Mathew Portell Bio

Mathew Portell has dedicated over a decade to education in his role as a teacher, instructional coach, teacher mentor, and school administrator. It is through the collaborative team approach and building positive relationships that Portell is leading his school into success. He is currently in his fourth year as principal of Fall-Hamilton Elementary, a nationally recognized innovative model school for trauma-informed practices in Metro Nashville Public Schools. The school’s work has been featured on National Public Radio, the local documentary Enough, PBS, and Edutopia, one of the world’s top educational practices website funded by the George Lucas Foundation. Principal Portell has had the honor of presenting Fall-Hamilton’s work to both the Tennessee State Legislative and Senate Education Committees along with some of the U.S. most influential educators who serve on the National Commission of Social Emotional and Academic Development. In January 2019 he traveled to England as the keynote speaker for Towards Trauma Informed in Northampton. His work is now being featured in a monthly blog in Education Week tilted “Learning is Social and Emotional” where he is documenting the journey of sustaining a trauma-informed school. He has also written contributions to Edutopia. He also contributed to the white paper: How Leaders Can Shift Mindsets and Create a Trauma-Informed Student Support Form, which can be located on ASCD website. He is the founder Trauma Educators Schools Network Group on Facebook which has connected over 4,500 educators in 30 different countries!

Mathew’s work extends past his educational experience. As a classroom teacher in 2008, he combined his passion for literacy and cycling and founded the double award winning national non-profit Ride for Reading. The organization promotes literacy and healthy living through the distribution of books via bicycle to underserved children. Ride for Reading has donated over 500,000 books to children nationally.