

# CONDITION OF EDUCATION

JANUARY 26, 2022



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# AGENDA

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## WELCOME

**Celine Coggins**, Executive Director, Grantmakers for Education,  
and Chair of the Board, Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy

## RESEARCH PRESENTATION

**Chad d'Entremont**, Executive Director, Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy

**Sophie Zamarripa**, Senior Associate, Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS: COMMUNITY CONVERSATION

**Sara Colum**, Consulting Teacher, Revere Public Schools

**Marianela De La Cruz**, Manager, Lawrence Working Families Initiative

**Mark Kostin**, Associate Director, Great Schools Partnership

**Katherine Lopez-Arias**, Director of Workforce Development, Lawrence CommunityWorks

**Stefanie Porrazzo**, Consulting Teacher, Revere Public Schools

*Panel Moderator:*

**Jessica Boston Davis**, Director of Equity and Excellence, Somerville Public Schools, and Board  
Member, Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy

## PANEL

**Samantha Aigner-Treworgy**, Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care

**Jeffrey C. Riley**, Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

**Carlos Santiago**, Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Higher Education

*Panel Moderators:*

**John H. Jackson**, President and CEO, Schott Foundation for Public Education

**Michael S. Wotorson**, Director of the National Opportunity to Learn Network, Schott Foundation for  
Public Education

## CLOSING REMARKS

**James Peyser**, Massachusetts Secretary of Education

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# SPEAKERS

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## **SAMANTHA AIGNER-TREWORGY**

### ***Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care***

Samantha Aigner-Treworgy was sworn in as Commissioner of the MA Department of Early Education and Care in August 2019. She began her career in early education and care in the classroom, serving as a preschool teacher in Western Massachusetts and the Chicagoland area. After some time as a teacher coach and social-emotional consultant to child care agencies, she began focusing on the development of early education policies that benefited children and families. Ms. Aigner-Treworgy helped to advance federal- and state-level initiatives at the Ounce of Prevention Fund, including the Illinois Infant & Toddler Early Learning Guidelines and ExceleRate, the Illinois Quality Rating and Improvement System. Later she worked with the City of Chicago and Chicago Public Schools to develop an innovative early childhood strategy focused on quality and access, and with the Ounce of Prevention Fund helped launch a national policy initiative that focused on supporting school districts to effectively implement early learning strategies in collaboration with local communities. Most recently, she was the Chief of Early Learning for the City of Chicago where she was the key architect of the City's early childhood strategic plan, which focused on reducing barriers for families and identifying administrative efficiencies across agencies. In this role she oversaw approximately \$350 million in early childhood funding across multiple City agencies, including coordination of birth-to-five services in schools, community-based organizations, libraries, and health and human service programs. While working for the City of Chicago Ms. Aigner-Treworgy also reconfigured the early childhood financing structures, oversaw the City's design for providing universal full-day pre-kindergarten to all four-year-olds, and launched the pilot of a universal nurse/home-visiting program with the City's Department of Public Health. Commissioner Aigner-Treworgy was born and raised in Massachusetts and graduated from Smith College in Northampton with a Bachelor of Arts in Child Development and Sociology. Commissioner Aigner-Treworgy received a Master of Public Policy and a Master of Social Work from the University of Chicago, where her studies concentrated on education and families.



## **JEFFREY C. RILEY**

### ***Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education***

Jeffrey C. Riley was appointed Massachusetts' 24th commissioner of elementary and secondary education in early 2018 and began serving as commissioner on April 5, 2018. A Massachusetts native, Riley's experience spans urban and suburban districts and includes teaching in Baltimore, MD, being principal of Tyngsboro Middle School, and being principal of Boston's Edwards Middle School. In January 2012, Commissioner Riley was appointed superintendent/receiver of the Lawrence Public Schools. During his more than six years there, he led a team that brought major improvements by shifting more resources and autonomy to the school level, expanding the school day, increasing enrichment opportunities, and ensuring all schools had great leaders and teachers. Commissioner Riley holds a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Pomona College in California, a master's degree in counseling from Johns Hopkins University in Maryland and a master's degree in school administration, planning and social policy from Harvard University.

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# SPEAKERS

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## CARLOS E. SANTIAGO

### *Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Higher Education*

Carlos E. Santiago is Commissioner of Higher Education for Massachusetts, appointed to this position by the Board of Higher Education (BHE) in July 2015. Working with the BHE, he is responsible for providing overall direction to public higher education in Massachusetts and helping shape state-level policies that maximize the benefits of higher education to the Commonwealth and its citizens. Santiago joined the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education in April 2013 as the Senior Deputy Commissioner for Academic Affairs. His past academic appointments include that of Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee (Wisconsin’s second largest research university). He brings over 30 years of experience in public higher education. Santiago also served as provost and chief operating officer at the University at Albany (SUNY). He was a professor of economics at UWM and SUNY-Albany and holds a Ph.D. in economics from Cornell University. Santiago is also the author or co-author of six books and has published dozens of articles and book reviews, of which many focus on economic development and the changing socioeconomic status of Latinos in the United States. On two separate occasions, in 1996 and 2011, Santiago has been named one of the 100 most influential Hispanics in the United States by Hispanic Business magazine.



