

## Meet the 2023-2024 Cohort of the Perrone-Sizer Institute for Creative Leadership at Hale



### **Ike Allen**

*Teacher Leader, Madison Park Technical Vocational High School, Boston Public Schools, Boston, MA*

As an educator in Boston, the last 10 years have given Ike the opportunity to immerse himself in the world of Literacy learning, specifically with students from the English Language Learning population who have to bridge Language Acquisition to English Literacy. Ike is proud to be a part of this movement. He attended inner city

schools at both the grammar and secondary levels and is no stranger to what the varying degrees of adversity within the infrastructure of an economically challenged community can impose on the psyche of an individual, especially a child. Disparity and hardships are oftentimes too complex to describe. However, with the right guidance, focus, and determination, one can rise to the occasion of achievement.



**Melissa Alvarez**

*Grade 9-12 School Adjustment Counselor,  
CityLab Innovation High School, Revere  
Public Schools, Revere MA*

Pursuing her goals, Melissa feels privileged to work in the mental health field and to continue to develop her skills. Her areas of concentration have been in inpatient, outpatient, and school settings around the greater Boston area. She has earned her B.S. in Interdisciplinary Studies from Boston University Metropolitan College/

School of Medicine and her M.Ed. in Mental Health and Counseling from Cambridge College. Melissa continues to explore the intersectionality between mental health and education; this includes equality within therapeutic interventions for BIPOC students. As an adjustment counselor in the Revere Public Schools, Melissa has set high expectations that encourage her students to understand and verbalize their experiences. She feels that it is important for students to challenge their own beliefs about their mental health and education. As Melissa's leadership role intensifies, one of her goals is to remove stigma specific to mental health challenges that routinely impact students navigating special education and urban school settings. Melissa has appreciated learning the value of trauma informed care. Knowing families are being heard, and their children feel safe and are in an environment where they can thrive—these are motivations for Melissa to strive for excellence in the services she provides.

*Melissa Alvarez is a Revere District PSi Fellow, an MPDE PSi Fellow, and a recipient of the Carmen M. Torres Scholarship for Emerging Latine Leaders.*



### **Airisenne Angle**

*Art Teacher and K-8 District Lead, Browne Middle School, Chelsea Public Schools, Chelsea MA*

Airisenne has been teaching Visual Art in Chelsea since 2005. From the beginning, Airisenne has focused on equitable treatment and education of all students and children. In 2009 she was awarded a place at the Ahimsa Institute at Cal Poly Tech in a Leadership in Nonviolence Graduate program. There she developed community and

citizenship lessons as well as an after school program called Peace and Consideration Training. In 2010, Airisenne graduated from Salem State University with a Master's in Art Education after completing a thesis demonstrating that Independent Problem Solving increased student pride in artwork. Over the course of Airisenne's tenure as a teacher, she has focused on bringing anti racist curriculum to the classroom and developing meaningful relationships with students. Recognizing that the action of making artwork leaves everyone vulnerable, she emphasizes the importance of kindness and empathy in the art room. Airisenne loves to paint for others, but helping students achieve their potential is her true passion.

*Airisenne Angle is a Chelsea District PSi Fellow..*



## **Damian Baeza**

*Grade 7 Social Studies Teacher, Cambridge Street Upper School, Cambridge Public Schools, Cambridge MA*

Jesus Damian Baeza goes by Damian. He has taught middle school for 7 years, but his first two years of teaching were at a Catholic school in the South End called Cathedral High School. He was raised in Arizona, but his roots are in Los Angeles, where he was born. His journey on the East Coast started when he attended Boston College as an undergraduate student. Damian

pursued a degree in Applied Psychology in Education and English with the hopes of becoming a school counselor. In his junior year of college, after much discernment and a deep dive into the story of Archbishop Oscar Romero's martyrdom, Damian sought a path to becoming a teacher. This led him to the Donovan Urban Teaching Scholars Program where he earned a Masters of Secondary Education teaching English. It was an invaluable experience that not only provided him with the foundations of teaching, but also gave him a critical lens to the world of urban education, as well as a community of colleagues that still support him today.

