Speaker Bios for: Student Success Through Social and Emotional Learning
August 7, 2019
9-10:15am
Room 202, Music City Convention Center

**John M. Bridgeland, Founder & CEO, Civic**

John Bridgeland is Founder & CEO of Civic; Vice Chairman of Malaria No More, a non-profit working to end malaria deaths in Africa; Vice Chairman of the Service Year Alliance to make a year of national service a common expectation and opportunity for all 18-28 year olds; Co-Convener of Grad Nation to reach a 90 percent high school graduation rate by 2020; Commissioner and Co-Chair of the Policy Committee of the National Commission on Social, Emotional and Academic Development at the Aspen Institute; Co-Founder of the Aspen High Seas Initiative to protect 30 percent of the ocean as marine reserves by 2030, and Executive Producer of the 2017 National Geographic film, *Sea of Hope*.

Previously, Bridgeland was appointed by President Obama to serve on the White House Council for Community Solutions, and by President George W. Bush to serve as Director of the White House Domestic Policy Council, Assistant to the President of the United States, and first Director of the USA Freedom Corps. The Freedom Corps grew Peace Corps to the highest levels in 40 years, AmeriCorps by 50 percent, and created a new Citizen Corps to engage Americans in disaster preparedness and response after 9/11. Bridgeland is author of the book, *Heart of the Nation: Volunteering and America’s Civic Spirit*, and gave a TED talk in 2017 at TEDx Pennsylvania entitled, *One Nation Indivisible*.

Bridgeland is a graduate of Harvard College and the University of Virginia School of Law. He practiced law in the New York and Paris, France offices of Davis Polk & Wardwell, won the 2015 Intercollegiate Tennis Association’s Lifetime Achievement Award, and has given the commencement address at half a dozen colleges, where he has received honorary degrees. He lives in McLean, Virginia with his wife and three children.

**Nick Yoder, Director of Policy and Practice, CASEL: Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning**

Nick Yoder oversees multiple policy and practice related initiatives specific to supporting state education agencies (SEAs) as they plan, develop, and implement statewide policies and practices that support high-quality SEL implementation in CASEL’s partner states, districts, schools, classrooms and communities. Through this work, he leads the technical assistance that CASEL offers to SEAs and co-designs a research agenda to better understand and guide the state-level work.

Prior to CASEL, Nick was a senior technical assistant consultant at the American Institutes for Research (AIR), where he led statewide efforts to support systemic SEL implementation supports (e.g., SEL learning goals/standards and professional learning experiences) through federally funded technical assistance centers, such as the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders (GTL Center), the Great Lakes Comprehensive Center, and the National Center on Safe and Supportive Learning Environments. Nick also worked with multiple SEL programs in their continuous improvement efforts, using mixed methods data to provide feedback to programs to make improvements.
Mathew Portell, Principal, Fall-Hamilton Elementary School, Nashville, Tenn.

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 titled "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.