## JAMES PEYSER

### *Massachusetts Secretary of Education*

As Massachusetts Secretary of Education, James Peyser directs the Executive Office of Education, which oversees early education, K-12, and higher education. Secretary Peyser sits on each of the boards governing the Commonwealth’s education agencies, as well as the University of Massachusetts system. He is Governor Charlie Baker’s top advisor on education and helps shape the Commonwealth’s education reform agenda. Before serving as Secretary, he was the managing director at NewSchools Venture Fund. He supported innovative education entrepreneurs in popular urban communities to transform public education. Secretary Peyser was the Massachusetts Board of Education’s chairman from 1999 to 2006. He also served as education advisor to Governors Bill Weld, Jane Swift and Mitt Romney. He developed state policies of standards and assessments, school accountability, and charter schools.

## **JESSICA BOSTON DAVIS, ED.L.D.**

***Director of Equity and Excellence, Somerville Public Schools***

***Board Member, Rennie Center For Education Research & Policy***

Dr. Jessica Boston Davis is an educator committed to equity with a variety of experiences in traditional public schools, charter schools, philanthropy, higher education, and international education. Jessica is currently the Director for Equity and Excellence at the Somerville Public Schools in Somerville, Massachusetts. As the Director for Equity and Excellence, Jessica works closely with school leaders, educators, students, and community members to identify strengths and areas of growth through a lens of equity, and develop improvement strategies that will best serve each school community. She is also currently adjunct faculty at Lesley University where she teaches Culturally Responsive Teaching with the Lesley University and Somerville Public Schools partnership. Jessica is a 2019 graduate of the Doctor of Education Leadership (EdLD) program at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. While at Harvard, Jessica served as the president of the Black Student Union. She was awarded with the Harvard University Certificate of Distinction in Teaching for her work as a teaching fellow at Harvard College. She was also awarded with the Torch Bearer Award for Excellence in Leadership within the Black community at Harvard. Prior studying at Harvard, Jessica was the founding principal of Life Academy, a turn-around school in Newark, New Jersey. While Jessica served as principal, Life Academy was recognized as a “proof-point for an effective restart” and Life Academy was profiled by the Wall Street Journal for the academic growth made by students. Prior to becoming a principal, Jessica taught in Newark, New Jersey and Brooklyn, New York. She also worked in schools in Johannesburg, South Africa and Nairobi, Kenya. Jessica earned an Ed.M. in Education Policy and Management from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Jessica also earned a M.S. in Teaching at Hunter College. Jessica is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Spelman College. In her free time, Jessica loves to spend time with her husband Justin and their two sons; Daniel who is three and Darius who is eight months old.

## **CELINE COGGINS, PH.D**

***Executive Director, Grantmakers For Education***

***Board Chair, Rennie Center For Education Research & Policy***

Celine has been an educator for more than two decades, with a track record as an innovator, leader, and connector. Celine began her career as a middle school teacher in Worcester, MA and went on to serve in a number of education policy leadership roles, including assistant to the Massachusetts Commissioner of Education. Celine’s work has always been deeply connected to teachers and disadvantaged schools. In 2007, she founded Teach Plus, a nationwide network of top-performing teachers, where she spent the next decade as CEO. Under Celine’s leadership, Teach Plus grew to over 30,000 participating teachers and offered groundbreaking programs in leadership development and advocacy. Celine was recognized by President Obama at the White House for her organization’s impact on public education. A nationally recognized expert on teacher leadership, education policy standards and accountability, and union politics, Celine has addressed audiences at the Philanthropy Roundtable, the Askwith Forum at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and on NBC’s Education Nation. She appears regularly in the media and has been interviewed by The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, and The Atlantic, among many others. She is the author of three books, including her most recent, How to Be Heard: Ten Lessons Teachers Need to Advocate for Their Students and Profession. Celine earned her Ph.D. in education policy analysis at Stanford University and holds an appointment as a lecturer at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. As a young person, Celine’s life and educational trajectory were profoundly altered by an anonymous donor. That experience made fighting for quality educational opportunities for disadvantaged students her life’s work. It also taught her the power of philanthropy, which started her on the journey to this role.

