

***Innovation in Early Childhood Development and K-12 Education***  
**Day Two—Education, Choice, and Accountability**  
**October 24, 2018**

**Kara Arzamendia, Saint Paul Public Schools**



Kara Arzamendia is the assistant director of research, evaluation, and assessment at Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS). She manages a team that provides reporting and data analysis support to both internal staff and external stakeholders. Prior to working at SPPS, Arzamendia was the data analytics supervisor at the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE). While at MDE, she served as the Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems coordinator for K-12 and assisted with data analysis and program evaluation efforts across the department. She has research and evaluation experience at the federal, state, and local levels. Arzamendia holds a master of public policy degree from the University of Chicago and a B.A. in child psychology and family social science from the University of Minnesota.

**Ben Austin, Kids Coalition**



Ben Austin is the executive director and founder of Kids Coalition, which advocates for a kids-first agenda by coordinating with the new reform-oriented Los Angeles Unified School District school board on policy, politics, media, and organizing strategy. Austin serves on the board of Students Matter, after having served as the organization's advocacy and policy director. He came to Students Matter from Parent Revolution, a nonprofit focused on transforming underperforming public schools through community organizing, which he founded and led for seven years. Austin invented, passed into law, and implemented California's historic parent trigger law, which was the subject of two feature films, the documentary *We the Parents* and the fictional account *Won't Back Down*. Austin served as a deputy mayor of Los Angeles under Mayor Richard Riordan, where he coordinated communications and helped craft the city's education policy. In 2010, he was appointed to the California State Board of Education, where he cast the vote to approve California's new Common Core standards. Austin had worked on five presidential campaigns, served as communications director for the 2000 Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles, and worked in the Clinton White House in a variety of roles. Austin holds a J.D. from Georgetown University Law Center and a B.A. in speech communication and rhetoric from the University of California-Berkeley.

**Carrie Bakken, Avalon School**



Carrie Bakken was hired with a team of teachers to open Avalon School in St. Paul, Minnesota, in 2001, where she is now a program coordinator and teacher. Over the last few years, she completed a two-year Aspen Institute Teacher Fellowship and won an Outstanding Educator in Ethics Education Award sponsored by the WEM Foundation. She is also a Teacher Powered Ambassador and Innovative Quality Schools Cadre Member. Bakken has an M.A. in teaching from the University of St. Thomas and a J.D. from Hamline University. She completed her undergraduate work at Beloit College in women's studies and Latin American studies.

## Brenda Cassellius, Minnesota Commissioner of Education



Brenda Cassellius has served as the Minnesota Commissioner of Education since 2010. Under her leadership, the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) applied for and received a waiver from the federal No Child Left Behind law, allowing for a better, fairer, more accurate and supportive accountability system. MDE was awarded a \$45 million Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant to further develop and strengthen early education efforts. The department was also awarded a \$28.2 million Federal Public Charter Schools grant to design and implement high-quality charter schools. Before serving as commissioner, Cassellius was the superintendent of the East Metro Integration District, where she led an achievement agenda with the district's ten superintendents. Previously, as an associate superintendent in the Minneapolis Public Schools, she led 19 middle and high schools and was responsible for the implementation of the Minneapolis Secondary

Redesign. As the academic superintendent of middle schools in Memphis, Tennessee, Cassellius was responsible for middle school and district reforms that led to accelerated gains and the narrowing of achievement gaps among students in Memphis.

## Sarah Cohodes, Columbia University



Sarah Cohodes is an assistant professor of education and public policy at Teachers College, Columbia University. She is also a faculty research fellow at the National Bureau of Economic Research. Her research uses quantitative causal inference methods to evaluate programs and policies that have the potential to ameliorate achievement gaps. She is particularly interested in how young people and their families make choices about education and how school and college quality interact with those decisions. Cohodes holds a Ph.D. in public policy from Harvard Kennedy School of Development, an Ed.M. in education policy and management from Harvard Graduate School of Education, and B.A.s in economics, education, and English literature from Swarthmore College.

