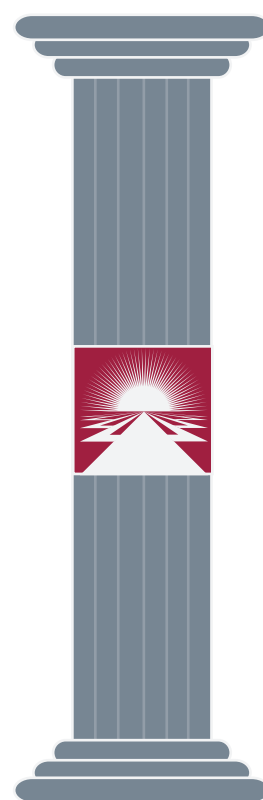


# Cross-Boundary Leaders for

# EDUCATION



# AND EQUITY

## Symposium

**September 30, 2014**

# Cross-Boundary Leaders for Education and Equity Symposium

Public education has become an increasingly polarizing topic. Yet, experience and research tell us that solutions to our most pressing educational issues are likely to emerge when leaders work together across boundaries—be they ideological, geographical, or institutional. For 50 years the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) has championed the need for leaders at all levels to shake off their institutional constraints and jointly respond to the needs of young people and their families.

IEL's Cross-Boundary Leaders for Education and Equity Symposium offers an objective, open-minded, nonpartisan space where leaders can come together and discuss complex issues facing public education and to offer forward-thinking solutions.

## Agenda

**Welcome:** Martin J. Blank, IEL President

**Panel 1:** Preparing Leaders for Public Education

**Panel 2:** Family Engagement in Education

**Panel 3:** Pathways to Success

**Closing:** Martin J. Blank



## Preparing Leaders for Public Education



**Is the incessant glare of public scrutiny in our 24-hour news cycle driving away good people and creating a leadership gap in education? What can we do to attract and prepare the leaders that public education needs?**



### **Andrew Lachman**

*Executive Director, Connecticut Center for School Change*

The Connecticut Center for School Change (the “Center”) is a statewide, non-profit organization with a mission to improve teaching and learning

and reduce achievement gaps. Mr. Lachman became the Center's executive director in 2000 after serving for 13 years as a senior advisor on policy and program development to former superintendents Anthony J. Alvarado and Elaine Fink in New York City's Community School District 2. He played a key role in that district's implementation of standards-based education reform. Mr. Lachman assisted the superintendent in developing and managing

innovative educational programs, professional development initiatives for improving teaching and learning, and strategies for enhancing school leadership. Mr. Lachman earned a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Chicago and a Master's degree in education from Teachers College, Columbia University.



### **Larry Leverett**

*Executive Director, Panasonic Foundation*

Dr. Larry Leverett is the Executive Director of the Panasonic Foundation, an endowed philanthropic nonprofit that provides expertise and

long-term partnerships with urban school districts to build sustainable systems that improve educational outcomes for all students. The New Jersey Network of Superintendents is a component of Panasonic's leadership development portfolio and involves urban and suburban school districts with diverse student populations to engage in a community of practice focused on systemic approaches to equity and excellence in public education. Dr. Leverett serves on the advisory committee for the Laura Bush Foundation for School Libraries and is a co-founder and board chair for the Coalition of Schools Educating Boys of Color. He graduated Virginia State University with a degree in elementary education and completed his Master's and Doctorate degrees at Teachers College, Columbia University.



### **Mary A. Ronan**

*Superintendent, Cincinnati (OH) Public Schools*

Superintendent Mary A. Ronan is now in her seventh year leading Cincinnati Public Schools and her 37th year with the district. Superintendent

Ronan has led Cincinnati Public Schools to the distinction of being Ohio's highest-performing urban school district for four school years. She introduced new strategies designed to increase student performance, including the Elementary Initiative: Ready for High School, and increased the academic rigor of courses offered in high school and expanded college access. Before her appointment as Interim Superintendent, she served as Director of Schools supervising the district's principals. She previously served as an Assistant Superintendent and she was principal of Kilgour School in 2001-02 when it won a National Blue Ribbon Award of Excellence from the U.S. Department of Education. Superintendent Ronan holds bachelor's degrees in biology, education and philosophy; and a Master's degree in business administration. She

serves on numerous boards of civic, cultural, educational and social-service organizations.



