

PRESCHOOL-KINDERGARTEN SUMMIT

FOSTERING CREATIVITY

AGENDA & CONFERENCE PROGRAM

February 13, 2018
Chicago Botanic Garden



PRESCHOOL-KINDERGARTEN SUMMIT

FOSTERING CREATIVITY

The objectives of the Preschool-Kindergarten Summit 2018 are to gather early childhood colleagues and educational leaders from Chicago's North Shore and nationally to:

- *discuss best practices, early childhood education trends, and emerging research that promote optimal development for our youngest learners*
- *foster a common understanding of developmentally appropriate practice among preschool to kindergarten educators in area schools*
- *provide resources so individuals can advocate for appropriate approaches to early education*

THANK YOU TO THE SUMMIT UNDERWRITERS

Thank you for the generous support of the [Chicago Botanic Garden](#), [Glencoe District 35](#), [Kenilworth District 38](#), [North Shore School District 112](#), [Northern Suburban Special Education District \(NSSED\)](#), [Sunset Ridge School District 29](#), and [The Winnetka Public Schools District 36](#) for making this event possible.

We are also grateful to The Alliance's annual sponsors - [Center of Talent Development at Northwestern University](#), [Glencoe District 35](#), [Kenilworth District 38](#), [North Shore School District 112](#), [Northern Suburban Special Education District \(NSSED\)](#), [Sunset Ridge School District 29](#), [Winnetka Park District](#), and [The Winnetka Public Schools District 36](#).

SUMMIT PLANNING COMMITTEE

Special thanks to the following individuals for assisting in the planning of the 2017 Preschool-Kindergarten Summit:

- Blakely Bundy, Defending the Early Years and The Alliance for Early Childhood
- Maureen Chertow Miller, The Winnetka Public Schools District 36, Winnetka
- Christy Crabtree, Northern Suburban Special Education District (NSSED)
- Debra Gaetano, Glencoe Junior Kindergarten and Nursery School, Glencoe
- Paige Goettel, The Alliance for Early Childhood
- Kathy Hardy, Winnetka Community Nursery School, Winnetka
- Kate Hughes, The Winnetka Public Schools District 36, Winnetka
- Trisha Kocanda, The Winnetka Public Schools District 36, Winnetka
- Kathryn Martin, The Alliance for Early Childhood
- Gina Mathews, The Alliance for Early Childhood
- Chelsey Maxwell, North Shore School District 112, Highland Park
- Tracey McDowell, Joseph Sears School, Kenilworth
- Eileen Prendergast, Chicago Botanic Garden, Glencoe
- Liza Sullivan, The Alliance for Early Childhood