*Damian Baeza is a Cambridge District PSi Fellow and an MPDE PSi Fellow.*



**Alma Barillas**

*Assistant Principal, Walsh Middle School,  
Framingham Public Schools, Framingham MA*

Alma is a veteran teacher who began her career in the Framingham Public Schools in 2003 as a dual language teacher at Framingham High School. Following 13 years at the high school, Alma transferred to Walsh Middle School, where she continues to teach in the dual language program. Alma is passionate about supporting all students, especially

marginalized students and families who do

not understand the complexities of navigating U.S. schools. As an immigrant who came to Massachusetts from Guatemala as a child, Alma knows firsthand how complicated the school system is. She is the first in her family to graduate from college and obtain a Master's degree. Alma vehemently advocates for and supports Latinx and other immigrant students and their families. She is committed to maintaining an environment where students feel safe being who they are and taking control of their education. She is dedicated to promoting equity, diversity and inclusion in her classroom and school. Alma aspires to become a leader who will empower students to be proud of who they are and creates an environment where all students will succeed.

*Alma Barillas is a Framingham District PSi Fellow and an MPDE PSi Fellow.*



## **Candace Bass**

*Elementary METCO Coordinator,  
Westwood Public Schools, Westwood MA*

Candace Bass is a veteran educator. She began her collegiate journey at The Fisk University and furthered her education at Suffolk University's School of Restorative Justice. Throughout her career thus far, Candace has taught in classrooms from kindergarten all the way through grade 12, and she pioneered the elementary METCO initiative in the Westwood Public

Schools. As a mentor, Candace has ignited and supported young educators to be authentically themselves to provide positive learning environments for all students. She has served as a consultant and facilitator in cultural competency and educational consciousness, and has an innate ability to adapt her methods to any learning environment. At one point in her career, while serving as Dean of Students, Candace opted to transition into the role of Restorative Justice Practice Coordinator to better serve her students at the time. As an abolitionist educator, in every role she takes on, Candace strives to restore and reverse the harm that is caused by oppressive educational systems. Candace believes she lives and embodies her ancestor's wildest dreams, and that her students are the legacy.

*Candace Bass is a Westwood District PSi Fellow and an MPDE PSi Fellow.*



**Christine Brito**

*Unidos Dual-Language Curriculum and Instruction Specialist, Somerville Public Schools, Somerville MA*

Christine has been in education for twenty-four years. Most of her advocacy work in public education has been for multilingual and special education learners. During her years of service, Christine has worked with under-resourced students and immigrant families and collaborated with teachers and staff across grade

levels. Her current position places her in the unique situation where she engages with all staff members, students and families in her school. Christine believes that good leadership empowers all members and builds processes aimed at the future. Her experience as a teacher helps her to better understand the roles and needs of an educator, and to help them perform their duties more effectively. Christine's experience in leadership helps her understand the bigger picture in terms of the needs and the potential of a school, and the important role of all the stakeholders involved.

What has inspired Christine to pursue her administrator's license is the desire to continue to advocate for all learners, staff, and families. In her current role, she is actively pursuing these goals, as she strives to provide a safe and productive environment that is equitable and positive, with high-quality learning for all students and staff.

*Christine Brito is an MPDE PSi Fellow and a recipient of the Carmen M. Torres Scholarship for Emerging Latine Leaders.*



**Edwin Cebrian**

*Grade 3 Inclusion Teacher, Wolfgang A. Mozart Elementary School, Boston Public Schools, Boston MA*

Edwin Cebrian has served Boston Public Schools as a teacher for 12 years. Currently, he is a Grade 3 Inclusion Teacher at the Wolfgang A. Mozart Elementary School. In his role as Lead Teacher, Edwin has designed professional learning, facilitated affinity group spaces, and coordinated peer observations that centered on culturally

responsive teaching and anti racist practices. As a member of the Mozart's Inclusion Planning Team, he supports the design and execution of the new full-inclusion program that specializes in ABA-based methodology. Previously, Edwin taught a full-inclusion grade 4 classroom and completed his student teaching through the Boston Teacher Residency at the Samuel W. Mason Pilot Elementary School. Prior to teaching, he directed a summer program at the James F. Condon Elementary School and worked as the Assistant Project Coordinator on the South Boston Youth Assets Campaign. His motivation for teaching is to support students with exceptionalities like his two younger brothers who both possess autism. As a result of these experiences, he has always known that he wants to promote inclusion in schools as his lifework. Edwin's wife is a high school ELA teacher, and his daughter will join him at the Mozart as a kindergarten student next year!