### **José Torres**

*President, Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy*

Dr. Torres was recently selected as President of the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy (IMSA) in

Aurora, IL, a teaching and learning laboratory that enrolls academically talented Illinois students (grades 10-12) and serves thousands of educators and students in Illinois and beyond. Prior to his position as President of IMSA, Dr. Torres spent 6 years as Superintendent of School District U-46 in Elgin, IL. In partnership with the Board of Education and U-46 staff, Dr. Torres developed Destination 2015, the district's five-year accountability plan. From February 2011 through 2013, Dr. Torres served as the only superintendent on the federal Equity and Excellence Commission of the United States Department of Education, and he was named a recipient of AASA's 2014 Dr. Effie H. Jones Humanitarian Award. Dr. Torres holds a Bachelor of General Studies, a Master of Education and a Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Administration from the University of Maryland.



### **Jerry Weast (Moderator)**

*Former Superintendent, Montgomery Co. (MD) Public Schools; IEL Board Member*

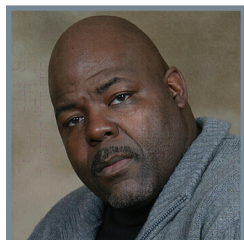
Dr. Jerry Weast is a veteran of education leadership with 35 years of experience as a superintendent of schools. Dr. Weast led Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) in Maryland to achieve both the highest graduation rate among the nation's largest school districts for four consecutive years and some of the highest academic performance measures ever in MCPS. He has received numerous awards and honors, including the Educator of the Year Award from the Schott Foundation for Public Education (2011) and the American Educational Research Association's 2012 Distinguished Public Service Award. Dr. Weast authored a chapter on the achievement gap in the book *Improving the Odds for America's Children*. He serves on many boards and advisory groups including the IEL board of directors and the National Education Association Foundation Senior Fellows Advisory Group. Dr. Weast is founder and president of the Partnership for Deliberate Excellence, LLC, through which he works with school districts.



# Family Engagement for Education



State, district, and school leaders struggle with how to cultivate and sustain positive relationships with families that can improve outcomes. Are we making progress?



## Jitu Brown

*National Director, Journey for Justice Alliance*

Jitu Brown is the national director for the Journey for Justice Alliance, a network of 30 grassroots community-based organizations in 23 cities organizing for community-driven school improvement. He was formerly the education organizer for the Kenwood-Oakland Community Organization. He helped develop the Mid-South Education Association, a grassroots advocacy group made up of administrators, parents, teachers, young people, and local school council members to meet the needs of area schools. He has been published in the magazine *Rethinking Schools*, appeared in *Ebony* magazine and on several talk shows, including MSNBC's *The Ed Show*, Al Jazeera America, WBEZ's *Community Voices*, *Democracy Now*, and CLTV's *Gerard McClellon Live*. Mr. Brown studied at Eastern Arizona College and Northeastern Illinois University, majoring in communications with a minor in Spanish.



## Yolie Flores

*Senior Fellow, Campaign for Grade-Level Reading*

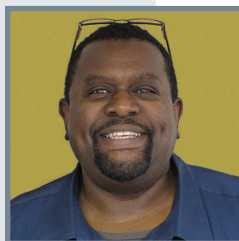
Yolie Flores is a Senior Fellow with the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, a collaborative, national effort to ensure that more children from low-income families succeed in school. In this role, Ms. Flores leads the work on Successful Parents and supports over 150 communities in their efforts to integrate parents into their work to ensure that more children are reading at grade level by third grade. From 2007-2011, Ms. Flores served on the LAUSD Board of Education where she led efforts to challenge the culture of failure for poor children and children of color. Ms. Flores is most recognized for having ushered groundbreaking reform policies, including Parents as Equal Partners in the Education of Their Children and Public School Choice. Ms. Flores earned her undergraduate degree from the University of Redlands and her Master's in Social Welfare from UCLA.