## Neil Dorosin, Innovation in Public School Choice



Neil Dorosin is the cofounder and executive director of Innovation in Public School Choice (IIPSC). He leads IIPSC's enrollment and choice reform projects. Dorosin and his colleagues at IIPSC developed the original theories behind Unified Enrollment and helped to create the first implementations of Unified Enrollment systems in Denver and New Orleans. Since 2007, he has designed and implemented Unified Enrollment and other choice reform projects in Camden, New Jersey; Cleveland; Chicago; Denver; Detroit; Indianapolis; Memphis, Tennessee; New Orleans; Newark, New Jersey; New York City; Oakland, California; Philadelphia; and Washington, D.C. Dorosin began his career in public education as a Teach For America corps member in the South Bronx in 1994. After five years of teaching, he worked as a program director at Chess-in-the-Schools, a not-for-profit

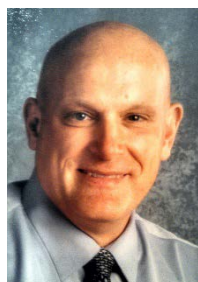
organization with a presence in hundreds of New York City schools, and then as lead curriculum and staff director at The Learning Project Incorporated, a charter school development organization. Dorosin holds an M.P.A. from Columbia University.

## Dennis Epple, Carnegie Mellon University



Dennis Epple is the Thomas Lord University Professor of Economics at Carnegie Mellon University. He is also the chairperson for the American Economic Association Committee on Oversight and Operation. His work on education markets has been featured in several prominent publications, including the *Journal of Labor Economics* and *Journal of Political Economy*. Formerly, Epple was a co-editor for the *Journal of Public Economics*, as well as the *American Economic Review*. Epple holds a Ph.D. and M.S. in economics from Princeton, an M.S. in public affairs from the Woodrow Wilson School, and a B.S. in aeronautical engineering from Purdue University.

## John Gawarecki, Math and Science Academy



John Gawarecki has spent over two decades in public school education, including both traditional and charter schools. Since June 2015, he has served as the director of the Math and Science Academy (MSA), a charter school in Woodbury, Minnesota. Prior to joining the MSA, he spent ten years at the Academy for Science and Agriculture in Vadnais Heights, Minnesota, where he taught chemistry and physics and became an assistant director. Gawarecki has also taught college-level and high-school-level chemistry and physics courses for a combined eight years at traditional public schools. Before entering the education field, he was a member of the U. S. Army, where he served as an officer during the Persian Gulf War, and then worked as a production supervisor for a thin-films manufacturer. Gawarecki holds a B.A. degree from St. John's University.

## Paul Glewwe, University of Minnesota



Paul Glewwe is a Distinguished McKnight University Professor in the Department of Applied Economics at the University of Minnesota. Glewwe's research focuses on household and individual behavior and welfare in developing countries. Most of his research is on education in those countries; in particular, on the factors that determine how long (if at all) children go to school and how much children learn in school. He also conducts research on inequality, income mobility, poverty, and child nutrition in developing countries, and on education in the U.S. In 2015, Glewwe received the Outstanding Contributions to Postbaccalaureate, Graduate and Professional Education Award from the University of Minnesota. Glewwe holds a Ph.D. in economics from Stanford University and a B.A. in economics from the University of Chicago.

## Neel Kashkari, Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis



Neel Kashkari has been president and chief executive officer of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis since January 1, 2016. In this role, he serves on the Federal Open Market Committee, bringing the Ninth Federal Reserve District's perspective to monetary policy discussions in Washington, D.C. In addition to his responsibilities as a monetary policymaker, Kashkari oversees all of the Bank's operations and was instrumental in establishing the Minneapolis Fed's Opportunity and Inclusive Growth Institute, whose mission is to improve the economic well-being of all Americans. Kashkari earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in mechanical engineering from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He went on to become an aerospace engineer, developing technology for NASA missions. But he eventually turned to finance and public policy, earned his M.B.A.

from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, joined Goldman Sachs in San Francisco, and served in several senior positions at the U.S. Department of the Treasury, including overseeing the Troubled Asset Relief

Program, or TARP, during the financial crisis. Before joining the Minneapolis Fed, Kashkari ran for governor of California in 2014 on a platform focused on economic opportunity.