AGENDA

8:30-8:45am Regenstein Center	Check-In and Registration
8:45-9:00am Alsdorf Auditorium, Regenstein Center	Welcome and Overview of the Day
9:00-10:00am Alsdorf Auditorium, Regenstein Center	Keynote Address Engagement First: Pathways to Intrinsically Motivated Learning , Gever Tulley
10:15-11:15am	Concurrent Breakout Sessions (<i>choose one session</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art is a Verb, Kathy Hardy (<i>Linnaeus Room, Regenstein Center</i>) • Block Building Basics I: Creating A Block Area, Rebecca Burdett (<i>Classrooms 10 & 11, Regenstein Learning Campus</i>) • Introduction to the Froebel Gifts and Occupations, Stacey Wellman (<i>Pullman Room, Regenstein Center</i>) • Keynote Extension, Gever Tulley (<i>Burnstein Hall, Regenstein Center</i>)
11:30am-12:30pm	Concurrent Breakout Sessions (<i>choose one session</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Block Building Basics 2: Sustained, Daily Block Building, Rebecca Burdett (<i>Classrooms 10 & 11, Regenstein Learning Campus</i>) • Fostering Creativity Through Play-Based Experiential Learning (PBEL), Joan Almon (<i>Linnaeus Room, Regenstein Center</i>) • Introduction to the Froebel Gifts and Occupations, Stacey Wellman (<i>Pullman Room, Regenstein Center</i>) • Introduction to the Reggio Emilia Approach to Early Learning, Karen Haigh (<i>Alsdorf Auditorium, Regenstein Center</i>) • Moving Toward Meaning: The Elegance and Power of Integrating Physical Literacy and Choreography into Studies with Children, Donna Mandel (<i>Classrooms 1 & 2, Regenstein Learning Campus</i>)
12:30-1:20pm Burnstein Hall, Regenstein Center	Lunch and Networking Enjoy this informal time to eat lunch and build your professional networks.
1:20-2:20pm	Concurrent Breakout Sessions (<i>choose one session</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended Block Play: Community Block Projects, Rebecca Burdett (<i>Classrooms 10 & 11, Regenstein Learning Campus</i>) • Fostering Creativity Through Play-Based Experiential Learning (PBEL), Joan Almon Linnaeus Room, Regenstein Center • Froebel Gifts: Creativity and Play as the Engine for Deep Learning, Stacey Wellman (<i>Pullman Room, Regenstein Center</i>) • Looking at the Reggio Approach and its Connections to Creativity, Karen Haigh (<i>Alsdorf Auditorium, Regenstein Center</i>) • Moving Toward Meaning: The Elegance and Power of Integrating Physical Literacy and Choreography into Studies with Children, Donna Mandel (<i>Classrooms 1 & 2, Regenstein Learning Campus</i>)
2:35-3:15pm Alsdorf Auditorium, Regenstein Center	Conference Wrap-Up: Bringing It All Together Facilitated by:
3:15pm Alsdorf Auditorium, Regenstein Center	Evaluation Completion
3:15pm Krehbiel Gallery, Regenstein Center	Tour the new Chicago Botanic Garden Nature Preschool & Regenstein Learning Campus Meet in the Krehbiel Gallery, Regenstein Center and walk to the Regenstein Learning Campus. Tour the CBG's new Nature Preschool, Nature Play Garden, and Regenstein Learning Campus.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

ENGAGEMENT FIRST: PATHWAYS TO INTRINSICALLY MOTIVATED LEARNING. Looking back at 12 years of experiments in creating highly engaging learning experiences, Gever Tulley will share his infectious optimism and some new ideas that may pave the way to more engaged students.

Facilitated by: Gever Tulley



Gever Tulley is an author, speaker, and computer scientist. In 2005, he founded [Tinkering School](#), afterschool and summer programs involving the use of real tools, materials, and problems to encourage students' love of learning, curiosity about the world, tenacity to think big, and persistence to do amazing things. Most recently in 2011, Gever created [Brightworks](#), a K-12 private school in San Francisco where students explore an idea from multiple perspectives with the help of real-world experts, tools, and experiences; collaborate on projects driven by their curiosity; and share their findings with the world. Rather than tests, grades, and homework, Brightworks supports students as they create a detailed portfolio of their work.

Gever is also the author of [Fifty Dangerous Things \(You Should Let Your Children Do\)](#), an activity book for children and parents to use for exploring the world around them, and [Dangerism!: Why We Worry About the Wrong Things and What It's Doing to Our Kids](#). For more information, visit gevertulley.com.

KEYNOTE EXTENSION

Participants will work together to design, build, and problem solve a unique project using tools and materials. The workshop will begin with an introduction to the tools and materials and basic skills to build simple mechanisms from wire. The project is a surprise, but you can count on learning new skills, making mistakes, and trying harder than usual!

This session will be held from 10:15-11:15am in the Burnstein Hall, Regenstein Center.

OVERVIEW OF BREAKOUT SESSIONS

- **ART IS A VERB**

Art is a verb. Young children are very active. They engage in everything with great enthusiasm, but show little desire to produce a product. The focus of this session is how to provide experiences that enable exploration of various media with freedom.

This session will be held from 10:15-11:15am in the Linnaeus Room, Regenstein Center.

Facilitated by: Kathy Hardy



Kathy Hardy has worked in the field of early childhood for over 30 years, holding positions as director, preschool teacher, elementary teacher, college instructor, mentor and trainer, studio teacher, specializing in documentation of children's work, environments for children, families and staff and the creative arts. She has been an active participant in the McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership mentoring directors across the United States and serving on the Advisory Board. She is a frequent presenter at The Leadership Connection Conference, The NAEYC Conference and Chicago organizations and early care and early childhood centers in the Chicago area. Kathy acted as the art therapist for Chicago Easter Seals, a program serving low income and special needs children. She serves on the Board of the Alliance for Early Childhood and The McCormick Tribune Board for Early Childhood Administration. Kathy holds a Master's degree in early childhood administration and curriculum from National-Louis University and an Illinois Director Credential.

