



# Academic Leaders Meetup: Boston

Forging connections, deepening leadership

Harvard Club of Boston

Friday, April 11th 2025 | 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM ET



## Meet the speakers

t

Learn and connect with our keynote speakers, panellists, and workshop facilitators!



**Jay McTighe**

Author, Consultant,  
and Co-creator of the  
UbD framework



**Trevor MacKenzie**

Teacher, Author,  
and Consultant,  
TMac Consulting



**Jared Colley**

Head of Learning &  
Innovation,  
Mt. Vernon School



**Cindy Blackburn**

Director, Learning and  
Engagement - Toddle



**Dr. Mehdi Lazar**

Academic Director at the  
International School of  
Boston



**Josh Clark**

Head of School at Landmark  
School



**Connie White**

Director of Learning &  
Innovation Woodward  
Academy, College Park,  
Georgia

# Event agenda



Time	Title & Speakers	Agenda
8:30 am	<b>Registration &amp; Breakfast</b>	Collect your name tag and Toddle goodies at our registration desk, and mingle with academic leaders from the Boston region over continental breakfast.
9:00 am Opening session	<b>Welcome and opening remarks</b>	
9:10 am Keynote and Workshop	<b>Leading a culture of curriculum excellence</b> <i>with Jay McTighe</i>	<p>As a leader, you want your school's unique identity to flourish through a curriculum that truly reflects your school's vision. But how do you strike the right balance between educator's autonomy and the need for a coherent and well-aligned curriculum?</p> <p>Join Jay McTighe, co-author of the Understanding by Design® framework, for a session where he'll present a blueprint for a school-wide curriculum and assessment system that is aligned, meaningful, and built to last.</p> <p>In this session, you will learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the elements of a "guaranteed and viable" pre-K-12 curriculum that integrates your school-specific goals with academic content;</li><li>• ways of achieving a vertically aligned curriculum that "spirals" around big ideas and essential questions;</li><li>• ideas for crafting an authentic assessment system for gathering evidence on all valued learning outcomes.</li><li>• ways of allowing teacher autonomy within a coordinated curriculum framework.</li></ul>

# Event agenda



Time	Title & Speakers	Agenda
10:40 am Break	Coffee break	
11:10 am Panel discussion	<b>Turn school mission statements into student-centered outcomes</b>	<p>How do school leaders turn mission statements into tangible, student-centered outcomes?</p> <p>In this dynamic panel, local leaders will share actionable ways they embed their values into daily practice - ensuring culture is visible, felt, and sustained. From onboarding new staff to shaping a Portrait of a Graduate, fostering family partnerships, and designing professional learning, panelists will discuss how they differentiate their schools and bring their vision to life.</p> <p>The panel will share:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• leadership strategies to build resilient and innovative school communities.</li><li>• insights on fostering collaboration and future-focused thinking across your teams.</li><li>• how to navigate challenges and lead cultures of change.</li></ul>
11:50 pm Break	Lunch	
12:50 pm Keynote	<b>Leading with an Inquiry Mindset</b> <i>with Trevor MacKenzie</i>	<p>Great leaders don't just provide answers, they ask better questions. Inquiry-based leadership fosters teacher agency, student engagement, and deeper learning. In this session, Trevor MacKenzie will explore how curiosity can be leveraged as a powerful leadership tool, providing strategies to help educators and students think critically, solve problems, and engage deeply in learning.</p>

# Event agenda

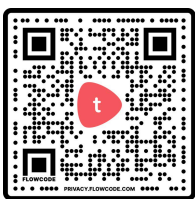


Time	Title & Speakers	Agenda
<b>12:50 pm</b> Keynote	<b>Leading with an Inquiry Mindset</b> <i>with Trevor MacKenzie</i>	In this session, you will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• learn how to embed inquiry-based leadership into school culture to drive innovation and teacher agency.</li><li>• discover question routines that empower both educators and students to develop critical thinking skills.</li><li>• gain strategies to lead with inquiry, curiosity, and intentionality for meaningful school transformation.</li></ul>
<b>1:50 pm</b> Break	<b>Coffee break</b>	
<b>2:20 pm</b> Workshop	<b>Personalizing with AI: A New Frontier</b> <i>with Jared Colley and Cindy Blackburn</i>	How can we truly personalize learning for 25+ unique students in a single classroom?  Join Jared Colley, Head of Learning and Innovation at Mt. Vernon School, and Cindy Blackburn, Director of Learning and Engagement at Toddle for a workshop on effectively integrating AI tools to enhance curriculum practices including application of competency-based and mastery-based learning. You'll also go deep into exploring how AI Tutors can empower educators, providing real-time feedback and targeted support while saving valuable time.

# Event agenda



Time	Title & Speakers	Agenda
2:20 pm Workshop	<b>Personalizing with AI: A New Frontier</b> <i>with Jared Colley and Cindy Blackburn</i>	In this session, you will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• understand how to select AI tools for effectively implementing a curriculum that meets the school's vision.</li><li>• discover the power of AI tutors to enhance personalized learning and support diverse learner needs.</li><li>• design a strategy unique to your school in selecting AI tools that help your school meet its student-centered vision.</li></ul>
3:20 pm Closing session	<b>Closing remarks</b>	
3:30 pm onwards Social	<b>Toddle Mixer</b>	Relax with complimentary drinks as you reconnect with fellow school leaders and build new relationships.



Still need to save your free seat? Simply scan this QR code.