## Sue Swenson

*Deputy Asst. Secretary, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, U.S. Dept. of Education*

Sue Swenson got involved with disability advocacy because her middle son, Charlie, had profound disabilities. She was active in the Minneapolis schools as well as in state and federal policy while working as a professional services marketing director before being named a Kennedy Fellow in the U.S. Senate in 1996. She has served as the U.S. commissioner for developmental disabilities in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and now serves as deputy assistant secretary for special education and rehabilitative services in the U.S. Department of Education. Ms. Swenson served as CEO of The Arc of the United States and executive director of the Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation. She was educated at the University of Chicago and earned an MBA at the University of Minnesota.



## Kwesi Rollins (Moderator)

*Director, Leadership Programs, IEL*

A member of IEL's Senior Leadership Team, Kwesi Rollins guides IEL's portfolio of programs designed to develop and support leaders, with a particular emphasis on family and community engagement, early childhood education, and community-based leadership development. Mr. Rollins directs several projects including the Kellogg Leadership for Community Change/Community Learning Exchange Project and the District Leaders Network on Family and Community Engagement. He is also president of the Parklands Community Center Board of Directors, has been recognized as the Big Brother of the Year in DC, and is an ex-officio member of the Board of Directors of Big Brothers Big Sisters of the National Capitol Area. He completed work on his MSW degree in 1996 at the University of Maryland at Baltimore School of Social Work, where he was a Maternal and Child Health Leadership Training Fellow.



# Pathways to Success

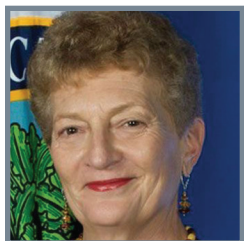
Young people are increasingly disengaged from society. What can leaders do to put disengaged and disconnected youth on pathways to success?



## **David E. Brown**

*Senior Fellow, Annie E. Casey Foundation*

David E. Brown is a senior associate with the Juvenile Justice Strategy Group of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, where he helps coordinate the foundation's juvenile justice system reform work. Prior to joining Casey in 2011, David was deputy director of the D.C. Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS), where he led the development of a comprehensive, community-based continuum of care and a service delivery system that included evidence-based practices and a menu of services, supports, and opportunities grounded in youth development. Before joining DYRS, Mr. Brown served as executive director of the National Youth Employment Coalition and as a senior policy analyst with the National Governors Association. Earlier in his career, he benefited from a range of youth policy, administrative, and program experiences within public and nonprofit youth-serving organizations at state and local levels. He earned a Masters in Public Administration from Baruch College, which he attended as a National Urban Fellow.



## **Brenda Dann-Messier**

*Former Asst. Secretary, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education, U.S. Dept. of Education*

Ms. Brenda Dann-Messier has worked her entire career to expand education and workforce opportunities for low-income youth and adults, with a primary emphasis on adult education, career and technical education, correctional education, and supporting community colleges. Ms. Dann-Messier was the assistant secretary for career, technical, and adult education (2009-2014) and served as acting assistant secretary for the Office of Post-secondary Education (2013-2014) in the U.S. Department of Education. Previously, she served as president of Dorcas Place Adult & Family Learning Center in Providence, RI, which provides educational and workforce services, college preparatory classes, and family literacy programs for low-income adults and disconnected youth.



## **Michael Gritton**

*Executive Director, KentuckianaWorks*

For 12 years, Mr. Michael Gritton has served as the Executive Director of KentuckianaWorks, the Louisville, KY region's Workforce Investment Board (WIB). Mr. Gritton's tenure has been marked by innovations that create opportunities for individuals to improve their economic competitiveness. These include a cutting-edge summer jobs effort (the Mayor's Summer-Works Program) that helped over 2,100 16-21-year-olds find work in the Louisville region in 2014 and won First Place for Mayor Greg Fischer in the U.S. Conference of Mayors Summer Youth Jobs Challenge in 2013; a regional partnership (WIRED65) with three other WIBs that spans a 26-county, two-state region and was given a national "systems change" award from the National Fund for Workforce Solutions; and the nation's first College Access Center run by a WIB. Mr. Gritton is a graduate of Duke University and Columbia Law School.