Kathy has visited the schools in Reggio Emilia twice in the past 5 years. Once, as part of a five state administrative tour, representing Illinois and the second time in a focus group on the role of art in children's lives and society. She brings her creative outlook into all does and inspires us to see the extraordinary in everything ordinary.

- **BLOCK BUILDING BASICS I: CREATING THE BLOCK AREA**

You have the blocks, and a space for building...now what? Are you making the most of this critical area in your classroom? In this workshop, participants will discuss how to organize the block area, shelve and arrange blocks to maximize their mathematical properties, select appropriate accessories, and set up simple guidelines from Day 1 that ensure a positive, creative experience for all children. We'll troubleshoot challenging block problems such as too little space, too few blocks, and effective cleanup routines.

This session will be held from 10:15-11:15am in Classrooms 10 & 11, Regenstein Learning Campus.

Facilitated by: Rebecca Burdett



Rebecca Burdett (Bank Street College of Education, Studies in Education, '99) has been an early childhood educator for 34 years, working in both public and private schools in NY's Hudson Valley. She currently teaches Kindergarten in the New Paltz Central School District, in Upstate New York, and is a Teaching Consultant for the Hudson Valley Writing Project, a local site of the National Writing Project, where she presents on topics such as emergent literacy, block play and place-based nature studies for young children. Her chapter, "They Thanked The Bear; Then They Ate The Bear: An Integrated Block-Based Curriculum," appears in the book *Teaching Kindergarten: Learner Centered Classrooms for the 21st Century*.

- **BLOCK BUILDING BASICS 2: SUSTAINED, DAILY BLOCK BUILDING**

Did you ever notice that a few children seem to always end up in (and take over) the block area, while other children within your class seem to shy away? In this workshop, we will learn how sustained, week-long experiences in the block area can provide *all* children with a framework for making the most from block play. We will consider a child's week in the block area as a mirror for the writing process, where children draft, edit, revise, and ultimately, publish their buildings!

This session will be held from 11:30am-12:30pm in Classrooms 10 & 11, Regenstein Learning Campus.

Facilitated by: Rebecca Burdett (See above for Rebecca Burdett's bio)

- **EXTENDED BLOCK PLAY: COMMUNITY BLOCK PROJECTS**

After months of individual block building experiences in the block area, preschoolers and Kindergarteners are ready to use this dynamic space as a studio for sharing all they know about a valued curricular topic. We will examine the case studies of two very different class block projects: "Bird Town" and "Life in the Longhouse," each of which emerged as extended, six-week interdisciplinary studies in the block area, involving every child in the classroom community. Using table blocks, natural materials and simple found objects, we'll give a try to community building ourselves!

This session will be held from 1:20-2:20pm in Classrooms 10 & 11, Regenstein Learning Campus.

Facilitated by: Rebecca Burdett (See above for Rebecca Burdett's bio)

- **FOSTERING CREATIVITY THROUGH PLAY-BASED EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (PBEL)**

Young children overflow with creativity and curiosity which they use to discover themselves and make sense of the world around them. This process is enhanced through play-based experiential approaches in preschool and kindergarten. Unfortunately, the pressure to meet today's academic standards often result in a loss of playful learning and creativity. Yet slowly, parents, educators, and policy makers are again realizing that a hands-on, play-based approach to early education strengthens children's healthy development, their creativity and zest for learning and are advocating for its return.

This session will be held from 11:30am-12:30pm and 1:20-2:20pm in the Linnaeus Room, Regenstein Center.

Facilitated by: Joan Almon



Joan Almon was a Waldorf early childhood educator for over thirty years and then co-founded the Alliance for Childhood out of a deep concern for the decline in children's health and wellbeing. She is known for her work to restore play to children's lives in early education, in school settings, and in communities. Her most recent publication is *Playing It Up - With loose parts, playpods, and adventure playgrounds* (available online at allianceforchildhood.org.)