## **Crystal Coronel**

*Teacher and Testing Lead, Chelsea High School, Chelsea Public Schools, Chelsea MA*

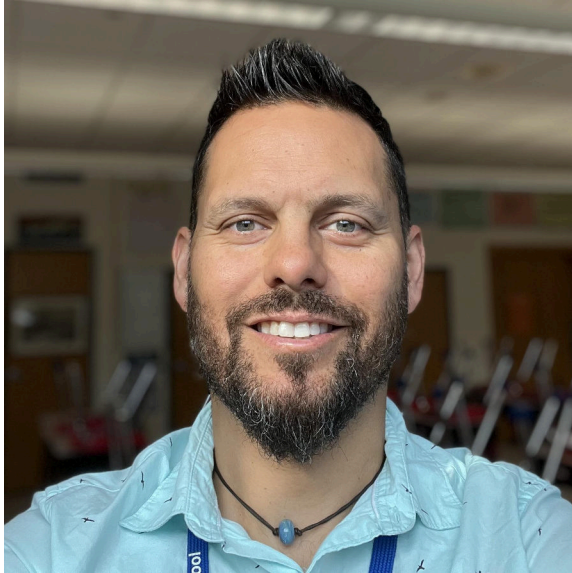
Crystal Coronel is a dedicated Latina educator who made the transition from Miami to join the Chelsea Public Schools family three years ago. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics from Florida International University, and as a first-generation college graduate, she possesses a deep-rooted passion for assisting her students in discovering

viable pathways to achieve their higher education aspirations.

Throughout her tenure at Chelsea High, Crystal has made significant contributions as an educator, teaching Financial Literacy and PreAP Algebra 1. Additionally, she has held various leadership positions, including Testing Lead and Supervisor of Instruction for the April Acceleration Academy.

With an unwavering ambition to make a lasting impact in education, Crystal aspires to ascend to the roles of principal or district administrator in the future. Her unwavering dedication to professional growth and continuous improvement has led her to eagerly pursue this opportunity through the PSi program. Crystal is excited about the potential for personal and professional growth, which will ultimately enable her to make a more profound difference in the lives of students and educators alike.

*Crystal Coronel is a Chelsea District PSi Fellow.*



**Sean D'Abbraccio**

*Grade 4 Classroom Teacher, Andrew Peabody Elementary School, Cambridge Public Schools, Cambridge MA*

Sean comes to PSi with 20+ years of experience as an elementary educator. Upon graduating from UMASS Boston in 2001, Sean taught for 10 years in a public school in Concord MA. In 2012, he moved to the U.S. Virgin Islands where he taught STEAM classes along with grade 4 and 5 Math and Science at a K-12 Private School. Since returning to the mainland, he has been a grade 4

educator in the Cambridge Public School District. In 2018, Sean spent a summer in Beijing China where he taught English Language Arts. He is a building equity specialist responsible for working with the administration to incorporate anti-racist professional development and inclusion practices. In 2016, Sean was selected as the PBS Digital Innovator and traveled to the International Society for Technology in Education Conference to share his passion and ideas with other education professionals. Sean is also an avid mosaic artist and owns a mosaic art studio with his wife in Chelmsford, MA. He offers classes for children and adults and has been involved in a number of community art projects.