## **Joan Wills (Moderator)**

*Senior Policy Fellow, IEL*

In 1991, Ms. Joan L. Wills launched IEL's Center for Workforce Development, which concentrates on development and improvement of employment-related learning systems. Her work has focused on development of tools (such as skill and literacy standards); systems improvements (such as transition from school to work); and capacity of institutions (such as employer-led organizations to work with education and youth-serving organizations). Prior to IEL, she served as project manager of the Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce. She was the Director of the Center for Policy Research at the National Governor's Association and served as a gubernatorial-appointed workforce development agency director in Ohio and Illinois. She has considerable international education and workforce development experience through work with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and the Inter-American Development Bank.

# About the Institute for Educational Leadership

For a half-century, the Institute for Educational Leadership has championed the need for leaders at all levels to shake off their institutional constraints and work across boundaries to address the needs of young people and their families. Bound by no constituency, IEL serves as a catalyst that helps policymakers, administrators, and practitioners at all levels to bridge bureaucratic silos and undo gridlock to improve outcomes for all young people and their families.

The work of IEL focuses on three pillars required for young people and their communities to succeed.

- Involving the broader community with public education to support the learning and development of young people.
- Building more effective pathways into the workforce for all young people and supporting the transition to adulthood.
- Preparing generations of leaders with the know-how to drive collaborative efforts at all levels.

## Vision

A society that uses all of its resources effectively to provide an equal opportunity for all children and youth to learn, develop, and become contributing citizens of our democracy.

## Mission

To equip leaders to work together across boundaries to build effective systems that prepare children and youth for postsecondary education, careers, and citizenship.

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# Leadership Lessons for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Fifty years of equipping leaders to work together across boundaries to build effective systems that prepare children and youth for college, careers, and citizenship yields many lessons. The Institute for Educational Leadership's broad network of leaders—superintendents, principals, policy leaders, academics, public officials, private funders and community-based practitioners—shared their lessons as a part of IEL's 50th anniversary celebration. Ten powerful lessons emerged from our review of their advice. We are grateful for their contribution.

1. Leaders are anchored in a commitment to equity and the pursuit of social justice. They mobilize partners and build collective will to ensure opportunities for all children and youth.
2. Leaders dream of a better world. They ground a shared vision in audacious possibility and practicality.
3. Leaders recognize that knowing how to lead change is as important as knowing the change one wants to achieve. They respect history, understand how people adapt, and focus on results. Leaders enable their teams and their community to see and pursue a clear path forward.
4. Leaders are committed to democracy and participatory approaches to change. By reaching across boundaries and fostering collaboration, they bring together resources from diverse people and organizations to help attain shared goals.
5. Leaders embrace and manage the tensions that are pervasive in their work and help others do the same. They balance the importance of building strong trusting relationships with demands for accountability and quick action, never overlooking one for the other.
6. Leaders are humble, yet relentless; tolerant, yet demanding; focused and analytical, yet creative systems-thinkers. They are unfailingly truthful, respectful, and ethical.
7. Leaders create a supportive and responsive culture—a culture of inclusion at all levels, a culture that helps individuals grow and learn, and a culture that embraces risk and learns from mistakes along the pathway to success. And, they know that “culture eats strategy for lunch.”
8. Leaders are present. They are reflective. They take care of themselves physically, mentally, and spiritually, so they can be fully focused in the moment.
9. Leaders listen actively and learn from everyone. They learn from their peers, from people in their own field and others, and from people all across their community.
10. Leadership can emerge from anywhere and anyone. Leaders mentor and empower, knowing that many more strong leaders are needed to enable all children and youth to succeed.

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