## **SARA COLUM**

### ***Consulting Teacher, Revere Public Schools***

Sara Colum has been an educator in the Revere Public School District for thirteen years. She spent the first ten years teaching high school English and supervising the Christian students' club, Poetry Out Loud, and the Drama/Film Guild. In 2019-2020, she began her work as a Consulting Teacher in the Colleague To Colleague program and started doing adjunct teaching within the M.Ed. program at Emmanuel College. At work, her passions are feedback, taking an assets lens, and humanizing assessment. At home, Sara enjoys cooking and impromptu singalongs with her toddler, husband, and a very vocal Boston terrier.

## **MARIANELA DE LA CRUZ**

### ***Manager, Lawrence Working Families Initiative***

Marianela De La Cruz is an Afro-Latina, of Dominican descent who was raised by a single mother, low-income family in Lawrence, MA. Marianela graduated 21 years ago from Lawrence High School, received a Bachelor's degree in Sociology and Criminal Justice, and worked as a social worker for over 15 years. Five and half years ago she became the Manager of the Lawrence Working Families Initiative at Lawrence Public Schools. LWF's focus is to support LPS parents with education, training, employment and advancement. Marianela has been able to build a strong relationship when it comes to working with parents, collaborating with partners on projects and developing and implementing pilot initiatives. With continued passion in the Lawrence community and commitment in closing racial equity gaps she led the design of the Paraeducator which offered parents a pipeline in becoming paraprofessionals in Lawrence Public Schools. The Initiative also designed the Para Teacher track which works with existing bilingual and bicultural LPS paraprofessionals to help them advance to full teacher status, filling the hiring needs of the district. Both these successful programs have allowed our LPS parents to advance economically, for our schools to become more inclusive, and for our students' families to be more engaged in their learning.

## **CHAD D'ENTREMONT, PH.D.**

### ***Executive Director, Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy***

As Executive Director, Dr. Chad d'Entremont is responsible for shepherding the Rennie Center's mission to improve public education through deep knowledge and evidence of effective policymaking and practice. In this capacity, he has co-authored numerous articles, book chapters, and reports on reform strategies ranging from early childhood education to early college designs, as well as launched multiple initiatives to support local communities in the implementation and evaluation of evidence-based practice. In 2012, he helped found the Massachusetts Education Partnership, a unique coalition of labor and management leaders committed to working collaboratively to advance sustainable school improvements. In 2014, he helped found the Massachusetts Institute for College and Career Readiness in partnership with Boston University, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and MassINC and supported by a \$1 million cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Education's Institute for Education Sciences. Dr. d'Entremont began his career as a teacher, serving high-needs students in both urban and rural settings. He is the former Assistant Director of a nationally renowned research center at Teachers College, Columbia University and, from 2007-2011, was the Research & Policy Director at Strategies for Children, as well as project manager for Massachusetts' successful application for a \$50 million Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge award. He has a Ph.D. in Education Policy and Social Analysis and an MA in the Sociology of Education from Teachers College, Columbia University.

## **JOHN H. JACKSON, ED.D., J.D.**

### ***President and CEO, Schott Foundation for Public Education***

Dr. John H. Jackson is President and CEO of the Schott Foundation for Public Education. In this role, Dr. Jackson leads the Foundation's efforts to ensure a fair and substantive opportunity to learn for all students regardless of race or gender. Dr. Jackson joined the Schott Foundation after serving in several senior level positions. Among them, National Director of Education and Chief Policy Officer of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) from 2000-2007. In 1999, President William Jefferson Clinton appointed Dr. Jackson to serve as Senior Policy Advisor in the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) at the U.S. Department of Education. Dr. Jackson has also served as an Adjunct Professor of Race, Gender, and Public Policy at the Georgetown Public Policy Institute. Earlier in his career, Dr. Jackson conducted extensive research at the Harvard Civil Rights Project on civil rights and opportunity gap issues. Dr. Jackson has been elected or appointed to serve on many boards and commissions. Among them the Xavier University of Louisiana Board of Directors, Nellie Mae Education Foundation Board of Directors, Harvard University Board of Alumni, Association of Black Foundation Executives, American Bar Association At-Risk Commission. Dr. Jackson also served on the Obama-Biden transition team as a member of the President's 13-member Education Policy Transition Work Group. A native of the Southside of Chicago and product of the public school system, Dr. Jackson holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Xavier University of Louisiana; A Master of Education in Education Policy from the University of Illinois' College of Education; and a Juris Doctorate from the University of Illinois' College of Law. In addition, Dr. Jackson received a Master of Education and Doctorate of Education in Administration, Planning, and Social Policy from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