### Hugh Macartney, Duke University



Hugh Macartney is an assistant professor of economics at Duke University and a faculty research fellow at the National Bureau of Economic Research. His broad research interests are in applied microeconomics, with an emphasis on the formation of human capital and the role of incentives in the public sphere. His work uses both theoretical modeling and structural estimation to examine key aspects of the education production process that underlie student achievement, such as teacher effort and the match between teachers and students. The goal of this work is to evaluate and prescribe policy refinements in order to allocate education resources more efficiently. Macartney holds a Ph.D. in economics, M.A. in economics, and B.S.

in physics and astronomy from the University of Toronto.

### Yusuke Narita, Yale University



Yusuke Narita is an assistant professor in the Department of Economics at Yale University. His research interests center around the design of education and labor markets. He is a co-author on a School Effectiveness and Inequality Initiative (at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, or MIT) that is exploring how randomness in school assignment opens the door to quasi-experimental research designs for the evaluation of school effectiveness. Narita has co-authored papers recently published in *American Economic Review* and *Econometrica*. He received his Ph.D. in economics from MIT.

### Anusha Nath, Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis



Anusha Nath joined the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis as an economist in 2016. She has taught at Boston University, Delhi University, and the University of Minnesota, where she is currently an adjunct assistant professor in the Department of Economics. Her current research focuses on applied microeconomics, development economics, and political economy. Her work has been featured in *The Economist*, *Economic and Political Weekly*, and *Brookings India Policy Forum*. Nath holds B.A. and M.A. degrees in economics from Delhi University and a Ph.D. in economics from Boston University.

### Colette Owens, Hiawatha Academies



Colette Owens is the executive director of Hiawatha Academies, a network of five open-enrollment public charter schools in South Minneapolis with a mission to ensure that “All Hiawatha Academies scholars will be empowered with the knowledge, character, and leadership skills to graduate from college and serve the common good.” Prior to joining Hiawatha Academies, Owens served as director of academic strategy and curriculum for St. Louis Public Schools in St. Louis, Missouri. In that role, she was responsible for the implementation of a performance-based management system to drive school improvement efforts, coordinated cross-team collaboration for the K-12 curriculum, and managed state and federal programs. She started her career in education as a middle school special education teacher. Owens holds an M.A. in teaching special education from Webster University and a B.A. in philosophy, neuroscience, and psychology from Washington University in St. Louis.

### Steven Rivkin, University of Illinois at Chicago



Steven Rivkin is a professor and head of the Department of Economics at the University of Illinois Chicago. He is working with the UChicago Consortium on School Research to study the variation in principal quality as measured by improvements in students’ test scores over time (e.g., principal value-added on student achievement), the pathways through which principals influence achievement (e.g., principal effects on teacher mobility), and the reward structure of the principal labor market. His research interests include teacher and principal quality and labor markets, charter schools, affirmative action, and school reforms in Central Europe. Rivkin holds a Ph.D. and M.A. in economics from the University of California Los Angeles and a B.A. in economics from the University of Michigan.

### Ben Whitney, Great MN Schools



Ben Whitney has had careers as a contractor, attorney, venture capitalist, and campaign manager, and spent four years serving as the U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Norway. Whitney is a founder and chairman of Great MN Schools, a nonprofit dedicated to the creation of great schools, and serves on the board of Ed Allies, Minnesota’s foremost education advocacy organization. Whitney formerly served as a vice-chair of Mastery Schools and the Harvest Network of Schools and has now joined the board of Prodeo Academy. He worked closely on the development of MN Comeback and on a series of other education-related projects. Whitney has served on the boards of many other nonprofits, including Wilderness Inquiry, the Guthrie Theater, and The Minneapolis Foundation. He has a master’s degree with a focus in education policy from Georgetown University.