- **FROEBEL GIFTS: CREATIVITY AND PLAY AS THE ENGINE FOR DEEP LEARNING**

Today, Froebel reminds both parents and educators that learning through the senses, relationship development and connectedness to the environment need to remain at the forefront of 21st century thinking when designing educational experiences that develop the intellect, creativity, sociability, and morality of a child. Froebel intuitively knew that children construct knowledge through visual, spatial and tactile feedback. He designed instructional practices and experiences that moved away from direct teaching and centered on the sensory-rich experiences of play. He created his own educational toys, the Gifts, to represent and connect children to the

basic geometric forms of nature. The purpose of this workshop is to allow participants to dive deeply into Gift Play. Hands-on exploration activities will be provided that allow participants to develop a stronger understanding of the concepts and skills taught through the Froebel Gifts. Examples will be provided regarding how the Gifts can be implemented into the modern day classroom.

This session will be held from 10:15-11:15am and 11:30am-12:30pm in the Pullman Room, Regenstein Center.

Facilitated by: Stacey Wellman



Stacey Wellman is a graduate of Northwestern University. She completed her undergraduate and graduate degrees from the institution. Stacey has been a speech-language pathologist in the public schools for over twenty years. Outside of the public school, she runs a Roots and Shoots program and travels internationally with students, believing that learning must extend beyond the classroom and into nature.

- **INTRODUCTION TO THE FROEBEL GIFTS AND OCCUPATIONS**

Friedrich Froebel recognized that every child has his or her own inner structure. He felt it was of primary importance to enable children to draw their own conclusions rather than be provided with answers. He disliked elaborate toys that discouraged creativity and discovery, believing that less was more. To create a life-long learner, he knew that children needed experiences that stimulated the senses, challenged the mind, and nourished the soul. The Froebel Gifts and Occupations are elegantly simple but allow for a profoundly deep exploration of spatial reasoning, analytical thinking, and creative design. The Gifts are modular, logical, and multi-functional. They are intended to be explored and experienced, allowing children to be open, creative, self-activated learners. The Occupations are the complement to the Gifts, building underlying neurodevelopmental processes necessary for higher thinking and learning. While the Froebel Gifts and Occupations were initially intended for young children, they continue to challenge the minds of all ages of learners. The purpose of this workshop is to introduce Friedrich Froebel's educational philosophy, as well as give an overview and introduction to the Froebel Gifts and Occupations. Hands-on activities will be provided that enable participants to develop a beginning understanding of the materials.

This session will be held from 1:20-2:20pm in the Pullman Room, Regenstein Center.

Facilitated by: Stacey Wellman (See above for Stacey Wellman's bio)

- **INTRODUCTION TO THE REGGIO EMILIA APPROACH TO EARLY LEARNING**

This session will review some of the history of the Reggio Emilia Approach to early learning, the principles of the approach along with images of the practice in Italy and some images of adaptations in the U.S.

This session will be held from 11:30am-12:30pm in the Alsdorf Auditorium, Regenstein Center.

Facilitated by: Karen M. Haigh



Karen M. Haigh, Ph.D., is currently an early education consultant. She is a former Associate Professor in the Early Childhood Education. While at Columbia College Chicago her areas of interest included Reggio Inspired principles and practices in an American Context with a particular focus on the Classroom Environment, the Role of Materials and Languages, Documentation, Listening and Observing to development emergent curriculum, Parent Partnerships, Collaboration, and Professional Development. She continues to study action research, professional development, and emergent curriculum development within her

current projects involving public and private schools and community based organizations.

Dr. Haigh has co-authored, *We Are All Explorers: Learning and Teaching with Reggio Principles in Urban Settings*. She has also contributed chapters/sections for books: *Insights and Inspirations*, *Next Steps Towards the Reggio Way* and *First Steps Towards the Reggio Way*. These works relate to her past position and experiences as administrator at Chicago Commons, which had focused heavily on the Reggio Approach. Additionally, she has written articles for *Theory Into Practice*, *Child Care Information Exchange* and *Innovations in Early Education*.

Dr. Haigh has worked as a teacher of young children, an education coordinator and a program administrator within Chicago Area Social Service organizations. Additionally, she has worked as director of professional development for the Chicago Public Schools Early Childhood Education Department.

- **LOOKING AT THE REGGIO APPROACH AND ITS CONNECTIONS TO CREATIVITY**

This session will discuss definitions and values of creativity. Then images of children's work or experiences will be viewed in order to note creativity and how it was supported and provoked through relationships with adults, children, and the environment.

