students. Randi previously worked as a fifth-grade teacher at Hugo Newman College Preparatory Elementary/Middle School in Manhattan for eight years. In addition to teaching in the classroom, she concurrently worked as an independent consultant to help research and write a series of reading Units of Study at the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project. While Randi loved teaching in her own classroom, it was always her career goal to work as a staff developer, guiding other professionals in the teaching of literacy.

Debra Wachtler is a Literacy Consultant for the Distinctive Educator's Institute who works with administrators and teachers to develop and implement effective literacy curriculum. Debra has also worked for the New York City Department of Education as a classroom teacher in both general and special education. While teaching, Debra received a Master of Science degree in Elementary and Special Education from Touro College in New York City and completed additional Master level coursework through New York University. She has always had a passion for teaching literacy and was a Columbia University Teachers College Teacher Leader for many years where she helped research various literacy topics and develop reading and writing units of study.

February 7, 2019: ***On the Wonder Pathway to Deepen  
Inquiry-Based Learning and Amplify Voice***  
Carol Varsalona, ELA Consultant

In a culture of curiosity, choice options lead students on pathways of wonder, inquiry, and discovery. How can educators foster wonder pathways to deeper learning, while challenging students to own their learning and exceed expectations? This workshop will share strategies to encourage wonder and inquiry leading to amplified voices.

This presentation was successfully delivered at the NCTE 2017 Conference. Attendees should bring a laptop or electronic device and a notebook.

Carol Varsalona is an ELA consultant with extensive experience as a districtwide director of language arts, literacy specialist, national/state conference presenter, and staff developer. In addition, she is a blogger, poet, Wonder Lead Ambassador for Wonderopolis, and moderator of #NYSEDChat, a professional learning network (PLN) on Twitter where she communicates with various state PLNs and global leaders.

Ms. Varsalona is dedicated to energizing and impacting K-12 teaching and literacy learning, focusing on the development of creativity, wonder and writer's voice in non-digital and digital platforms. She is ardent about providing relevant and meaningful professional development that encourages educators to redesign their literacy landscapes into student-centered, joyful havens of learning where self-efficacy is evident.

Ms. Varsalona's credits include membership in the NYS Academy for Teaching and Learning, LI Educator of the Month, Board Member/Newsletter Editor of the Long Island Language Arts Council (LILAC), and creator of Reflect with Me global galleries of artistic expressions. She holds a Professional Diploma in School District Administration, a CAS in Reading, an MS in Developmental Reading, and a BA in English Education.

March 7, 2019: ***Going Global: What It Means and How Do We Do It?***

Dr. Roberta Robinson  
Staff Developer, William Spyropoulos School  
Literacy Specialist, The Saltzman Center, Hofstra University  
Independent Literacy Consultant  
Member of the Middle East Outreach Council  
Book Award Committee

Participants in this workshop will explore the differences between multiculturalism and globalism. They will learn about the importance of helping children see themselves as global citizens. Suggestions and resources for implementing a global perspective will be discussed.

Dr. Robinson has a BS in Elementary Education, an MA in the Teaching of Writing, a CAS in Literacy and an Ed. D. in Literacy. Her area of interest is in global education. She has spent many years exploring cultures on four continents, with a special interest in the cultures of the Middle East and the Arab World. She has compiled an annotated bibliography of Middle East and Arab World themed elementary literature for children and teachers comprised of 120 books.

April 11, 2019: ***Using Students' Backgrounds and Interests to Support Their Writing Work***  
Elizabeth Morphis, Ed.D.  
Assistant Professor of Literacy, SUNY Old Westbury

This session will focus on how elementary students bring their backgrounds and interests to their writing work. Dr. Morphis will share examples of writing pieces from students who were labeled as "struggling" writers by the classroom teacher and the curriculum due to their inability to respond to writing prompts that were both curriculum and teacher created. When discussing these writing pieces with the students, they shared their lack of interest in these required writing prompts. This discussion will focus on moving beyond writing prompts and connecting student backgrounds and interests to the writing curriculum. Strategies will include planning writing units that will tap into student interests. Discussion will also include strategies for supporting bilingual students who are learning to write in English.

Elizabeth Morphis joined the School of Education at SUNY Old Westbury as an Assistant Professor of Literacy. Dr. Morphis was an instructor at Teachers College, Columbia University and The City College of New York, with her research focused on how young children who speak multiple languages navigated the writing curriculum at a bilingual school. She is the author of *"The Power of One-to-One Coaching: Preparing Pre-Service Teachers for the Early Childhood Classroom"* which will be published in the journal *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*. Elizabeth is currently in the final stages of writing two other articles. One is being submitted to the *Journal of Early Childhood Research* and the other to the journal *Written Communication*.

May 10, 2018: ***555 Reading Club –  
Becoming an Independent Reader***  
Kenneth Llinas, Adjunct Professor  
St. John's University

The workshop will provide participants with an in depth, hands on study of a 15-step process that guides and supports students as they become independent readers. Discussion will focus on developing real-time skills that young students will use to search for, react to, and share their thoughts about a self-selected book. The workshop is fun, engaging for all, and will include ideas for implementing the program across a wide range of curriculum areas and school settings. As a special bonus, all participants will become **Honorary Members of the 555 Reading Club**.

Kenneth Llinas retired as principal of P.S. 185 in June 2015. Since then he has been working as an assistant field director for the Council of Supervisors and Administrators which is the union that supports all administrators working for the New York City Department of Education. He is assigned to 75 schools and works with and supports this wonderfully diverse and talented ensemble of school leaders. In addition, for the past four years Ken has been teaching a wide range of graduate courses at St. John's University, Staten Island campus.