*Sean D'Abbraccio is a Cambridge District PSi Fellow and an MPDE PSi Fellow.*



## **Carla Feehan**

*Vice Principal, Barbieri School, Framingham Public Schools, Framingham MA*

Carla is entering her first year as a Vice Principal in Framingham Public Schools. Prior to this role, Carla has been a School Social Worker in Massachusetts, New York, and Wisconsin. Carla has worked with all grade levels from pre-k to high school, including some college prep. Carla grew up in Milwaukee, WI, where she completed her Bachelors and Masters in Social Work at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In 2022, she also

completed a second Masters from Fitchburg State in Education Leadership and Management. Carla is eager to combine her love for working in schools, with students and families, and her dedication to supporting typically underrepresented students and families at an administration level. As a daughter of Mexican immigrants, Carla has firsthand experience with the inequities that Black and Brown communities experience within the education systems. It is this experience that drives her work with anti-racist, culturally conscious, and strengths-based lenses.

*Carla Feehan is a Framingham District PSi Fellow and an MPDE PSi Fellow.*



**Julie Gelardi**

*Assistant Principal, King Elementary School, Framingham Public Schools, Framingham MA*

Julie has taught in the Framingham Public Schools for 23 years, starting as a grade 4 teacher and, over the years, teaching grades 4 and 6 as a general ed teacher and a special educator. Julie's path then changed to instructional coaching in literacy and math in the Framingham Public Schools. Julie has had the privilege to work as a district

facilitator in Social Studies, which allowed for leadership opportunities and curriculum development. She is honored to serve the students and families in the Framingham community.

*Julie Gelardi is a Framingham District PSi Fellow and an MPDE PSi Fellow.*



**Kathleen Mitchell**

*Digital Literacy Specialist, Kelly Elementary School, Chelsea Public Schools, Chelsea MA*

In Katie's eleven years of teaching experience, she has worked with students ranging from kindergarten to grade 6 in a variety of capacities. Working for the last 6 years as a Science Specialist and the Social and Emotional Team Lead of the Kelly School, she has supported both teachers and students in fostering equitable and inclusive classroom communities. She is an

advocate for social and emotional learning that supports students both inside and outside of the classroom. Working through the set of values of Restorative Justice, she believes when we are able to truly know ourselves and other members of our communities, we thrive. In her time outside of teaching, Katie enjoys running, spending time outdoors, cooking, and seeing friends and family.

*Katie Mitchell is a Chelsea District PSi Fellow.*



**Alzimara Oliveira**

*Foreign Language Educator, Arthur D. Healey School, Somerville Public Schools, Somerville MA*

Alzimara began her career in education in 1999 in her home country of Brazil. She taught in both rural and urban elementary school communities in her first years of teaching. She moved to the United States to begin a family and to pursue the American dream. As an immigrant, Alzimara faced many challenges such as learning English as a second language, and taking the MTEL

multiple times in order to pursue her educator licensure in the state of Massachusetts. Alzimara has a strong background in family outreach and home visit. She understands the challenges families face in a public educational system that is not equipped to meet them where they are. As a speaker of Portuguese, Spanish and English, Alzimara understands the culture of the families. She also provides a warm and welcoming space for parents and guardians to communicate directly about their needs and concerns about their children.

Alzimara is excited to be part of PSi and believes that with hard work and determination, it is possible to make public schools a space that is realistically inclusive and understanding of families.

*Alzimara Oliveira is a Somerville District PSi Fellow and an MPDE PSi Fellow.*



**Nelia Felicia Correa Patrick**  
*Dual Language and World Language  
Spanish Teacher, Walsh Middle School,  
Framingham Public Schools, Framingham  
MA*

Nelia is a proud Latina who strongly advocates for multilingualism and promotes equity in education for BIPOC students. As a middle school Dual Language Teacher, she wrote the grade 8 Spanish Language curriculum, and is currently the Team Lead for the World Language Department at her school. As

an educator she feels that making connections with students motivates them to meet the high expectations that she sets for them.

When she began teaching 25 years ago, Nelia avidly joined the discourse of equity in education for BIPOC students by working in school and community organizations that shared this focus. Nelia was the co-Leader of Latinas en Acción (LEA) which mentored young Latinas in college preparedness, community engagement leadership skills, public speaking, and more.