This session will be held from 1:20-2:20pm in the Alsdorf Auditorium, Regenstein Center.

Facilitated by: Karen M. Haigh (See above for Karen Haigh's bio)

- **MOVING TOWARD MEANING: THE ELEGANCE AND POWER OF INTEGRATING PHYSICAL LITERACY AND CHOREOGRAPHY INTO STUDIES WITH CHILDREN**

Children want to move. Teachers can harness this passion and use it to help children explore ideas, construct meaning and communicate. Situating children's movement studies in both theory and practice, we will look at the why and how of taking this most fundamental human language into full expression, both on its own, and in tandem with other languages and literacies. Participants will have an opportunity for a hands-on experience investigating elements of space, time and energetic quality in movement, and to see examples of children applying these elements as they choreograph and perform. Studies integrating movement with science, art, literature and math will be presented along with structures for eliciting focused movement exploration, body and spatial awareness, and the development of dialogue through and among these shared and complimentary languages.

This session will be held from 11:30am-12:30pm and 1:20-2:20pm in Classrooms 1 & 2, Regenstein Learning Campus.

Facilitated by: Donna Mandel



Donna Mandel is a Nursery School Head Teacher at the University of Chicago Laboratory Schools. Serving as a choreographer and artistic co-director of Fluid Measure Performance Company, she was awarded numerous fellowships from the Illinois Arts Council and residencies from the Ragdale Foundation. She has served as a dance artist and consultant in Chicago area schools under the auspices of venues such as the Art Institute of Chicago, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Chicago Arts Partnership in Education, and Erikson Institute. After completing her M.A. in Teaching from National-Louis University, Mandel served as a preschool teacher at First United Nursery School in Oak Park and as a dance integration consultant at Velma Thomas Early Childhood Center in Chicago before joining the faculty of the University of Chicago Laboratory Schools.

PLAN YOUR DAY

Breakout Session Registration

Prior to the Summit, we recommend that you use [Sched](#) to register for the breakout sessions you'd like to attend (see directions below). Some rooms have capacity restrictions, so only those who have pre-registered can be accommodated.

Please note if you pre-registered using Sched, on the evening before the Summit, you will receive an email outlining your personal event agenda. You can also follow the instructions below to access your schedule.

1. Go to <https://2018annualprekindergartensummit.sched.com/>
2. Log in with your email address
3. Simply click on the sessions you want to attend
4. Click your Profile (your head or initials, top right)
5. Choose "My Sched" to save your schedule by taking a screenshot, printing or emailing it to yourself.

	Alsldorf Auditorium Regenstein Center	Pullman Room Regenstein Center	Linnaeus Room, Regenstein Center	Burnstein Hall Regenstein Center	Classrooms 1 & 2, Regenstein Learning Campus	Classrooms 10 & 11, Regenstein Learning Campus
8:45-9:00am	Welcome					
9:00-10:00am	Keynote Address					
10:15-11:15am		Introduction To The Froebel Gifts And Occupations Stacey Wellman	Art Is A Verb Kathy Hardy	Keynote Extension Gever Tulley		Block Building Basics I: Creating A Block Area Rebecca Burdett
11:30am-12:30pm	Introduction To The Reggio Emilia Approach To Early Learning Karen Haigh	Introduction To The Froebel Gifts And Occupations Stacey Wellman	Fostering Creativity Through Play- Based Experiential Learning (PBEL) Joan Almon		Moving Toward Meaning Donna Mandel	Block Building Basics 2: Sustained, Daily Block Building Rebecca Burdett
12:30-1:20pm				Lunch		
1:20-2:20pm	Looking At The Reggio Approach And Its Connections To Creativity Karen Haigh	Froebel Gifts: Creativity And Play As The Engine For Deep Learning Stacey Wellman	FOSTERING CREATIVITY THROUGH PLAY- BASED EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (PBEL) Joan Almon		Moving Toward Meaning Donna Mandel	Extended Block Play: Community Block Projects Rebecca Burdett
2:35-3:15pm	Conference Wrap-Up					
3:15pm	Online Evaluation					
3:15pm	Tour CBG Preschool & Regenstein Learning Campus (Krehbiel Gallery)					