## **MARK KOSTIN**

### ***Associate Director, Great Schools Partnership***

Mark Kostin is associate director of the Great Schools Partnership. Mark joined the Partnership in 2003 and co-leads a number of large-scale initiatives including the New England Secondary School Consortium and the NextGen Personalized Learning initiative. He provides direct support to state education agencies and supports districts and schools across the country. Mark's professional interests include collaborative school improvement, ensuring college and career readiness for all students, the role of policy in large-scale reform, and the importance of schools in a democracy. Mark earned his BSc in chemistry and a DipEd in secondary education from McGill University in Montreal and an MEd in administration and planning and an EdD in educational leadership and policy studies from the University of Vermont. Mark has worked as a science teacher in Canada's largest school system in Toronto and was a school administrator in a large rural school district in Vermont. Mark was a tenured faculty member at Georgia Southern University in Statesboro, GA where he directed an award-winning proficiency-based secondary education program and oversaw the field experiences and partnership in dozens of districts for over 1,000 university students a year. He lives in Yarmouth, Maine, with his wife and three children.

## **KATHERINE LOPEZ-ARIAS**

### ***Director of Workforce Development, Lawrence CommunityWorks***

Katherine Lopez-Arias is a Latina from the Dominican Republic who moved to Lawrence MA at the age of 12 and have lived here since. She graduated from Lawrence High and is very proud of her community. She obtained a Bachelor Degree in Business Administration and an Associate Degree in Marketing. Before working at Lawrence CommunityWorks, she worked in the retail field as a merchandising and later on as a logistic operations manager. She started her career at Lawrence CommunityWorks as the Family Coach Specialist almost three years ago after being a parent volunteer for the Neighborhood Cycle program for over 6 years and is now serving as the Director of the Workforce Development Department. Lawrence CommunityWorks believes that helping local employers find talent to meet

their business needs while helping the local workforce develop their skills to access opportunities and succeed at their jobs and careers are reciprocal strategies that advance economic development in the City of Lawrence. Our objective is to cultivate a pipeline of skilled bi-lingual personnel, primarily from the Lawrence community, to meet the needs of local employers.

## **STEFANIE PORRAZZO**

### ***Consulting Teacher, Revere Public Schools***

Stefanie Porrazzo is a 12 year veteran in the Revere Public School system. She has taught both 3rd and 5th grades and is currently an instructional coach as part of the Colleague to Colleague program. Outside of school, she likes spending time outside and being with her husband and two sons. Her educational interests include self-efficacy, goal-setting and equity and she is scheduled to defend her dissertation related to this work this March!

## **MICHAEL S. WOTORSON**

### ***Director of the National Opportunity to Learn Network, Schott Foundation for Public Education***

Michael S. Wotorson joined the Schott Foundation in October 2021 as the Director of the National Opportunity to Learn Network. In this role he works closely with grantees and allies to cultivate and support effective grassroots organizing and campaigns that build a more racially just and equitable public education system for all children. Michael brings a wealth of philanthropic expertise from his time as a Senior Community Impact Officer with the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. There he managed grant making and outreach activities in key areas including student educational progress, gun violence reduction and community safety. Michael has centered his commitments to racial justice and civil rights throughout his professional life. In addition to providing grant-making support to the Hartford Foundation's Black Giving Circle, Latino Endowment Fund, and Catalyst Endowment Fund, he has worked for national and regional organizations including the NAACP, the Anti-Defamation League, and the Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium. Public education has been a touchstone of Michael's career. In addition to a brief stint teaching in Columbia, Missouri public schools, he was a higher education professional at the Central Missouri State University, later working at the American Association of State Colleges & Universities, the National Association of State Universities & Land-Grant Colleges, and the Campaign for High School Equity, a special project of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors. Michael earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in comparative political systems from the University of Missouri-Columbia and he completed doctoral coursework in Education Administration at American University in Washington, DC. Michael lives with his wife and four children in Farmington, Connecticut.

## **SOPHIE ZAMARRIPA**

### ***Senior Associate, Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy***

Sophie brings to the Rennie Center a combination of experience in consulting, education research and policy, data analysis, and hands-on classroom engagement. Throughout her experiences and coursework, she has developed a strong commitment to correcting and preventing educational inequities in public education. Most notably, Sophie works as a project lead on the Condition of Education project, the Center's flagship annual report and data dashboard. Prior to joining the Rennie Center, Sophie worked as a consultant at District Management Group, where she partnered with districts across the country to evaluate and recommend improvements to special education, social-emotional and behavioral, and intervention practices. In addition to her consulting work, Sophie has supported Rennie on a previous project to infuse equity considerations into continuous improvement processes. During her graduate studies in Educational Leadership and Policy at the University of Michigan, she joined the Education Trust-Midwest's Data and Policy Analysis team as a Graduate Student Fellow where she analyzed opportunity gaps in Michigan schools. She received a B.A. in Political Science and Educational Studies from Tufts University, throughout which she worked as a teacher's assistant in a Kindergarten classroom.