Nelia's commitment to the Framingham students and community influenced her to join the PSi leadership program. It is her desire that she can have an even greater impact in Framingham as an administrator.

*Nelia Felicia Correa Patrick is a Framingham District PSi Fellow and an MPDE PSi Fellow.*



**Melissa Psallidas**

*Transformative Learning Experience  
Coach, Chelsea Opportunity Academy,  
Chelsea Public Schools, Chelsea MA*

For over a decade, Melissa has been a teacher and leader in various charter and public school settings. She began her teaching career in New Orleans East, a place that has laid the foundation for her work in education in unforgettable ways and still guides her practice daily. Melissa specializes in developing arts infused curriculum,

building cross curricular learning experiences, and fostering a culture of lifelong readers through masterful literacy instruction. She is particularly curious about building free, democratic, child- led schools that center the learner and community, and decenter standardization.

Melissa was awarded ReNEW Schools Teacher of the Year in 2015 for her work as an English and history teacher. Since then, she has taught and led in middle schools in Dorchester and Chelsea. She now coaches and supports teachers at Chelsea Opportunity Academy, a place where students who have struggled to be successful in traditional schools can flourish.

*Melissa Psallidas is a Chelsea District PSi Fellow.*





**Jeny Rivera**

*Vice Principal, Brophy Elementary School,  
Framingham Public Schools, Framingham  
MA*

Jeny was born and raised in Framingham and went to Brophy for elementary school. Her family is from El Salvador, and she speaks Spanish fluently. Jeny has a bachelors in psychology from Pine Manor college and a masters in social work from Simmons University. She has been working in the mental health profession for over ten years. Jeny worked as a

social worker for the Department of Children and Families for nine years. Last year she was a school social worker at Brophy school. Growing up in a low income household and with two immigrant parents who did not speak English made it difficult to navigate school and resources to support their family. Therefore, Jeny's goal has always been to become a person who could help and support families to become better equipped to be advocates for their children and obtain the resources necessary to succeed.

*Jeny Rivera is a Framingham District PSi Fellow and an MPDE PSi Fellow.*



**Shimona Romney**

*Assistant Principal, Fuller Middle School,  
Framingham Public Schools, Framingham  
MA*

Shimona is an anti-racist educator of Caribbean descent. Shimona was the first in her family to earn a college degree. She has earned a BSW and MSW with a concentration in child and adolescent trauma from Rhode Island College and holds a LCSW in the state of Massachusetts. Shimona has worked in both the education and mental health

fields since 2018. She prioritizes creating authentic spaces of belonging for students and staff by encouraging identity expression and meaningful connection. Shimona has done this work as an Adjustment Counselor, grades 3-5 in Fall River Public Schools and as a Social Emotional Behavioral Coach, grades 6-8 in Framingham Public Schools. Shimona is deeply passionate about restorative justice and creating an anti-racist educational experience for students, families, and staff. She is excited to leverage the intersection between belonging and leadership in order to create equitable learning outcomes.

*Shimona Romney is a Framingham District PSi Fellow and an MPDE PSi Fellow.*



**Allison Saiff**

*Music Teacher, Chelsea Public Schools,  
Chelsea MA*

Ali has worked as a general music teacher at the Edgar F. Hooks Elementary School for 4 years. She received her bachelor's in Music Education from Syracuse University in 2015 and her master's in Music Education from the University at Buffalo in 2019. Throughout her career Ali has taught music in grades K-8 in both Massachusetts and New York.

Recently, she has been fortunate enough to be involved with the partnership between Chelsea Public Schools and the Boston Children's Chorus and loves seeing how the opportunity has allowed students across the district to go. Ali strives to make sure her students feel seen and are enthusiastic about music. Beyond teaching music, Ali has also had a variety of experiences with theater, from performing to directing, both as a teacher and in the communities she has lived in. She has worked with the Gatesinger Company (Pultneyville, NY), the Martha's Vineyard Playhouse (Vineyard Haven, MA) and, most recently, the Firehouse Center for the Arts (Newburyport, MA) as a performer and a house manager. Ali looks forward to integrating these connections and passions to further support her students in Chelsea.

*Ali Saiff is a Chelsea District PSi Fellow.*



**Marcella Sancho**

*Vice Principal, Brophy Elementary School,  
Framingham Public Schools, Framingham  
MA*

Marcella (she/her/ella) has spent most of her life in Connecticut, relocating to Massachusetts in 2018 to become a school social worker at Framingham Public Schools. She attended college at Fairfield University where she earned a Bachelors of Arts in International Studies and Spanish and later received her Masters Degree in Clinical Social

Work from Fordham University. Prior to her work in Framingham, she worked as a clinical social worker providing individual and family therapy and also worked for over 4 years within school-based health centers, providing psychotherapeutic services to children and adolescents during the school day. Marcella is passionate about advocacy and equity for students and families who hold historically marginalized identities. She hopes to gain and grow her knowledge of instructional practices and data analysis to equip her in creating strategies and plans to support her school community in rooting itself in equitable and inclusive practices. A point of pride and identity, Marcella's family is from Costa Rica. She tries to encompass her culture's most common phrase "Pura Vida", translated as "pure life." The phrase is more so a way of life for Costa Ricans, focused on positivity, gratitude and living life to the fullest.

*Marcella Sancho is a Framingham District PSi Fellow and an MPDE PSi Fellow.*



**Jason Torrey**

*Biology Teacher, Revere High School, Revere Public Schools, Revere, MA*

Jason has been helping people understand information in learning spaces since he was in middle school, in both informal and formal ways. He has spent the last 15 years coordinating and instructing science learners from middle school to graduate school.

Originally from St. Louis, MO, Jason graduated from Morehouse College and continued his studies at the University of Michigan. Despite spending time as an Adjunct Professor and Senior Museum Educator elsewhere, his East Coast education journey began teaching biology at Revere High School where he has served for the past 4 years. In this capacity, he has led professional development around restorative practices, coached flag football and co-led affinity groups related to diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging (DEIB).

*Jason Torrey is a Revere District PSi Fellow and an MPDE PSi Fellow.*



## **Nancy Uribe**

*Grade 3 Teacher, Unidos Program, East Somerville Community School, Somerville Public Schools, Somerville MA, and an Adjunct Professor at Salem State University*

Nancy is from Colombia, with over a decade of experience teaching bilingual education and advocating for equity for multilingual learners. She began teaching in Colombia in a public school for a low-income community in the city of Medellín. There, she had the

opportunity to develop a kindergarten curriculum and community workshops to support families with pedagogical strategies, to help students at home with their learning process. After moving to the United States, she ran a successful bilingual daycare center for ten years, where she implemented a bilingual curriculum. After that, Nancy returned to teaching in public school as a bilingual teacher in the Boston area and an adjunct professor in the Graduate School of Education at a local university. She is also a well-known speaker at bilingual conferences for different organizations and is also a member of the MABE board for the past few years. Her focus is on issues related to bilingual education, equality, social justice, and building relationships with families and the community to ensure student success. Nancy is a firm believer in the power of positive thinking and mindfulness, and she regularly supports her co-workers with mindfulness exercises during professional development.

*Nancy Uribe is an MPDE PSi Fellow, and a recipient of the Carmen M. Torres Scholarship for Emerging Latine Leaders.*



**Alicia Winslow**

*Music Teacher, Westwood Public Schools,  
Westwood, MA*

Alicia is a veteran music teacher with almost 20 years of teaching experience in a wide variety of K12 settings. Alicia began her teaching career in the city of Hartford and spent the majority of her years there as a middle school and high school instrumental teacher. Eight years ago, she joined the Westwood Public Schools and now directs the string program in grades 2-8 along with

co-teaching the middle school choruses. Alicia is very active in the Massachusetts Music Educators Association and has served multiple terms as an ensemble manager for both the All-State and Eastern District music festivals. In addition to teaching, Alicia maintains a busy freelance schedule performing with local symphonies and chamber ensembles in Southeastern New England.

*Alicia Winslow is a Westwood District PSi Fellow and an MPDE PSi Fellow.*